

he **Watchtower**
Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom

January 1, 1988

***The Last Days
—A Time of Harvest***

In This Issue

Who Are the True Evangelizers?	3
Evangelizers Reap a Worldwide Harvest	5
A Preview of Christ's Kingdom Glory	8
The Last Days—A Time of Harvest	10
Kingdom Proclaimers Report	19
"The Good News Has to Be Preached First"	20
Keep On Preaching the Kingdom	25
Ancient Coins Testify to Prophetic Truth	30

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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January 31: The Last Days—A Time of Harvest.
Page 10. Songs to Be Used: 171, 92.

February 7: "The Good News Has to Be Preached First." Page 20. Songs to Be Used: 193, 72.

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Who Are the True Evangelizers?

NO MATTER where you live, in one way or another the evangelistic movement started by Jesus Christ has touched your life. But not everyone who has claimed to represent Christ has spread the true message of God's Word. Not all evangelizers—present or past—have been fired with the same missionary zeal that characterized the first-century disciples of Christ.

True, the churches of Christendom have an estimated 220,000 missionaries at work in the world today, but do those missionaries pass the test of true evangelizers? Christian evangelism was not meant to be a form of spiritual imperialism, where preachers would work as agents of colonizing world powers. (Compare James 4:4.) Moreover, genuine Christian evangelism would not advocate so-called liberation theology and push for radical changes in the political and social systems; neither did Jesus have in mind Bible-thumping electronic preachers who wail their version of "prosperity theology" over the TV and radio waves. (John 17:16; Matthew 6:24) Well, then, what is an evangelizer?

What Is True Evangelism?

In the Bible's original languages, Hebrew and Greek, an evangelizer is a proclaimer of



glad tidings, or good news.* Good news of what? Of salvation, of righteous rule, and of peace. For example, Isaiah 52:7 states: "How comely upon the mountains are the feet of the one bringing good news, the one publishing peace, the one bringing good news of something better, the one publishing salvation, the one saying to Zion: 'Your God has become king!'"

Further, at the birth of God's Son, the angel announced to the shepherds: "Have no fear, for, look! I am declaring to you good news of a great joy that all the people will have, because there was born to you today a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2: 10, 11) Thus, the good news centers on Jesus Christ.

Some 30 years later, Jesus entered the synagogue in the city of Nazareth on the Sabbath day and stood up to read. "The

* The Greek verb for "bring good news," or "evangelize," (*euaggeli'zo-mai*) came to stand for the Hebrew word rendered 'bring good news' (*bis-sar'*) in Isaiah 52:7. The verb *bis-sar'* here means "to herald Yahweh's universal victory over the world and his kingly rule" and the dawn of a new age, states *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*.—Compare Nahum 1:15, *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures—With References*, footnote.

scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed him, and he opened the scroll and found the place where it was written: 'Jehovah's spirit is upon me, because he anointed me to declare good news.' After he finished reading, "he rolled up the scroll, handed it back to the attendant and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were intently fixed upon him. Then he started to say to them: 'Today this scripture that you just heard is fulfilled.'" Jesus was admittedly a preacher of good news, and the good news that he declared focused on "the kingdom of God."—Luke 4:17-21; 8:1.

Jesus compared his evangelizing work to a harvest and said that "the harvest is great, but the workers are few." (Matthew 9:36-38) Hence, he trained and commissioned his followers to be evangelizers also. (Matthew, chapter 10; Luke, chapter 10) As was the case with their Teacher, the heart of their preaching was "the kingdom of the heavens." (Matthew 10:7) However, Kingdom-preaching was not limited to Jesus' apostles.

When persecution against the fledgling Christian congregation erupted in the city of Jerusalem, the historical account at Acts 8:1 relates that "all except the apostles were scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria." Did those dispersed disciples hide and cower in fear? No, for verse 4 continues: "However, those who had been scattered went through the land declaring the good news of the word." In this way a great harvest was reaped by those first-century evangelizers.

Interestingly, the book *A Theological Word Book of the Bible* states: "In the NT [New Testament] preaching has nothing to do with the delivery of sermons to the converted, which is what it usually means today, but always concerns the proclamation of the 'good tidings of God' to the non-Christian world." Thus, all Christians are evangelizers, and their evangelizing is not limited to speaking to fellow believers.

But what is the theme of modern-day evangelism? Jesus predicted for our day that "this good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come." (Matthew 24:14) And Jesus commanded not only those who saw his ascension but his future followers as well to be "witnesses of [him] both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the most distant part of the earth."—Acts 1:8; see also Matthew 28:19, 20.

Thus, the core of an evangelizer's message is the good news of Jehovah God's Kingdom in the hands of his appointed Ruler, Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9:6) And it includes all the truths that Jesus spoke and that his disciples recorded. True evangelizers of today faithfully stick to this one theme.

Who Sponsors True Evangelism?

True evangelizers worship Jehovah as God. He is the Great Evangelizer; he is the Sponsor of the preaching of the good news. (Galatians 3:8; Revelation 10:7) And he desires all people everywhere to hear and obey his message. "For a certainty I perceive that God is not partial," proclaimed the apostle Peter to a small crowd in the Mediterranean seaport of Caesarea. "But in every nation the man that fears him and works righteousness is acceptable to him. He sent out the word to the sons of Israel to declare to them the good news of peace through Jesus Christ: this One is Lord of all others."—Acts 10:34-36.

The Bible foretold that in our day evangelizers would once again reap a great harvest. (Revelation 14:15, 16) Read in the following article some of the experiences that Jehovah's Witnesses are having as they share in this harvest work. Examine their preaching record on pages 12 to 15 of this magazine. Then speak with Jehovah's Witnesses when they call at your home and see if you do not agree that they are the true evangelizers of today.

Evangelizers

Reap a Worldwide Harvest

"As the clock ticks away to Armageddon, the Jehovah's Witnesses are stepping up their activities to get as many of us as possible saved from that dreaded destruction."—Editorial by Ian Boyne in "The Sunday Gleaner," March 15, 1987, Kingston, Jamaica.

THE editorial writer quoted above is correct. Jehovah's Witnesses believe that Armageddon, when God will destroy the wicked, is near and that mankind is living in a time of divine judgment. (Revelation 14:6, 7) Hence, there is a need for people to heed the message of good news. Jesus Christ, the greatest human evangelizer ever, set in motion an organization that evangelized "to the ends of the earth" in the first century. (Acts 1:8, *New English Bible*; Colossians 1:23) He predicted a similar evangelizing work for our day. (Matthew 24:14) The organization now doing that is made up of Jehovah's Witnesses, who preach the good news of God's Kingdom with urgency in 210 countries and territories.

Jehovah's Witnesses, though, are more than a preaching organization. They are also a teaching one. Jesus commissioned his followers to "make disciples of people of all the nations, . . . teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you." (Matthew 28:19, 20) We would like to introduce you to some individuals who have benefited from their preaching and teaching work.

Mexico

Meet Virginia. She is 110 years old and wants to tell you that "it is never too late to come to know and serve Jehovah." As a

young woman, she was so devout that for four years she clothed herself in special religious garb. "But something was lacking," she says. Nowhere could she find satisfying answers to her Bible questions. For example, when she asked the teachers in her church, "What is God's name?" they responded, "God's name is God."

But things changed in 1983 when her granddaughter began to study the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses. The granddaughter answered Virginia's question by saying that Jehovah is the name of God. (Psalm 83:18) This motivated Virginia to have her own Bible study with the Witnesses. Two years later, on June 2, 1985, she was baptized at 108 years of age.

"I remember that date with affection," she says, "because on that day I started to live. At my age, I preach five or six hours a month and use a cane for support in walking. I prefer walking to taking a car. In this way I keep in good physical shape."



India

"I was the local rowdy and a good-for-nothing fellow," says a man who was a prisoner to many vices. "I would smuggle drugs, play *mutka* (gamble), and smoke free cigarettes eagerly supplied by my clandestine clients. There was also the alcohol habit—all of this



despite the fact that I was an active church member." But when one of Jehovah's Witnesses called at his house and he began to study the Bible and apply its counsel, his life changed. (Proverbs 2:1-22; 2 Timothy 3:16) Now he, his wife, and two daughters are helping others to break free from such vices.

Belgium

A young couple grew bitterly angry with God. Why? Their first child, a daughter, died ten days after birth. Their second child was born a cripple. And their third, who seemed to be strong and healthy, died unexpectedly after five months. The mother could not believe that a loving God would permit such tragedies to happen to them when so many people who live a life of debauchery have healthy children.

Shortly thereafter, one of Jehovah's Witnesses was preaching from house to house in the neighborhood and called at her home. As the Witness spoke about God's promises of a happy future for mankind, the woman revolted against the idea of a God who is a loving heavenly Father. (Psalm 37:10, 11) But she did agree to accept some Bible literature. Gradually, after repeated visits by the Witness, the Bible's message of good news softened her heart and built up her confidence in God. Now both she and her husband have a strong hope not only that Jehovah will cure their crippled boy in the future Paradise earth but also that He will resurrect their two other children.—John 5:28, 29; Revelation 21:1-4.

Portugal

One Sunday morning, a lady carrying a bag full of groceries stopped to talk with a

married couple. This was the first but not the last time they would meet. The couple, Jehovah's Witnesses, were in the evangelizing activity. They commended the shopper for looking after the material needs of her family. But who, they asked, could supply the needs of mankind? They answered the question themselves by stating that God could. (Psalm 107:8, 9; Isaiah 33:24) "Does he have a remedy for my problem?" the lady wondered out loud. The Witnesses replied in the affirmative and were invited to her home, where a Bible study was started. Her husband, noticing changes for the better in his wife's attitude, joined the Bible study and in a short time also made changes in his life-style.

Later, the lady told the Witnesses that prior to speaking to them that Sunday morning, she had attempted suicide twice. She had been deeply upset because she and her husband had decided to separate. Now, though, she, her husband, and their children are unitedly making progress in learning about the good news.

Thailand

For most of her life, a woman living in the northern part of this country was harassed by demons. When she met one of Jehovah's Witnesses in the evangelizing work, she obtained some Bible literature and agreed to a home Bible study. After two months of study, she came to appreciate the Scriptural reasons for clearing out of her house all objects of false worship, such as idols, and to demolish her treasured spirit house built to protect her family from evil spirits. (Acts 19:19; 1 Corinthians 10:21; 1 John 5:21) Now she



has no more demon attacks and is able to concentrate on helping others learn about the one true God, Jehovah.

Kenya

When a criminal gang leader was told he was considered so dangerous that the police were under orders to shoot him on sight, he shrugged it off with a laugh. However, soon thereafter one of his gang raids did not go according to plan. He found himself alone, surrounded by an enraged crowd ready to inflict mob justice. At that moment, the police came to his rescue, plucked him away, and locked him in prison to await court trial.

His lawyer advised him on various tactics to deny guilt. But while in the jail cell, he remembered the visits made by one of Jehovah's Witnesses years ago. He began to regret his lawless ways and prayed to God for help. In fact, he



prayed to Jehovah by name. (Compare Acts 10:1, 2.) To the surprise of the judge, this criminal admitted his guilt to the court. So the judge meted out a comparatively mild sentence; instead of death, his sentence was ten years in a maximum security prison.

While behind bars, he ardently read Bible literature and repeatedly prayed to God, asking that, if possible, his time in prison be reduced so that he could serve Him. Unexpectedly, he was told that his sentence had been reduced by half. Thus, after being incarcerated for five years, he was released and immediately started to study the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses. Soon thereafter he was baptized, and now he has full-time evangelizing as his goal.

The above are only a few examples of how Jehovah's Witnesses are fulfilling their commission and obligation to evangelize "to the ends of the earth." These experiences could be multiplied a thousandfold. Do you doubt, then, that Jehovah's Witnesses are the true evangelizers of today?

A Preview of Christ's Kingdom Glory

JESUS has stopped en route to Caesarea Philippi, and he is teaching a crowd along with his apostles. He makes this startling announcement to them: "Truly I say to you that there are some of those standing here that will not taste death at all until first they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom."

"What could Jesus mean?" the disciples must wonder. About a week later, Jesus takes Peter, James, and John along with him and they climb a lofty mountain. Possibly it is night, since the disciples are sleepy. While Jesus is praying, he is transfigured before them. His face begins to shine as the sun, and his garments become brilliant as light.

Then, two figures, identified as "Moses and Elijah," appear and start talking to Jesus about his 'departure that is to occur at Jerusalem.' The departure evidently refers to Jesus' death and subsequent resurrection. Thus, this conversation proves that his humiliating death is not something to avoid, as Peter had desired.

Fully awake now, the disciples watch and listen with amazement. Although this is a vision, it appears so real that Peter begins to participate in the scene, saying: "Lord, it is fine for us to be here. If you wish, I will erect three tents here, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah."

While Peter is speaking, a bright cloud covers them, and a voice from the cloud says: "This is my Son, the beloved, whom I have approved; listen to him." At hearing the voice, the disciples fall on their faces. But Jesus says: "Get up and have no fear." When they do, they see no one except Jesus.

On their way down the mountain the next day, Jesus commands: "Tell the vision to no one until the Son of man is raised up from the dead." Elijah's appearance in the vision raises a question in the disciples' minds. "Why," they ask, "do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?"

"Elijah has already come," Jesus responds, "and they did not recognize him." Jesus, however, is speaking about John the Baptizer, who fulfilled a role similar to Elijah's. John prepared the way for the coming of Christ, as Elijah did for Elisha.

How strengthening this vision proves to be, both to Jesus and to the disciples! The vision is, as it were, a preview of Christ's Kingdom glory. The disciples saw, in effect, the "Son of man coming in his kingdom," just as Jesus had promised a week earlier. After Jesus' death, Peter wrote about having 'become eyewitnesses of Christ's magnificence while we were with him in the holy mountain.'

The Pharisees had demanded from Jesus a sign to prove that he was the one promised in the Scriptures to be God's chosen King. They were given no such sign. On the other hand, Jesus' intimate disciples are permitted to see Jesus' transfiguration as confirmation of the Kingdom prophecies. Thus, Peter later wrote: "Consequently we have the prophetic word made more sure." **Matthew 16:28-17:13; Mark 9:1-13; Luke 9:27-37; 2 Peter 1:16-19.**

- ♦ How did some see Christ coming in his Kingdom before they tasted death?
- ♦ In the vision, what did Moses and Elijah talk about with Jesus?
- ♦ Why was this vision such a strengthening aid to the disciples?



The Last Days —A Time of Harvest

"And I saw, and, look! a white cloud, and upon the cloud someone seated like a son of man, with a golden crown on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand."—REVELATION 14:14.

WHAT a tumultuous time this 20th century has been! Mankind has had to endure two ferocious world wars. Country after country has been wracked by revolution. Famine has caused more suffering than ever before in human history. Economic uncertainty, crime, pollution, and frightening sicknesses threaten everyone's well-being. At the same time, man has made gigantic scientific advances. He has harnessed the power of the atom and even walked on the moon. Truly, our generation is unique in many ways. Nevertheless, one thing stands out as *the* most important event of our time, and beside it all other things pale into insignificance.

² This truly epoch-making event was foretold back in the sixth century B.C.E. by the prophet Daniel. Listen to his divinely inspired report: "I kept on beholding in the visions of the night, and, see there! with the clouds of the heavens someone like a son of man happened to be coming; and to the Ancient of Days he gained access, and they brought him up close even before that One. And to him there were given rulership and dignity and kingdom, that the peoples, national groups and languages should all serve even him."—Daniel 7:13, 14.

1. What are some things that have made this century unique?
2. What event prophesied by Daniel was due to happen in our time?

³ "The Ancient of Days" is Jehovah God. Daniel sees him in "the clouds of the heavens," that is, in the invisible spirit realm, giving kingship to "someone like a son of man." Who is that "someone"? Jesus answered that question back in 33 C.E. when he was on trial before the Sanhedrin. The Jewish high priest put him under oath to say whether he was the Christ or not. In answer, Jesus boldly applied Daniel's prophecy to himself, saying: "From henceforth you will see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power and coming on the clouds of heaven." Rather than bowing to Jehovah's chosen King, the high priest accused him of blasphemy. Subsequently, the Jewish religious leaders pressured Pontius Pilate to condemn Jesus to death.—Matthew 26:63-65; 27:1, 2, 11-26.

⁴ This attempt to frustrate Jesus' words failed when he was raised from the dead and ascended to heaven to await Jehovah's due time for giving him the Kingdom. (Acts 2:24, 33, 34; Psalm 110:1, 2) That time came in 1914. According to *all* the evidence, in the latter part of that year, Jesus received the crown of kingship from "the Ancient of Days" and began to rule. (Matthew 24:3-42) The newborn Kingdom

3. (a) Who is "the Ancient of Days," and what did he give to "someone like a son of man"? (b) Who is this one "like a son of man," and how did the Jewish religious leaders respond when Jesus made this identification?
4. When did Jesus receive the crown of kingship, and despite what opposition?

faced bitter opposition. But the Jewish religious leaders of the first century, all the accumulated power of the nations, and even Satan and his demons were not able to prevent God's will from being accomplished. (Psalm 2:2, 4-6; Revelation 12:1-12) In 1914 the heavenly chorus rang out right on schedule: "The kingdom of the world did become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will rule as king forever and ever." (Revelation 11:15) Since that date, we have been living in "the last days" of this wicked system of things.—2 Timothy 3:1.

A Time of Harvest

⁵ According to Daniel's prophecy, when Jesus receives his crown "the peoples, national groups and languages [will] all serve even him." How can that be if mankind as a whole rejects him as King? A dramatic vision revealed to the apostle John indicates the answer. John tells us what he saw: "Look! a white cloud, and upon the cloud someone seated like a son of man, with a golden crown on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand." (Revelation 14:14) Similar to Daniel's vision, Jesus is here seen on a cloud and is identified as "someone . . . like a son of man." He wears the crown of kingship, but in his hand he has not a scepter but a harvester's sickle. Why?

⁶ John continues: "And another angel emerged from the temple sanctuary, crying with a loud voice to the one seated on the cloud: 'Put your sickle in and reap, because the hour has come to reap, for the harvest of the earth is thoroughly ripe.'" Jesus, although a King, still obeys in-

structions transmitted from Jehovah in "the temple sanctuary." So when Jehovah instructs him to engage in a harvest work during the last days, he obeys. Jesus "thrust in his sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped."—Revelation 14:15, 16; Hebrews 9:24; 1 Corinthians 11:3.

⁷ What is "the harvest of the earth"? It is people who come out of this satanic system of things to serve Jehovah and His appointed King. The harvest begins with the gathering of the remaining ones of the 144,000 who are to reign with Jesus in his heavenly kingdom. (Matthew 13:37-43) These are "the Israel of God," a "firstfruits to God and to the Lamb." They have been bought "out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation." (Galatians 6:16; Revelation 14:4; 5:9, 10) In this way, individuals out of all "peoples, national groups and languages" begin to serve the enthroned Jesus.

⁸ However, they are not alone. John, in another vision, sees the sealing of the final ones of the 144,000. (Revelation 7:1-8) Evidently, the gathering of these was virtually complete by 1935. But then, John reports, he sees "a great crowd, which no man was able to number, out of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb." (Revelation 7:9-17) So the harvest work continues as many more from "the peoples, national groups and languages" start to serve Jesus as King.

⁹ These newcomers look forward to enjoying life in a paradise earth under Jehovah's appointed King. (Psalm 37:11, 29;

5. (a) According to Daniel's prophecy, who would serve the newly crowned King? (b) What vision did John see that also involved Jesus as a newly crowned King?

6. What work does Jehovah command the newly crowned Jesus to engage in?

7. (a) What is "the harvest of the earth"? (b) What was the beginning of this "harvest"?

8. (a) In what year did the gathering of the final ones of the anointed evidently come to its conclusion? (b) How, according to another vision of John, did the harvest work continue?

9. Who are these newcomers, and what other prophecies mention their appearance during "the final part of the days"?

1987 SERVICE YEAR REPORT OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES WORLDWIDE

Country or Territory	Population	1987 Peak Pubs.	Ratio, One Pub- lisher to:	1987 Av. Pubs.	% Inc. Over 1986	1986 Av. Pubs.	1987 No. Bptzd.	Av. Pio. Pubs.	No. of Cong.	Total Hours	Av. Bible Studies	Memorial Atten- dance
Alaska	514,000	1,890	272	1,820	-3*	1,868	105	241	25	371,095	1,111	4,449
Algeria	22,200,000	41	541,463	37		37	5	1	3	2,030	38	82
American Samoa	36,960	111	333	101	31	77	8	12	1	22,662	128	433
Andorra	46,976	110	427	104	6	98	6	6	1	15,925	62	273
Anguilla	6,524	18	362	15	-6*	16		2	1	4,502	13	62
Antigua	70,794	229	309	218	3	212	7	34	4	52,723	228	605
Argentina	31,497,000	67,225	469	64,862	9	59,348	5,779	9,055	998	15,718,851	82,003	170,120
Aruba	64,539	402	161	379	10	345	31	43	5	85,641	469	1,203
Australia	16,089,900	46,170	348	44,649	4	42,998	2,159	4,989	610	9,434,752	23,726	89,517
Austria	7,555,338	17,056	443	16,714	3	16,185	911	1,359	238	3,139,087	9,179	30,384
Azores	261,300	360	726	346	5	331	29	39	12	77,620	355	1,027
Bahamas	209,505	877	239	852	8	791	74	159	16	242,624	1,400	2,877
Bangladesh	103,000,000	25	4,120,000	22	16	19	1	6	1	6,719	39	79
Barbados	265,000	1,598	166	1,551	3	1,501	90	179	16	316,290	1,725	4,803
Belau	13,000	50	260	43	-7*	46	3	15	1	21,503	137	212
Belgium	9,794,751	22,620	433	21,834	2	21,343	1,092	1,839	305	4,111,261	10,438	45,466
Belize	171,000	773	221	729	5	695	76	109	18	197,223	1,032	3,928
Benin	4,005,000	1,752	2,286	1,565	5	1,491	49	114	64	304,632	1,744	9,005
Bermuda	54,050	341	159	329		330	16	55	4	84,828	296	906
Bolivia	6,650,000	5,514	1,206	4,979	11	4,467	681	1,003	96	1,635,223	8,007	21,778
Bonaire	10,456	60	174	55	12	49	10	6	1	12,367	99	215
Botswana	1,224,056	510	2,400	466	8	430	29	72	18	127,072	606	1,711
Brazil	141,302,000	216,216	654	203,405	10	185,126	18,467	20,390	3,328	38,667,254	235,811	657,784
Britain	55,326,500	109,624	505	105,082	3	101,863	5,948	12,036	1,231	21,571,972	55,165	209,172
Brunei	225,000	12	18,750	8	60	5				353	8	53
Burkina Faso	7,318,695	361	20,273	340	18	288	71	89	15	140,009	759	1,402
Burma	37,000,000	1,540	24,026	1,456	8	1,342	88	242	73	398,667	1,330	3,795
Canada	25,309,300	90,080	281	87,459	4	84,343	4,329	9,135	1,210	16,790,200	44,729	168,303
Cape Verde Islands	310,000	277	1,119	244	15	212	32	30	7	69,763	434	1,415
Cayman Islands	16,821	66	255	60	11	54	2	5	1	11,929	73	188
Central Afr. Rep.	2,746,485	1,248	2,201	1,166		1,170	41	140	40	249,669	1,250	4,042
Chad	4,000,000	196	20,408	186	8	172	17	50	9	78,051	416	1,228
Chile	12,536,383	30,988	405	29,346	6	27,585	2,450	3,651	327	6,835,811	44,646	95,664
Colombia	29,481,842	34,261	861	30,857	12	27,587	3,381	4,452	508	8,023,835	50,641	144,449
Congo	1,750,000	1,256	1,393	1,103	2	1,084	49	91	47	238,572	1,807	4,725
Cook Islands	17,000	108	157	90	14	79	9	16	4	23,655	106	350
Costa Rica	2,640,912	10,722	246	10,067	7	9,433	597	889	193	2,022,547	12,513	30,534
Côte d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast)	9,273,167	2,584	3,589	2,478	12	2,207	187	491	75	857,057	4,923	11,284
Curaçao	171,590	1,420	121	1,363	8	1,265	125	173	13	327,339	2,088	4,138
Cyprus	620,000	1,140	544	1,126	3	1,096	55	122	15	216,726	554	2,427

Denmark	5,124,772	15,626	328	15,087	2	14,796	531	1,225	238	2,383,994	5,444	24,935
Dominica	81,000	247	328	230	4	222	6	35	7	64,170	264	1,018
Dominican Rep.	5,647,977	10,403	543	9,929	7	9,307	884	1,471	151	2,533,549	17,937	39,108
Ecuador	9,922,514	11,654	851	11,195	12	10,013	1,011	1,687	160	3,039,508	20,549	58,043
El Salvador	5,401,320	16,041	337	15,232	5	14,546	1,251	2,087	295	3,900,960	22,316	58,933
Equatorial Guinea	312,120	159	1,963	144	1	143	26	34	4	50,531	328	466
Faeroe Islands	46,312	97	477	87	2	85	1	23	4	27,974	58	153
Falkland Islands	2,000	6	333	5	25	4			1	446	3	11
Fiji	730,827	1,335	547	1,254	14	1,098	94	269	29	418,123	1,663	4,397
Finland	4,926,197	16,691	295	16,012	3	15,533	562	1,932	267	3,090,616	8,294	26,875
France	55,500,000	96,954	572	94,180	5	89,785	6,571	8,759	1,296	19,910,975	59,138	198,797
French Guiana	84,177	511	165	463	16	400	34	67	5	137,194	979	1,675
Gabon	1,150,000	584	1,969	553	11	499	46	53	13	130,435	1,214	2,163
Gambia	750,000	26	28,846	23	28	18	1	8	1	14,100	61	99
Germany, F. R.; W. Berlin	61,140,500	121,273	504	118,318	2	116,152	4,770	8,284	1,624	20,791,334	54,727	211,306
Ghana	13,182,575	32,614	404	30,430	6	28,635	2,281	4,726	548	7,977,112	52,673	133,754
Gibraltar	29,166	133	219	127	2	124	5	9	1	19,501	47	202
Greece	9,740,417	23,380	417	23,161	2	22,815	849	2,365	323	4,417,769	9,339	41,894
Greenland	53,733	96	560	91	7	85	2	18	7	26,324	78	194
Grenada	112,000	358	313	345	1	340	10	55	7	82,229	412	1,216
Guadeloupe	328,000	5,143	64	4,914	12	4,397	515	312	53	947,062	7,094	14,703
Guam	118,338	270	438	257	6	243	28	53	2	79,722	445	1,143
Guatemala	8,000,000	9,598	834	9,200	10	8,401	812	1,037	153	2,098,482	11,383	36,907
Guinea	5,143,284	206	24,967	152	1	151	22	25	11	47,630	189	745
Guinea-Bissau	900,000	6	150,000	5	150	2		3	1	3,755	19	35
Guyana	842,000	1,353	622	1,317	-2*	1,346	68	231	30	325,419	1,584	5,181
Haiti	6,000,000	4,894	1,226	4,598	9	4,220	417	534	83	1,152,752	8,453	29,598
Hawaii	1,062,300	5,567	191	5,453	2	5,353	225	846	71	1,296,927	4,471	14,897
Honduras	4,516,661	4,830	935	4,550	9	4,161	341	688	82	1,274,670	7,957	23,160
Hong Kong	5,300,000	1,571	3,374	1,515	11	1,360	157	402	19	603,304	2,523	3,583
Iceland	244,009	202	1,208	188	9	173	16	24	4	40,632	150	448
India	830,000,000	8,077	102,761	7,721	7	7,184	718	873	284	1,628,819	5,041	21,310
Ireland	5,103,995	2,690	1,897	2,591	5	2,472	126	544	81	843,717	1,548	5,494
Israel	5,743,600	343	16,745	333	5	316	18	36	6	73,727	261	719
Italy	57,202,345	149,870	382	145,610	8	134,677	11,867	24,735	2,281	40,899,475	104,543	340,909
Jamaica	2,300,000	8,142	282	7,852	3	7,620	442	839	171	1,507,432	8,372	27,397
Japan	121,371,798	120,722	1,005	117,308	8	108,702	9,211	49,503	1,934	57,151,828	159,499	277,553
Kenya	21,800,000	4,373	4,985	4,081	11	3,686	466	1,021	105	1,580,774	6,876	15,683
Kiribati	63,843	16	3,990	15	25	12	1	5	1	8,681	24	146
Korea, Republic of	42,082,000	48,438	869	46,211	11	41,751	5,125	17,743	789	19,922,627	55,086	102,662
Kosrae	6,005	25	240	23	-4*	24		3	1	4,679	42	214
Lebanon	2,619,000	2,448	1,070	2,361	6	2,230	164	258	51	539,896	1,942	5,302
Lesotho	1,577,000	1,044	1,511	902	14	791	67	177	42	270,020	1,096	4,204
Liberia	2,200,000	1,576	1,396	1,446	10	1,318	118	312	33	504,257	2,855	8,254
Libya	3,637,488	10	363,749	5		5				489	6	34
Liechtenstein	27,399	49	559	45	5	43		6	1	9,315	33	88
Luxembourg	433,500	1,308	331	1,288	3	1,246	45	102	20	240,473	860	2,887
Macao	400,000	25	16,000	22	16	19		5	1	8,985	32	58

Country or Territory	Population	1987 Peak Pubs.	Ratio, One Pub- lisher to:	1987 Av. Pubs.	% Inc. Over 1986	1986 Av. Pubs.	1987 No. Bptzd.	Av. Pio. Pubs.	No. of Cong.	Total Hours	Av. Bible Studies	Memorial Atten- dance
Madagascar	10,264,704	2,598	3,951	2,424	13	2,146	241	305	37	626,611	5,535	13,382
Madeira	270,000	547	494	517	7	483	37	39	11	95,350	520	1,433
Malaysia	16,347,000	859	19,030	835	6	790	48	140	20	253,400	1,467	2,397
Mali	7,800,000	63	123,810	58	16	50	8	31	1	50,915	238	299
Malta	383,000	319	1,201	302	2	297	22	29	4	60,210	215	600
Marquesas Islands	6,548	3	2,183	2	New			1	1	2,613	7	10
Marshall Islands	33,113	174	190	145	-3*	150	2	37	2	46,865	375	1,192
Martinique	333,275	2,294	145	2,208	10	2,005	246	278	24	534,841	2,799	6,206
Mauritania	2,000,000	2	1,000,000	2	New			1		346	4	11
Mauritius	1,003,000	798	1,257	765	1	759	65	78	9	157,820	784	1,929
Mayotte	68,000	19	3,579	18		18		4	1	8,432	41	65
Mexico	81,163,256	222,168	365	210,536	13	186,291	31,703	32,150	6,482	54,778,546	349,527	957,081
Montserrat	13,076	35	374	32		32		3	1	5,466	20	114
Morocco	24,300,000	78	311,538	65	-8*	71	5	7	3	14,918	49	194
Nauru	6,000	8	750	5	-17*	6				296	4	57
Nepal	16,480,000	49	336,327	46	18	39		6	1	10,400	38	155
Netherlands	14,615,125	29,170	501	28,524	1	28,367	1,038	2,134	313	4,560,000	9,536	50,846
Nevis	15,482	38	407	35	-3*	36	1	7	1	12,289	54	121
New Caledonia	155,000	917	169	868	10	789	97	83	9	196,180	1,012	2,717
New Zealand	3,319,600	10,369	320	9,621	5	9,165	587	1,216	140	2,045,059	6,003	20,800
Niger	6,491,000	96	67,615	83	17	71	4	17	5	30,338	152	365
Nigeria	102,900,000	133,899	768	126,450	4	121,670	5,647	13,310	2,464	27,057,216	148,345	429,251
Niue	2,500	18	139	15		15	2	3	1	2,974	27	66
Norway	4,184,491	8,482	493	8,207	4	7,929	423	529	175	1,174,982	3,184	15,604
Pakistan	98,000,000	248	395,161	236	2	231	13	43	6	69,767	379	849
Panama	2,274,448	5,034	452	4,755	6	4,480	258	625	100	1,150,180	7,666	18,888
Papua New Guinea	3,006,799	1,934	1,555	1,832	6	1,732	133	210	89	420,216	2,288	10,235
Paraguay	3,457,362	2,470	1,400	2,379	6	2,251	109	404	36	631,682	3,020	6,040
Peru	20,400,000	26,387	773	24,121	12	21,471	2,571	5,204	486	7,967,813	38,863	104,684
Philippines	57,000,000	101,735	560	94,095	7	88,174	8,084	19,906	2,658	25,468,632	74,646	294,712
Ponape	28,000	63	444	58	-6*	62	2	15	1	19,756	130	553
Portugal	9,731,300	32,010	304	31,189	5	29,617	2,115	2,361	438	5,298,900	22,861	82,607
Puerto Rico	3,400,000	22,468	151	22,043	4	21,231	1,236	2,254	275	4,501,105	19,205	54,221
Réunion	560,000	1,311	427	1,246	14	1,093	86	154	14	311,171	1,327	3,481
Rodrigues	36,618	28	1,308	24	4	23		5	1	9,098	47	70
Rota	1,500	11	136	9	29	7	1	4	1	6,076	20	41
Saba	972	4	243	4		4		3		3,437	25	17
St. Eustatius	1,335	6	223	5	-17*	6		1		1,025	9	45
St. Helena	6,000	111	54	107	10	97	7	5	2	14,922	65	300
St. Kitts	36,538	162	226	145	2	142	3	19	2	35,596	189	432
St. Lucia	130,000	340	382	312	3	302	12	49	5	77,389	397	1,257
St. Maarten	15,926	109	146	99	24	80	7	11	2	20,446	103	417
St. Pierre & Miquelon	6,000	12	500	10	11	9		2	1	2,391	5	20
St. Vincent	120,000	178	674	156	3	152	8	26	4	45,099	177	533

Saipan	20,350	58	351	45	41	32	5	15	1	21,589	117	188
San Marino	21,240	100	212	96	12	86	1	9	2	22,167	50	209
São Tomé	100,000	30	3,333	23	77	13	5		1	3,797	69	108
Senegal	6,800,000	507	13,412	481	7	451	46	126	14	213,108	995	1,447
Seychelles	66,000	73	904	65	14	57	6	6	1	15,111	89	220
Sierra Leone	3,517,530	708	4,968	639	1	635	22	133	30	214,028	1,005	3,184
Solomon Islands	276,262	728	379	681	5	649	23	71	30	139,524	653	3,565
South Africa	34,089,207	42,509	802	40,456	6	38,291	2,511	5,196	993	9,535,298	41,003	124,234
South-West Africa	1,184,000	460	2,574	416	13	368	38	49	12	99,190	503	1,318
Spain	38,832,262	69,539	558	67,427	6	63,453	5,279	9,270	980	16,477,856	48,263	154,768
Sri Lanka	16,200,000	1,086	14,917	1,040	13	924	105	191	31	323,386	1,354	3,754
Suriname	350,000	1,261	278	1,216	4	1,167	132	169	18	309,806	1,489	4,225
Swaziland	669,734	1,003	668	926	8	860	58	234	44	355,418	1,333	3,419
Sweden	8,399,095	21,046	399	20,787	2	20,350	821	2,489	326	3,985,305	10,510	36,855
Switzerland	6,572,900	14,229	462	13,917	4	13,373	783	946	263	2,524,881	8,805	26,970
Tahiti	178,281	794	225	768	12	683	76	84	11	184,396	1,066	2,216
Taiwan	20,000,000	1,336	14,970	1,266	13	1,121	108	330	21	454,626	1,695	3,794
Tanzania	23,700,000	2,800	8,464	2,646	9	2,425	281	491	84	816,025	2,657	8,529
Thailand	52,969,204	946	55,993	913	3	883	38	171	32	271,895	995	2,302
Togo	3,025,420	3,366	899	3,023	7	2,822	32	268	64	649,948	5,949	12,841
Tokelau Islands	1,692	6	282	4		4			1	431	3	43
Tonga	94,535	61	1,550	52	33	39	7	13	2	20,858	82	216
Trinidad	1,197,332	4,893	245	4,682	8	4,335	360	833	54	1,213,966	6,720	16,292
Truk	50,229	42	1,196	38	6	36	2	12	2	19,093	151	609
Tunisia	7,300,000	52	140,385	44	-2*	45	3	3	1	6,483	30	89
Turkey	50,000,000	851	58,754	823	4	795	30	65	10	163,683	549	1,522
Turks & Caicos Isls.	8,000	40	200	38	15	33	3	9	1	15,784	95	149
Tuvalu	9,000	24	375	19	-17*	23	4	4	1	5,219	29	208
Uganda	16,000,000	401	39,900	369	19	310	53	96	11	146,654	886	2,036
U.S. of America	240,940,000	773,219	312	734,378	3	710,344	39,189	94,856	8,547	155,191,882	509,502	1,778,066
Uruguay	2,921,000	6,212	470	5,956	6	5,596	534	809	94	1,390,285	8,415	18,220
Vanuatu	140,000	88	1,591	83	-1*	84	12	14	2	26,122	199	665
Venezuela	19,055,000	38,490	495	36,035	14	31,691	4,050	6,243	375	10,543,490	61,380	148,843
Virgin Isls. (Brit.)	12,000	102	118	94	4	90	20	8	3	20,452	140	321
Virgin Isls. (U.S.)	96,000	506	190	467	1	464	11	48	8	94,005	499	1,765
Wallis & Futuna Isls.	14,000	2	7,000	2		2				181		8
Western Samoa	158,940	178	893	152	3	148	16	28	3	47,017	148	636
Yap	9,320	30	311	28	4	27		8	1	10,828	53	155
Zaire	34,500,000	38,109	905	33,430	-6*	35,680	2,716	5,614	1,063	8,433,065	47,196	82,069
Zambia	7,257,000	67,144	108	63,281	10	57,624	4,933	6,493	1,715	12,426,151	79,384	381,129
Zimbabwe	8,488,791	15,448	550	14,726	1	14,557	1,119	1,506	521	3,071,855	13,973	51,925
173 Countries		3,116,916		2,970,455	5.8	2,807,004	215,166	423,383	50,024	701,836,058	2,807,388	8,442,050
# 37 Other Countries		278,696		267,296	4.3	256,285	15,677	12,796	4,887	37,183,228	197,660	523,171
GRAND TOTAL (210 countries)		3,395,612		3,237,751	5.7	3,063,289	230,843	436,179	54,911	739,019,286	3,005,048	8,965,221

During the 1987 service year the Watch Tower Society spent \$26,864,296.11 in caring for special pioneers, missionaries, and traveling overseers in their field service assignments.

MEMORIAL PARTAKERS WORLDWIDE: 8,808

* Percentage of decrease

Work banned and reports are incomplete

72:7-9) Their gathering was foretold in a number of other prophecies. Isaiah, for example, foretold that in "the final part of the days" the nations would stream to Jehovah's house. (Isaiah 2:2, 3) Haggai prophesied a shaking of the nations during which "the desirable things of all the nations must come in." (Haggai 2:7) Zechariah spoke of "ten men out of all the languages of the nations" who would join themselves to God's people. (Zechariah 8:23) Moreover, Jesus himself prophesied about this "great crowd." He said: "When the Son of man arrives in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit down on his glorious throne. And all the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another, just as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And he will put the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on his left."—Matthew 25:31-33.

¹⁰ Yes, all mankind is being scrutinized to see who are "sheep" and who are "goats." How is this examining work accomplished? In John's vision, "the harvest of the earth" is reaped in conjunction with powerful messages proclaimed by angels. One angel declares a message of "everlasting good news." Another announces the fall of "Babylon the Great." And a third warns against worship of "the wild beast," Satan's political system of things. (Revelation 14:6-10) True, nobody has heard the actual voices of these angels. But they have heard corresponding messages being uttered by faithful humans. (Matthew 24:14; Isaiah 48:20; Zechariah 2:7; James 1:27; 1 John 2:15-17) So, clearly, the messages are broadcast by human mouthpieces under angelic direction. A person is identified as a 'sheep' or as a 'goat' by the way he responds to the angelic messages.

10. (a) By what means is "the harvest of the earth" being reaped? (b) Who only are cooperating with the angels in this work?

During this 20th century, only Jehovah's Witnesses have cooperated with the angels in this vital work.

¹¹ The spreading of these messages is a more pressing task than anything else being done today. No political breakthrough or scientific discovery comes close in importance. These messages point the way to the solution of all mankind's problems and tell of the eternal salvation of faithful humans. And, most important, they have to do with the sanctification of Jehovah's name.

The Annual Report

¹² That is why Jehovah's Witnesses look forward each year to reading the annual report of the activity of Jehovah's organization. They thrill to see continued evidence of his blessing on their work. If you examine the 1987 report, reproduced on pages 12 to 15 of this magazine, you will see that the angels and their human coworkers were extremely active last year.

¹³ The good news was heard in 210 lands—certainly 'every tribe and national group and tongue' accessible at present. (Mark 13:10) Moreover, as a peak, 3,395,612 worked together to accomplish that—more than ever before in Christian history. The figures are impressive even in some individual lands. In the United States, a new peak of 773,219 was reached. Two other countries, Brazil and Mexico, saw peaks of 216,216 and 222,168 respectively; and six more, Britain, Germany, Italy, Japan, Nigeria, and the Philippines, reported peaks in excess of 100,000. On the other hand, there are lands with large populations and just a few thousand publishers or less. The work of

11. How important is the spreading abroad of these angelic messages?

12, 13. Give some details from the annual report that indicate that a large "harvest" has already been gathered.

these faithful souls is also immensely important as they strive to keep the light of truth shining under difficult circumstances.—Matthew 5:14-16.

¹⁴ Of course, God's people are not interested in increase just for its own sake. They know, however, that all those new ones pouring into Jehovah's organization are "desirable things" in Jehovah's eyes. Many were "sighing and groaning over all the detestable things" they witnessed in Christendom. (Ezekiel 9:4) They all stream to "the mountain of Jehovah" because they want to be instructed in God's ways. (Isaiah 2:2, 3) What a powerful evidence of Jehovah's blessing—that in this corrupt and materialistic system of things, hundreds of thousands of new ones each year manifest themselves as Jehovah's "desirable things"!

Urgent Times

¹⁵ The preaching work of Jehovah's Witnesses is urgent. Why? For one thing, the territory is huge. The "good news" must be announced "to every nation and tribe and tongue and people." (Revelation 14:6) In Jesus' parable, people of "all the nations" are being divided into "sheep" and "goats." There is much work to be done. How fitting, then, that the "great crowd" seen by John is praising God "*day and night* in his temple." (Revelation 7:15) In fulfillment of this vision, this "great crowd," working in cooperation with their anointed brothers, reported spending a total of 739,019,286 hours in the preaching work last year—a figure almost too large to comprehend. Worldwide, this represented an average of more than 18 hours

14. What kind of people are being gathered into Jehovah's organization?

15. (a) How large is the territory to be covered by the preaching work? (b) According to John's vision, how active is the "great crowd"?

a month per publisher. Compare this with the average of 12 hours a month just ten years ago, and you can see that the pace of the preaching work is increasing. How does your personal average compare with the world average?

¹⁶ Notice, too, the new peak of auxiliary and regular pioneers: 650,095. This means that there were more pioneers in the field last year than there were publishers in 1955. Were you one of those pioneers? If so, you found an excellent way to apply personally Paul's counsel: "Preach the word, be at it urgently." (2 Timothy 4:2) Why not plan to share in the pioneer service for at least one month during the 1988 service year?

Prospects for More Growth

¹⁷ The prospect for future growth is truly excellent. The figure for home Bible studies was 3,005,048—and each Bible student is a potential 'desirable thing'! Moreover, 8,965,221 attended the celebration of the Lord's Evening Meal last April. The majority of those who attended were not Jehovah's Witnesses. Some were newly interested ones. They were most welcome and are encouraged to continue to make fine progress. Others may have attended such occasions several times before. They evidently enjoy being with the Witnesses but have not as yet felt the need to do more than that.

¹⁸ Such are to be commended for their interest in Bible truth. But remember, in Jesus' parable the "sheep" who depart into everlasting life are those who show

16. (a) What is a fine way to "preach the word . . . urgently"? (b) How many shared in this work last year?

17. What figures show that the prospect for future increase is good?

18. According to the prophecies of Jesus and of Zechariah, what does a person have to do to be counted as one of Jehovah's "sheep"?

helpfulness toward Jesus' anointed brothers and cooperate with them. (Matthew 25:34-40, 46) In the prophecy of Zechariah, the complete number of "ten men" declare without reservation: "We will go with you people, for we have heard that God is with you people." (Zechariah 8:23) They do not merely have a friendly attitude. They "take hold" of God's people and go with them, dedicating themselves to serve the God of these ones. In our day, this includes becoming fully involved in Jehovah's organization.

Not Much Longer

¹⁹ The harvest work is urgent for a second reason. Soon it will be completed. (Matthew 24:32-34) What happens then? Read what happens next in John's vision: "And still another angel emerged from the temple sanctuary that is in heaven, he, too, having a sharp sickle. And still another angel emerged from the altar and he had authority over the fire. And he called out with a loud voice to the one that had the sharp sickle, saying: 'Put your sharp sickle in and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, because its grapes have become ripe.' And the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and he hurled it into the great winepress of the anger of God." —Revelation 14:17-19.

²⁰ After the harvest of "desirable things" is gathered, there will be no more reason for this corrupt old world to continue in existence. "The vine of the earth," this whole satanic world system of things, will be cut down and destroyed. At that time, even opposers will be forced to recognize Jehovah's appointed King. John

19, 20. (a) According to John's vision, what will happen when the gathering of "the harvest of the earth" is completed? (b) What will this mean for all of those who do not submit themselves to Jesus as King?

wrote: "Look! He [Jesus] is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, and those who pierced him; and all the tribes of the earth will beat themselves in grief because of him." (Revelation 1:7; Matthew 24:30) Then, Jesus' words to the Jewish religious leaders, who were foremost among "those who pierced him," will be fulfilled. (Matthew 26:64) Of course, those religious hypocrites will not be resurrected to "see" Jesus personally. (Matthew 23:33) But all today who show that spirit and refuse to accept Jehovah's appointed King will be forced to recognize him when he comes to destroy the nations at Armageddon.—Revelation 19:11-16, 19-21.

²¹ Indeed, the survival of individual humans is at stake. We have a heavy responsibility in being coworkers with the angels. But what a great privilege! May we continue to work hard in cooperation with the heavenly angels as we strive to locate all sheeplike ones, Jehovah's "desirable things," before the harvest work is concluded.

21. Why should God's people work hard in cooperation with the heavenly angels?

Can You Explain?

- ☐ What is the major event thus far in this 20th century?
- ☐ What is "the harvest of the earth," and how is it being gathered?
- ☐ What are some characteristics of Jehovah's "sheep"?
- ☐ How does the annual report show Jehovah's blessing on the harvesting work?
- ☐ Why is the preaching work urgent?

Kingdom Proclaimers Report

Witness Schoolchildren Commended

ARE you, as a student in school, timid about speaking out in behalf of your faith? The experiences below reveal that these young Witnesses were not afraid to uphold their Christian faith and were commended for doing so.

□ At a school in Australia, the students were assigned to write an essay on Christmas, but the teacher said to an 11-year-old Witness: "I know you are one of Jehovah's Witnesses, so you cannot write about Christmas celebrations. You can write a different essay on the 'History of Christmas.'" The young sister compiled the essay, using appropriate information from the Society's publications and other reference books. To the astonishment of the class, the teacher commented that the information was excellent and historically accurate. "Out of all

the essays I have received, yours is the best in the class," stated the teacher. As a result, the young Witness placed one *School* brochure, 15 magazines, one *Youth* book, and two *Live Forever* books with her teacher and fellow students.

□ In another school in Australia, eight Witness children were supervised by a substitute teacher each afternoon for the final three weeks of school, since they did not participate in Christmas activities. She later commented to the mother of some of the children: "The part I played was only small. Quite a few of the teachers have come in and asked how things are going. I've said to them: 'It doesn't matter what you think of their religion and the way they withdraw from certain activities, this is the best bunch of children I've ever worked with.'" A

few weeks later when contacted in the house-to-house ministry, she said: "By the way, did you pass on what I said about the children at school? I want everybody to know."

□ From the United States comes this experience of one 17-year-old senior in high school whose law class was deeply involved in a discussion over the rights connected with freedom of religion and the separation of Church and State. Two of the cases involved Jehovah's Witnesses and the blood issue. The young sister found the report under discussion one-sided and unfair as regards the Bible truths on blood and told her teacher that. He responded by giving her the opportunity to speak to the class. Before her talk, the students thought that the courts had made the right decision in forcing Witnesses to have blood transfusions against their wishes. But after hearing the Bible-based argument, the class voted unanimously against the court's decisions. Our sister was pleased when many of the students approached her and asked for more information regarding the beliefs of Jehovah's Witnesses. She now says she more fully appreciates that school is her special territory.

Yes, you schoolchildren have a unique territory. As you have opportunity, continue kindly to help your fellow students learn of the magnificent purpose of God, and you will get commendation not only from others but from Jehovah himself!—Job 40:14.



“The Good News Has to Be Preached First”

“Also, in all the nations the good news has to be preached first.”

—MARK 13:10.

OF ALL those who claim to be Christian, only Jehovah’s Witnesses take the preaching of the good news seriously. They form the only group in which every member feels a personal obligation to approach his neighbor on a regular basis in order to talk to him about God’s purposes. Why is this? Because each Witness feels that, as a Christian, he must be a footstep follower of Christ. (1 Peter 2:21) What does this imply?

² In the minds of many, Jesus Christ was merely a man who did good deeds. He healed the sick, fed the hungry, and showed love and kindness to those in need. But Jesus did much more. He was first of all a zealous preacher of the good news of God’s Kingdom. A few months after his baptism in the river Jordan, Jesus began publicly preaching: “Repent, you people, for the kingdom of the heavens has drawn near.”

1. What is one thing that makes Jehovah’s Witnesses different from all the religions of Christendom, and why?

2. How do many people view Jesus Christ, but what was his primary activity on earth?

(Matthew 4:17) Mark’s account states: “Jesus went into Galilee, preaching the good news of God and saying: ‘The appointed time has been fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has drawn near. Be repentant, you people, and have faith in the good news.’” —Mark 1:14, 15.

³ Jesus called Peter, Andrew, James, and John to follow him, and we read: “Then he went around throughout the whole of Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the good news of the kingdom and curing every sort of disease and every sort of infirmity among the people.” When the crowds in Galilee tried to detain him, he said: “Also to other cities I must declare the good news of the kingdom of God, *because for this I was sent forth*.” Then he went preaching in the synagogues of Judea. —Matthew 4:18-23; Luke 4:43, 44.

⁴ Returning again to Galilee, Jesus “went journeying from city to city and from village to village, preaching and declaring the good news of the kingdom of God.” (Luke 8:1) He likened his preaching work to harvesting and said: “The harvest is great, but the workers are few. Therefore, beg the Master of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest.” (Matthew 9:35-38) Even when crowds gave him no rest, “he received them kindly and began to speak to them about the kingdom of God, and he healed those needing a cure.” —Luke 9:11.

⁵ True, Jesus healed the sick and on occasion fed the hungry. But more than all else, he was busy telling people about the Kingdom of God. And he wanted his followers to do the same. Having trained his apostles, he sent them out two by two to preach,

3, 4. (a) Although Jesus cured every sort of disease, what did he emphasize in his ministry? (b) Why was Jesus sent forth? (c) To what did Jesus liken his preaching work, and what did he tell his disciples to do?

5. When Jesus sent out his apostles and other disciples in the ministry, what instructions did he give them?

saying: "As you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of the heavens has drawn near.'" (Matthew 10:7) Luke states: "He sent them forth to preach the kingdom of God and to heal." (Luke 9:2) To the 70 disciples, Jesus also gave the command to 'cure the sick ones and go on telling them that the kingdom of God has come near.'—Luke 10:9.

⁶ Before ascending to heaven, Jesus commissioned his followers to continue the preaching work and even to expand it. He commanded them: "Go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations . . . teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you." (Matthew 28:19, 20) Further, he said: "You will receive power when the holy spirit arrives upon you, and you will be witnesses of me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the most distant part of the earth." (Acts 1:8) Thus, both Jesus and his apostles gave first attention to the preaching of the good news of God's Kingdom.

The Kingdom to Be Preached in Our Time

⁷ In his prophecy about events to take place at "the conclusion of the system of things," Jesus said: "And this good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come." (Matthew 24:3, 14) Or, as stated at Mark 13:10: "Also, in all the nations the good news has to be preached first."—See also Revelation 14:6, 7.

⁸ In "the last days," the good news of the Kingdom involves more than it did when Jesus was on earth. Jesus preached that the

6. Before ascending to heaven, what instructions pertaining to their ministry did Jesus give to his followers?

7. What did Jesus say about a preaching work to be done at "the conclusion of the system of things"?

8. (a) What did the good news include in the apostles' time? (b) What does the message of the good news include today?

Kingdom had drawn near, drawing attention to the fact that he was among the people as the Messiah and King. (2 Timothy 3:1; Matthew 4:17; Luke 17:21) The good news preached by the early Christians included the matter of Jesus' resurrection and ascension to heaven, and it encouraged meek ones to put faith in the coming Kingdom. (Acts 2:22-24, 32; 3:19-21; 17:2, 3; 26:23; 28:23, 31) Now that we have reached "the conclusion of the system of things," the preaching of the good news of the Kingdom includes the striking message that the Kingdom is established in the heavens.—Revelation 11:15-18; 12:10.

Who Will Preach the Good News?

⁹ Who, today, should share in the preaching work? Evidently, Christendom feels it is not an obligation for everyone, and it is true that when Jesus said that the good news would be preached, he did not specify who would do the work. Whom else, though, would Jehovah use for such a work but those who have put faith in his Word and begun to apply it in their lives? When Jehovah determined in the days of Noah to warn the wicked world of mankind of a

9. (a) How may some argue that preaching the good news is not obligatory for all Christians today? (b) Whom did Jehovah use in the past to preach his word, and what does this mean for us today?

In Our Next Issue

- **Do They Really
Speak With the Dead?**
- **Jehovah—Our Strength**
- **Were You Once Associated
With Jehovah's
Organization?**

coming destruction, he used a man who "walked with the true God." (Genesis 6:9, 13, 14; 2 Peter 2:5) When he wanted prophetic messages delivered to Israel, he sent 'his servants, the prophets.' (Jeremiah 7:25; Amos 3:7, 8) The dedicated nation of Israel was a nation of his witnesses. (Exodus 19:5, 6; Isaiah 43:10-12) Yes, Jehovah uses his dedicated servants as his witnesses.

¹⁰ Some have said that the command to make disciples, given at Matthew 28:19, 20, was given only to the apostles and therefore does not apply to Christians in general. But notice what Jesus said: "Go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations . . . teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you." Jesus' followers were to teach new disciples to observe all the things Jesus commanded. And one of the things he commanded was to 'go and make disciples.' Surely, all new disciples would have to be taught to observe this particular command too.

¹¹ The Christian congregation of the first century was called 'God's people for special possession that they should declare abroad the excellencies of the one who called them out of darkness into his wonderful light.' (1 Peter 2:9) Its members zealously bore witness to the Kingdom of God. (Acts 8: 4, 12) All the "holy ones," anointed Christians, in Rome were told that "with the mouth one makes public declaration for salvation" and that "everyone who calls on the name of Jehovah will be saved." (Romans 1:7; 10:9, 10, 13) This public declaration for salvation, made at the time of one's baptism, also includes the public preaching of the good news of Jehovah's Kingdom.

10. How can it be seen from the wording of Matthew 28:19, 20 that the command to make disciples applies to all Christians?

11. (a) What obligation rested upon the Christian congregation in the first century? (b) What is necessary for one to get saved, and what does this include?

¹² The apostle Paul wrote to the Hebrew Christians: "Let us hold fast the public declaration of our hope without wavering, for he is faithful that promised." (Hebrews 10:23) This public declaration is not limited to meetings of the congregation. (Psalm 40: 9, 10) At Psalm 96:2, 3, 10 we clearly see a prophetic command to preach outside the congregation, to the nations, in these words: "From day to day tell the good news of salvation by him. Declare among the nations his glory, among all the peoples his wonderful works. Say among the nations: 'Jehovah himself has become king.'" Indeed, at Matthew 28:19, 20 and Acts 1:8, Jesus commanded Christians to preach to the nations.

¹³ This public preaching is referred to in Paul's further words to the anointed Hebrew Christians: "Through him let us always offer to God a sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of lips which make *public* declaration to his name." (Hebrews 13:15) In the book of Revelation, the "great crowd," gathered out of all nations, is also seen crying out with a loud voice: "Salvation we owe to our God, who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb." (Revelation 7:9, 10) Thus, in this time of the conclusion of the system of things, the preaching of the good news is done by Jehovah's dedicated Witnesses, the remnant of Christ's spiritual brothers and their sheeplike companions who make up the "great crowd." But how should they actually do this work?

"Publicly and From House to House"

¹⁴ Jesus preached directly to the peo-

12, 13. (a) What does "the public declaration of our hope" mentioned at Hebrews 10:23 include? (b) How does Psalm 96 show the need for a public declaration outside the congregation, and how does Revelation 7:9, 10 support this?

14. Where did Jesus do his preaching, and what principle can we learn from this?

ple. We read, for example, that he preached in the synagogues. Why? Because people assembled there on the Sabbath and listened to a reading and discussion of the Scriptures. (Matthew 4:23; Luke 4:15-21) Jesus also preached to people along the wayside, beside the sea, on a mountain slope, at a well outside a city, and in homes. Wherever there were people, Jesus preached to them.—Matthew 5:1, 2; Mark 1:29-34; 2:1-4, 13; 3:19; 4:1, 2; Luke 5:1-3; 9:57-60; John 4:4-26.

¹⁵ When Jesus sent out his disciples to preach, he also sent them directly to the people. This is seen in his instructions recorded at Matthew 10:1-15, 40-42. In verse 11 he stated: "Into whatever city or village you enter, search out who in it is deserving, and stay there until you leave." *The Jerusalem Bible* renders this verse: "Ask for someone trustworthy," as if the disciples were to ask some prominent or knowledgeable person in the village to find out who had a good reputation and was thus deserving of the message. (See also *Weymouth* and the *King James Version*.) And this is the explanation that some Bible commentators give of verse 11.

¹⁶ It should be kept in mind, however, that for the most part, the theologians of Christendom do not go from house to house, and many Bible commentators tend to interpret the Scriptures in the

15. (a) What instructions did Jesus give his disciples when he sent them out to preach? (b) How have some Bible commentators explained this?

16. What more objective consideration of Jesus' words at Matthew 10:11 indicates how the apostles were to search out worthy ones?



context of their own experience. A more objective consideration of Jesus' instruction indicates that he was speaking about his disciples' searching out people individually, either from house to house or publicly, and presenting to them the message of the Kingdom. (Matthew 10:7) Their response would indicate whether they were deserving or not.—Matthew 10:12-15.

¹⁷ This is seen in Jesus' words at Matthew 10:14: "Wherever anyone does not take you in or listen to your words, on going out of that house or that city shake the dust off your feet." Jesus was speaking about his disciples' making uninvited calls on people to preach to them. True, they would also accept lodging

17. What proves that Jesus' disciples were not merely calling on worthy persons based on recommendation or appointment?

with one of the households that responded to the message. (Matthew 10:11) But the main thing was the preaching work. At Luke 9:6 it is stated: "Then starting out they went through the territory from village to village, declaring the good news and performing cures everywhere." (See also Luke 10:8, 9.) Deserving ones who received the disciples into their homes as prophets, perhaps giving them "a cup of cold water" or even accommodations, would not lose their reward. They would hear the Kingdom message. —Matthew 10:40-42.

¹⁸ After the Christian congregation was founded, we read concerning the apostles: "And every day in the temple and from house to house they continued without letup teaching and declaring the good news about the Christ, Jesus." (Acts 5:42; see *Reference Bible*, footnote.) The expression in the Greek translated "from house to house" is *kat' oi'kon*. Here *ka-ta'* is in the distributive sense. Hence, it might be said that the disciples' preaching was *distributed* from house to house. They were not making mere prearranged social calls. A similar use of *ka-ta'* is found at Luke 8:1 in the expression "from city to city and from village to village."

¹⁹ The same expression in the plural, *kat' oi'kous*, is used by the apostle Paul at Acts 20:20. There he stated: "I did not hold back from . . . teaching you publicly and from house to house." The expression "from house to house" is rendered "in your homes" in some translations. So some of Christendom's Bible commentators say that Paul is referring here to

18, 19. (a) According to Acts 5:42, how did the early Christians do their preaching work? (b) How do Paul's words at Acts 20:20, 21 show that he was speaking about a ministry to non-believers, not an internal shepherding work?

shepherding visits in the homes of believers. But Paul's next words show that he was speaking about a ministry to non-believers, for he states: "But I thoroughly bore witness both to Jews and to Greeks about repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus."—Acts 20:21.

²⁰ This method of reaching the people should therefore be used in our time when the "good news of the kingdom" must be "preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations." (Matthew 24:14) For more than 65 years, Jehovah's Witnesses have been zealously preaching the good news of God's established Kingdom publicly and from house to house—now in 210 lands. What a grand witness is being accomplished! And this despite the fact that most people today hear the message "without response," some even with annoyance. (Matthew 13:15) Why do Jehovah's Witnesses persist in preaching in locations where people refuse to listen or even oppose them? This question will be taken up in the following article.

20. (a) To what extent have Jehovah's Witnesses preached the good news of the Kingdom in our time? (b) How may some view the matter of keeping on with the preaching?

How Would You Answer?

- ☐ What do the Scriptures show characterized Jesus' ministry?
- ☐ What directions were given the apostles in their ministry?
- ☐ What work is to be done in our time, and why?
- ☐ Who would Jehovah use to preach the good news in our day?
- ☐ Where and how is the preaching work to be accomplished?

Keep On Preaching the Kingdom

"This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come."—MATTHEW 24:14.

PREACHING the good news of God's Kingdom is the most important work of this century. It is what the Almighty God wants to have done now, and it is being accomplished in fulfillment of his prophetic Word. Your response to it will affect your eternal destiny. —1 Corinthians 9:16, 23.

² It is thrilling to see that the number having a share in this preaching work continues to increase, with now more than three million taking part. Greater numbers than ever are entering the full-time ministry. And many more interested people are accepting a Bible study and putting forth an effort to learn to do God's will.

1, 2. (a) What is the most important work of this century, and to what extent is it being done? (b) What evidence is there of Jehovah's blessing on this work?



³ At times, however, some may "give up in doing what is fine" and "get tired" as far as the preaching work is concerned. (Galatians 6:9; Hebrews 12:3) They may say that the good news has already been preached extensively in their territory and that people have taken their stand and are now annoyed when we call at their homes. Those doing the preaching work there get very few results or none at all. So, they feel, perhaps the work is basically done, and there is no need to continue. What is wrong with this way of thinking?

Why Persist?

⁴ First, our enduring faithfully in the preaching work should not depend upon whether people listen to us or not. Jeremiah preached for 40 years in Jerusalem even though very few listened and many

3. What may some say about the need to continue with the preaching of the good news?
4. What should motivate us to keep on preaching even in territory where the response is poor?



violently opposed him. Why did he persist? Because he was doing a work that Jehovah had commanded and because his prophetic knowledge of what was going to happen to Jerusalem *forced* him to keep speaking. (Jeremiah 1:17-19) He said: "In my heart it proved to be like a burning fire shut up in my bones; and I got tired of holding in, and I was unable to endure it." (Jeremiah 20:7-10) Our situation is similar. It is Jehovah, through Jesus Christ, who commanded that the "good news" should be preached in all the inhabited earth. (Matthew 24:14) When people refuse to listen, this gives us an opportunity to show the depth of our love and devotion to Jehovah by persisting in doing what is right. (1 John 5:3) Besides, when we meditate on what the near future holds for mankind, how can we hold ourselves back from trying to warn our neighbors? —2 Timothy 4:2.

⁵ Moreover, Jeremiah's preaching was really a judgment work. In 607 B.C.E., none of those who suffered death or enslavement when Jerusalem fell could claim that they did not know why this was happening to them. For 40 years previously, Jeremiah had been warning them of exactly such an outcome if they continued being rebellious against Jehovah. (Compare

5. (a) For what other reason should we endure in the preaching work? (b) How is the preaching work a basis for judgment?

Ezekiel 2:5.) Similarly today, the preaching of the good news as "a witness to all the nations" is a basis for judgment. The apostle Paul makes this clear when he states that Christ Jesus will bring vengeance upon "those who do not know God and those who do not obey the good news about

our Lord Jesus." (2 Thessalonians 1:8, 9) People will be judged by their response to the good news. Hence, the preaching work must continue loud and clear right to the end. (Revelation 14:6, 7) Nothing should hinder this vital message from being brought to the people as frequently as possible. This places a great responsibility on all of Jehovah's dedicated servants.

⁶ True, we may already have preached the good news quite extensively in our area. But there are so many things happening in the world that even though many people have heard our message, they would soon forget it if we ceased preaching. Think of the revolutions, terrorist actions, strikes, scandals, and other events that are extensively publicized. Then there are the many forms of popular entertainment and other distractions. We must continue preaching to keep our message before the people despite all these other claims on their attention.

⁷ When many try to ignore us, we should remember what kind of people the prophet Isaiah had to preach to. Jehovah told him: "For it is a rebellious people, untruthful sons, sons who have been unwilling to hear the law of Jehovah; who

6. Though our message may be widely known, why do we need to keep on preaching?

7. How is the reaction of many today similar to that of the Israelites to Isaiah's prophesying, but why should this not deter us from preaching?

have said to the ones seeing, 'You must not see,' and to the ones having visions, 'You must not envision for us any straightforward things. Speak to us smooth things; envision deceptive things. Turn aside from the way; deviate from the path. Cause the Holy One of Israel to cease just on account of us.'” Nevertheless, Isaiah faithfully told the people: “Jehovah is a God of judgment. Happy are all those keeping in expectation of him.” (Isaiah 30: 9-11, 18) We should do the same. As long as we persist, our message will penetrate to some degree. Some will take heed and others will not. But all will have the opportunity to hear.

‘How Will They Hear?’

⁸ Perhaps we feel that people in a certain territory have taken a definite stand and are determined to reject our message or even to oppose it. But remember, the situation in people’s lives is constantly changing. They may face new problems or situations tomorrow, next week, or next month that will make them receptive to the truth. They may hear of disturbing events in the world or perhaps suffer economic reverses, illness, or death in the family. Such things may cause them to wake up and want to learn the reason for their distress. If we keep on preaching, they will know where to turn.

⁹ Our situation might be compared to that of rescue workers in a disaster area, such as after an earthquake. Some might be working in an area where fewer survivors were found, but the fact that their fellow workers were finding more survivors in another area would not cause them to slack off and quit. Rather, all rescue

workers tirelessly persevere even when they feel there may be no more survivors in their assigned section. And, then, sometimes they find yet another survivor. The search is called off only when the time that has passed reveals that there is no more hope. Well, our search has not yet been called off, and we are still finding thousands upon thousands who want to be rescued from this old world and survive “the great tribulation.” (Revelation 7: 9, 14) Even in areas that have been worked thoroughly and where most people do not respond, there are still *some* results. And there are additional reasons for continuing to preach.

¹⁰ People need to be continually reminded that “everyone who calls on the name of Jehovah will be saved.” However, as Paul continues in his letter to the Romans, “how will they call on him in whom they have not put faith? How, in turn, will they put faith in him of whom they have not heard? How, in turn, will they hear without someone to preach?” (Romans 10: 13, 14) These words should impress on each of us the need to persist in preaching the good news of God’s Kingdom.

¹¹ As the time of the end has continued, children have been born and have grown up to adulthood or to an age of responsibility. Often these young people have not paid any attention to the truth. Their parents may have rejected the message and even spoken against it. But now these youths are old enough to think seriously for themselves about world conditions, about the future, and about their purpose in life. They too need to call on Jehovah’s name if they will be saved. But “how . . . will they put faith in him of whom they

8. Though people may appear to have taken their stand against the truth, what factors might change their minds?

9. How may our preaching work be compared to that of rescue workers in a disaster area?

10. How only will people know where to turn if they want to seek the truth, according to Romans 10:13, 14?

11. What responsibility do we have toward young ones who are growing to adulthood?

PREACHING RESULTS OVER SEVEN YEARS

	Number Baptized	Memorial Attendance	Number Bible Studies
1981	119,836	5,987,893	1,475,177
1982	138,540	6,252,787	1,586,293
1983	161,896	6,767,707	1,797,112
1984	179,421	7,416,974	2,047,113
1985	189,800	7,792,109	2,379,146
1986	225,868	8,160,597	2,726,252
1987	230,843	8,965,221	3,005,048

have not heard?" (Romans 10:14) In many cases these teenagers and young adults are responsive to the truth, so we need to search them out and preach to them.

¹² The fact that the way is still open for preaching is an expression of Jehovah's mercy. The apostle Peter writes: "Jehovah is not slow respecting his promise, as some people consider slowness, but he is patient with you because he does not desire any to be destroyed but desires all to attain to repentance. Furthermore, consider the patience of our Lord as salvation." (2 Peter 3:9, 15) Jehovah's desire that all sorts of men be saved is expressed not only by his patiently allowing time before he executes judgment but also by his continually appealing to men to turn to him and get saved. (1 Timothy 2:4) As we continue to preach the good news, we highlight God's mercy, and in this way we praise him.

Avoiding Bloodguilt

¹³ The responsibility of Jehovah's dedicated Witnesses to warn people of God's

12. How does our continuing with the preaching work constitute an expression of Jehovah's mercy?

13, 14. (a) How can our preaching work be compared with the work of a watchman, as mentioned in Ezekiel's prophecy? (b) Why could Paul say that he was "clean from the blood of all men," and how only can Jehovah's Witnesses say this today?

coming judgment can be compared to that of Ezekiel in his time. He was designated a watchman to the house of Israel. His assignment was to warn the Israelites that execution was coming upon them if they did not turn away from their bad ways. If he as a watchman failed to sound the warning, execution would still come upon the wicked people, but their blood would be upon the head of the negligent watchman. In this Jehovah shows his attitude toward executing judgment: "I take delight, not in the death of the wicked one, but in that someone wicked turns back from his way and actually keeps living. Turn back, turn back from your bad ways, for why is it that you should die, O house of Israel?"—Ezekiel 33:1-11.

¹⁴ The apostle Paul acknowledged his responsibility as a watchman, stating to the elders from Ephesus: "Hence I call you to witness this very day that I am clean from the blood of all men." Why could he say that? He continues: "For I have not held back from telling you all the counsel of God." (Acts 20:26, 27) So it is with the watchman class today, the remnant of anointed followers of Jesus Christ. All of these, together with more than three million of their companions who have the hope of surviving the end of this system of things and receiving everlasting life on earth, must never slack off from preaching the good news of God's Kingdom and

warning of the coming execution of his judgment. In this way they avoid blood-guilt.

¹⁵ The preaching work today is prophetically described in Ezekiel chapter 9. Here, Jehovah's punishment was determined for the city of Jerusalem. Prior to the execution of that judgment, a man clothed with linen and with a secretary's inkhorn at his hips is told to go through the city and put a mark on the foreheads of all those who are sighing over the detestable things being done there. When this marking work is completed, all in the city except those marked for survival would be executed. At the successful completion of his marking work, the man reported: "I have done just as you have commanded me." (Ezekiel 9:11) He faithfully carried out his assignment to the finish.

¹⁶ The man clothed with linen pictures the anointed remnant of Christ's followers, and they are joined by the "great crowd" of "other sheep." The big issue today, as in Ezekiel's time, is the vindication of Jehovah's sovereignty. Concerning the end of this present wicked system of things at the war of the great day of God the Almighty, Jehovah says: "And the nations will have to know that I am Jehovah." (Revelation 7:9; John 10:16; Ezekiel 39:7) For the nations to know this, it is imperative that Jehovah's servants on earth continue preaching his name and purpose as a witness to all nations.

¹⁷ By keeping on preaching the good

15. According to Ezekiel chapter 9, who was marked, and who did the marking?

16. (a) Whom does the man clothed with linen picture today? (b) How does the issue of the vindication of Jehovah's sovereignty impel us to continue to preach?

17, 18. (a) How does our continuing to preach help us to keep on the watch? (b) What report do all of us want to make to Jehovah when he brings the preaching work to its conclusion, and how only can we do this?

news of the Kingdom, we maintain our own vigilance. We keep aware of the importance of Jehovah's name and purpose. If we slack off, our Kingdom hope could weaken, and we could be carried away by the "anxieties and riches and pleasures of this life . . . and bring nothing to perfection." (Luke 8:14) By zealously persevering in declaring "the good news," we faithfully follow the commands of our Master, Jesus Christ: "Keep looking, keep awake, for you do not know when the appointed time is. But what I say to you I say to all, Keep on the watch."—Mark 13:10, 33, 37.

¹⁸ Let all of us, then, persist in seeking out 'those who are sighing' as long as Jehovah allows the time for it. May all of us, whether of the anointed remnant or of the "other sheep," be faithful in carrying out our assignment to preach the good news of the Kingdom in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations. (Matthew 24:14) When Jehovah himself brings this work to its end by beginning "the great tribulation," may each of us be able to say to Jehovah, 'We have done just as you have commanded.'

Do You Remember?

- ☐ What do results indicate as to our preaching?
- ☐ What are other reasons why we should continue to preach?
- ☐ How is our preaching an expression of Jehovah's mercy?
- ☐ How can we keep clean from the blood of all men?
- ☐ How does our preaching help us to keep on the watch?

Ancient Coins

Testify to Prophetic Truth

THE coins that jingle in your pocket or purse may carry little message other than that you can afford to purchase some small item. But certain coins carry a much weightier message.

Shortly before his death, Jesus prophesied that a terrible destruction was coming upon Jerusalem, capital of the unfaithful nation of Israel. (Matthew 23:37–24:2) Jesus said: “When you see Jerusalem surrounded by encamped armies, then know that the desolating of her has drawn near. Then let those in Judea begin fleeing to the mountains . . . because these are days for meting out justice, that all the things written may be fulfilled.”—Luke 21:20–22.

At that time, the Jews were under the rigid control of mighty Rome. How, then, could Jesus’ prophecy come true? Well, the Jews revolted in 66 C.E. Cestius Gallus led powerful Roman forces against them and even surrounded Jerusalem, as Jesus had foretold. Then, for no apparent reason, the Romans hurriedly withdrew. The rebels rejoiced in a victory that seemed to spell freedom at last. They even struck coins, such as the one seen here. (Numbers 1, 2)

But Christ’s disciples were not deceived. Heeding his warning to ‘flee to the mountains,’ they abandoned their homes in Judea. They fled down to and across the Jordan River, then north to settle in Pella. But was that necessary, since a few years passed and the Jews in Jerusalem remained free? Though those Jews had their own coins, they would soon find no food to buy with them. Why?

Look at the coin illustrated by numbers 3 and 4. You see the head of Roman general Vespasian, who was appointed to take over from Cestius Gallus. According to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Vespasian was “to conduct the war in Judaea, which was threatening general commotion throughout the

East, owing to a widely spread notion in those parts that from Judaea were to come the future rulers of the world. Vespasian, who had a strong vein of superstition, was made to believe that he was himself to fulfil this expectation.” The historian Josephus vividly recounts the resulting battles. After Vespasian became emperor in 69 C.E., his son Titus carried on the war, even besieging Jerusalem. Starvation and terror plagued those trapped inside. When the city fell, its walls were torn down and its temple destroyed.

What was the human cost to those who had ignored Jesus’ warning? “For half-starved men they defended their stronghold with amazing tenacity, losing over a hundred thousand of their members in the process. Nearly as many again, having been compelled to witness the agonizing sight of the burning, looting, and total destruction of their sacred temple, were taken in slavery, many of them being forced . . . to serve as doomed gladiators or as helpless quarries for wild beasts in the spectacular ‘sports’ which the triumphant Titus staged.”

—*Coins of Bible Days*.

This book explains that in 71 C.E., Vespasian and Titus marched triumphantly through Rome to celebrate this victory. But “more enduring than any parades or festivals were the numerous ‘victory’ coins.” One was this gold coin (Number 5) struck by Vespasian to commemorate the Roman conquest of Judea.

Although many Jews might have scoffed at Jesus’ prophetic statement about the end of the Jewish system, his words came true, as these coins testify. Jesus’ prophecy has a major fulfillment today, pointing to an approaching calamity for the present worldwide system of things. You owe it to yourself to learn what this present-day message is and how you can avoid being a victim of this approaching calamity.



1. Obverse: Bronze prutah (or perutah) struck after the First Revolt (66-70 C.E.), showing an amphora (a two-handled vessel). The Hebrew lettering says "Year two," meaning 67 C.E., the second year of the Jews' autonomy



2. Reverse: A vine leaf surrounded by the words "Freedom of Zion" or "Deliverance of Zion"



3. Obverse: A bronze sestertius struck by Emperor Vespasian to commemorate the conquest of Judea. The Latin abbreviations around his portrait are **IMP**[erator] (Emperor) **CAES**[ar] **VES-PASIAN**[us] **AVG**[ustus] **P**[ontifex] **M**[aximus] (high priest) **TR**[ibunicia] **P**[otestate] (holder of the tribune's power) **P**[ater] **P**[atriae] (father of the fatherland) **CO**[n] **S**[ul] **III** (in his third consulship), which dates the coin to 71 C.E.



4. Reverse: On the left is the exultant Emperor Vespasian (or General Titus) in armor, holding a spear and a dagger, his foot resting on a helmet. To the right is a Jewess seated on a breastplate under a date palm; she is in mourning and weeping. The words **IVDAEA CAPTA** mean "Captive Judea." This coin was minted **S**[enatus] **C**[onsulto], "with the consent of the Senate"



5. Reverse: An aureus (gold coin) by Vespasian depicting Judea in mourning

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BEARING UP UNDER SUPERHUMAN PRESSURE

Do you feel that this is what you are doing?

Many people do. And they are helped by knowing how others cope. A card from Greenville, Texas, addressed to the Watchtower Society, explained: "I truly appreciate the true life stories of Christian persons who have endured much suffering in order to be faithful. Many were the experiences I read with tears streaming down my face, as I could see that only Jehovah the true God was able to deliver them out of such a dilemma as the ones they were in. It makes me a more humble and thankful Christian as I read what they went through, and it helped me *not* to think too much of myself or be selfish."