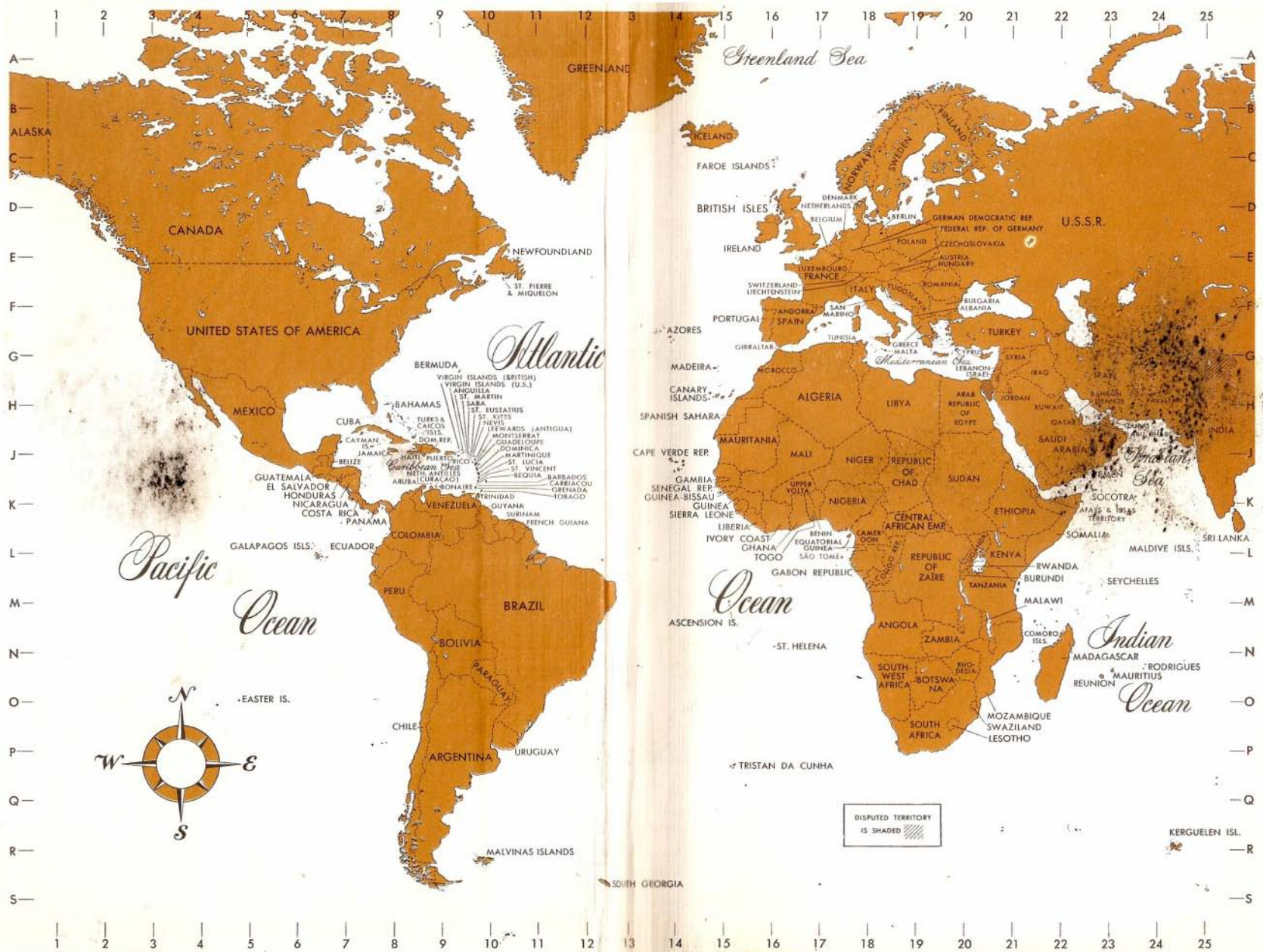


1978

YEAR
BOOK

1978

YEARBOOK
OF
JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES



1978 YEARBOOK

of Jehovah's Witnesses
Containing Report for the Service Year
of 1977

Also Daily Texts and Comments



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*Jehovah's Witnesses
world wide are thankful to
the Most High God
for the open door leading
to Kingdom Activity.
—1 Cor. 16:9.*

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1978 YEARBOOK of Jehovah's Witnesses

"Happy are those hearing the word of God and keeping it!" In saying those words, as we find them recorded at Luke 11:28, Jesus may have had in mind the similar words of Psalm 112:1: "Happy is the man in fear of Jehovah, in whose commandments he has taken very much delight." Jesus himself was happy and took delight in obeying his Father's commandments, in hearing and observing God's Word. Jehovah's obedient servants through the years have realized that the keeping of Jehovah's law, his orders, commandments and judicial decisions brings a "large reward." Today Jehovah's Witnesses are most thankful for the privileges that come to them in representing him. His word is always pleasant to their ears and they are determined to keep it and treasure it.—1 Tim. 1:11; 6:15; Ps. 19:7-11.

The arrangement that Jehovah established under the Mosaic law provided a shadow of good things to come. (Heb. 10:1) Those who complied with its requirements were blessed by Jehovah and they looked forward to blessings in the future. Most, though, reflected the attitude of our first parents by taking an independent course and becoming disobedient to God's word. Though they heard it with their ears, they did not keep it. (Heb. 3:18, 19) Jesus summed up their attitude when he said that "with their ears they have heard without response." (Matt. 13:15; Isa. 6:10)

Repeatedly, Jehovah had reminded them of the vital need of hearing and keeping his word. For example, through his prophet, he said: "I, Jehovah, am your God, the One teaching you to benefit yourself, the One causing you to tread in the way in which you should walk. O if only you would actually pay attention to my commandments!"—Isa. 48:17, 18.

When Jesus appeared on earth, he established the Christian arrangement. He knew that only those adhering to God's word could be truly happy. In his prayer to his Father on his last night on earth, he said that the taking in of knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ was necessary for one who desired to have life. (John 17:3) The knowledge contained in the Bible is truly life giving. It can be relied on, since God himself caused it to be written by means of his holy spirit. It is priceless. Men, as history shows, risked their lives to translate it and to preserve it for our benefit. Today, Jehovah's Witnesses are dedicated to the task—sometimes also at the risk of their lives—of taking that Word to people of every nation and tongue.

Nowadays, as in ancient Israel, many are indifferent to the appeal of God's Word, the Bible. Others shun it or outrightly oppose its distribution. But in doing so they are not happy; rather, they are glum. In spite of this, Jehovah's servants proceed with their pleasurable work of upholding the Word of God. They know that more is required than merely reading the Word. As Jesus said in his revelation to John: "Happy is he who reads aloud and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and who observe the things written in it."—Rev. 1:3.

A BIBLE-BASED ORGANIZATION

The disciple James was concerned that his fellow Christians might follow the wrong course of the Israelites and, after hearing the Word of God, become

listless, and so he warned them: "You must do what the word tells you, and not just listen to it and deceive yourselves." (Jas. 1:22, *Jerusalem Bible*) Only by diligently studying the Word of God can one prove oneself Christ's disciple. Those in the Macedonian city of Berea did just that, and Luke described them as being noble-minded. "Now the latter [Bereans] were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with the greatest eagerness of mind, carefully examining the Scriptures daily as to whether these things were so." They were students, researchers. They wanted to know if the Hebrew Scriptures backed up what they heard. They set a good example for all to follow.—Acts 17:11.

Jehovah's Witnesses today follow this fine example. They are modern Bereans, Bible students. At one time, because of their intensive study of the Bible they were actually called "Bible Students." While they no longer use that as their name, having adopted the Scriptural name Jehovah's Witnesses in 1931, they still studiously interest themselves in "examining the Scriptures daily." They are devoted to the work commanded by Jesus of making disciples of people everywhere and "teaching them to observe all the things" that Jesus commanded. They keep Jehovah's Word and they preach it diligently on any and every appropriate occasion, whether the occasion is convenient to themselves or not.—Matt. 28:19, 20; 2 Tim. 4:2.

The organization of Jehovah's Witnesses is truly Bible based. For the past one hundred years it has been holding forth the word of life. It has not turned aside from the truth. Loyal ones have made no pretense of only believing the truth, but have made it their own and actively advocated it, even though this has made them objects of persecution. In doing so they have become "a theatrical spectacle to the world," like the apostles who were charged with upsetting the inhabited earth because of their insistence on adhering to the Word of God.—1 Cor. 4:9; Acts 17:6.

Jehovah's Witnesses are "steadfast, unmovable, always having plenty to do in the work of the Lord." They have not watered down the truths of the Bible as have Christendom's clergy who offer to people, already "slumbering," a 'soft religion.' (1 Cor. 15:58; 2 Cor. 11:14, 15) Christians know that what the world has to offer is as tinsel, 'window dressing,' so they keep their eyes, "not on the things seen, but on the things unseen. For the things seen are temporary [transitory], but the things unseen are everlasting." (2 Cor. 4:18) Some of the "things seen" may appear desirable; they may have a 'sugar coating.' Men are

tempted to look about and see what is available just for the asking. Jesus was presented with temptation by means of "things seen." Satan asked him for but one act of worship, and all the "kingdoms of the world" would be his. Adamantly Jesus replied: "Go away, Satan! For it is written, 'It is Jehovah your God you must worship, and it is to him alone you must render sacred service.'" Jesus rightly recognized the test for what it was—a trick to get him to compromise his sacred service and treasured relationship with his Father. To maintain our integrity, we must see temptations in the same light now.—Matt. 4:8-10; 1 John 2:15, 16.

Well, look around. What is available? What does Satan hold out as temptingly desirable? What is it that should be shunned as something that could cause Jehovah's Witnesses to desert their sacred service? Why, for one thing, running with the world. Some who are now Jehovah's Witnesses were once very much wrapped up in the ways of the world. They had what they called a 'high time,' seemingly enjoying it. But one who becomes a Christian puts this way of life in the past, as something to be despised. The apostle Peter said: "For the time that has passed by is sufficient for you to have worked out the will of the nations when you proceeded in deeds of loose conduct, lusts, excesses with wine, revelries, drinking matches, and illegal idolatries."—1 Pet. 4:3.

Former worldly associates may not understand why one who previously was satisfied with the "weak and beggarly elementary things" now concerns himself with hearing and doing the Word of God. So they resent it, and close their ears to the message of life that could have benefited them. Peter added: "Because you do not continue running with them in this course to the same low sink of debauchery, they are puzzled and go on speaking abusively of you." (1 Pet. 4:4; Gal. 4:9) But see how many friends there are among Jehovah's Witnesses that one acquires! One is no longer interested in partying with the world, risking the precious newly found relationship with Jehovah and His family.—Mark 10:30; 1 Pet. 1:22; Phil. 3:12-16.

Over the centuries, all the way back to the time when Adam and Eve, at the urgings of the Tempter, lost their happiness by rejecting the word of God and failing to keep it, the name of Jehovah has been besmirched. Especially was this noticeable with respect to those whom he chose to make his name-people. (Ex. 6:7) God commanded them not to take up his name

in a worthless or vain way, thereby bringing reproach on him and his name. Dire consequences would be theirs for disobeying that command. (Ex. 20:7) To them Jehovah, through the mouth of Jeremiah, said: "I kept sending to you all my servants the prophets, daily getting up early and sending them. But they did not listen to me, and they did not incline their ear, but they kept hardening their neck."—Jer. 7:25, 26.

Finally Jehovah sent his heavenly Son. Jesus was pained at the way God's name-people were acting. He lived among the people of Israel and toward the close of his human life he summed up his feelings, saying: "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the killer of the prophets and stoner of those sent forth to her—how often I wanted to gather your children together in the manner that a hen gathers her brood of chicks under her wings, but you people did not want it!" On behalf of his Father he said to religious opposers: "Look! Your house is abandoned to you." (Luke 13:34, 35) They had spurned both the Father and the Son. By what they did to the Son they dishonored the Father's name. Jesus recognized their despising of him and his Father and what his Father's name stood for, and in an illustration he said that "a man" (Jehovah) sent his beloved son for an accounting, saying, "They will respect my son." But, though recognizing the son as heir, they said, "Come, let us kill him." And kill him they did!—Mark 12:1-11.

A remnant of Israel agreed to 'hear the word and keep it' and were accepted into the Christian congregation. Now, seeing how Israel had disrespected Jehovah and his name, how would these followers of Christ act? Would they uphold God's name and give to Jehovah an answer to the great besmircher, Satan the Devil? God had pleaded with Israel: "Be wise, my son, and make my heart rejoice, that I may make a reply to him that is taunting me." (Prov. 27:11) As it has turned out, only a remnant of those who took the name "Christian" have given basis for such a reply. The command not to sully the name of Jehovah applies with equal force to Jehovah's Witnesses today. And they are pleased to honor that name, to make it holy.

Today, almost universally, the God of the Bible is unknown to mankind. The name of God is not made holy. Rather, it is used vulgarly. The Bible to some is a myth, a 'good storybook' for children, but its prophecies are not taken seriously. Those who happily study the Bible, accepting it, "just as it truthfully is, as the word of God," are considered by these persons as 'old fogies.'—1 Thess. 2:13.

PROPER MOTIVATION

Faithful servants of God today, in the face of this dishonoring of the God of the universe, have gladly taken up the Bible name Jehovah's Witnesses. (Isa. 43: 10) Their purpose in life is to uphold that sacred name, even though their association with that name may bring to them ostracism by those who ostensibly are followers of Christ, yes, and from others. Their Master said: "If you love me, you will observe my commandments . . . If you observe my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have observed the commandments of the Father and remain in his love." (John 14:15; 15:10) It brought joy and happiness to Jesus to observe the commandments of his Father and he therefore said that "those hearing the word of God and keeping it" would be happy.—Luke 11:28.

Jehovah's Witnesses have found this happiness and real joy in being properly motivated in their work of bearing witness to Jesus and in preaching the good news of God's established kingdom. (Rev. 12:17) Their motivation is not tainted with a desire to be "somebody." While ministering to the spiritual needs of people, they refuse to accept adulation, as Jesus also refused to do, or to assume titles. Let the titles stay with those who seem to be so proud to bear them. Rather, Jehovah's people are pleased to be fellow servants with the one who "made himself of no reputation."—Phil. 2:7, *Authorized Version*.

Peter warned of false teachers who would quietly or privately "bring in destructive sects and . . . disown even the owner that bought them, bringing speedy destruction upon themselves." Peter's further warning was that others would follow them, thus causing the way of the truth to be spoken of abusively. (2 Pet. 2:1, 2) There is need to be on the alert so as not to fall into this subtle trap. Some actually do disown their owner. Others do not go so far as to declare openly that they do not know their owner, Christ. But by their actions, their speech and the careless way that they 'walk in the truth,' they in effect become suspect as to their love of Christ. They ought to take to heart Paul's words at 1 Corinthians 15:34: "Wake up to soberness in a righteous way and do not practice sin, for some are without knowledge of God ["seem not to know God at all," *JB*]. I am speaking to move you to shame."

SHUNNING MATERIALISM

There is an old saying, 'All that glitters is not gold.' This also applies in a spiritual sense. Jehovah's Wit-

nesses are engaged in the most profitable work in all the earth. The benefits are outstanding. To have Jehovah's favor is most valuable. Yet sometimes they are enticed by material treasures. But wisely Jehovah's Witnesses prefer riches that endure, so they store up for themselves "treasures in heaven." Paul warned: "The love of money is a root of all sorts of injurious things, and by reaching out for this love some have been led astray from the faith and have stabbed themselves all over with many pains ["spiked themselves on many thorny griefs," *New English Bible*]."—Matt. 6:19, 20; 1 Tim. 6:10.

Regrettably, materialism at times takes its toll among a few of Jehovah's Witnesses, blurring their vision. It has been said that materialism is anything that stands between a person and his worship of Jehovah. So it need not necessarily be an expensive automobile, an ostentatious home or a large bank account. It could be anything that absorbs a person's time and attention so that he neglects the worship due to Jehovah. What causes this lamentable situation to develop? Could it be neglecting a study of God's Word, which is a "lamp" to guide the servant's feet, and a "light" to his roadway? (Ps. 119:105) Without such guidance one can easily become a prey to materialism. Materialism can creep in if one neglects that most important communication with the Hearer of prayer. Personal study of God's Word and constant communication with Jehovah deepen and strengthen one's personal relationship with Jehovah. David said: "I keep Yahweh before me always, for with him at my right hand nothing can shake me."—Ps. 16:8, *JB*.

Because of being constant and steadfast as witnesses of the Ruler of the universe, and by keeping themselves away from materialism, Jehovah's Witnesses have enjoyed many blessings during the past year. "The blessing of Jehovah—that is what makes rich, and he adds no pain [sorrow] with it." (Prov. 10:22) True, some have taken the brunt of persecution, but it is a fact of both theocratic and secular history that persecution has failed to stop the proclamation of God's Word. Persecution has not brought pain or sorrow, so as to cause these Witnesses to lose faith. They have not been failures. They have had Jehovah's blessing and they have been made rich. Their boldness in serving God has called for his protection, because they have continued in their firm, conscientious and fearless support of the truth. (1 Tim. 3:15) They may have been "pressed in every way, but not cramped beyond movement; . . . perplexed, but

not absolutely with no way out; . . . persecuted, but not left in the lurch; . . . thrown down, but not destroyed." Yes, they have been blessed in their spiritual paradise, blessed in the knowledge that their steadfastness in 'keeping the word of God' earns them a place in God's favor. They have contributed to answering Satan's challenge to God.—2 Cor. 4:8, 9; Prov. 27:11.

MAINTAINING FAITH DESPITE PERSECUTION

Some of Jehovah's Witnesses have to live and carry on their work of preaching the good news of the Kingdom under very trying conditions. Nevertheless, despite persecution, intimidation and pressure to compromise their faith, they keep their integrity. They take their stand against the Devil, "solid in the faith, knowing that the same things in the way of sufferings are being accomplished in the entire association" of their brothers in the world. They realize that endurance is necessary in order to inherit the promise; therefore they, as fine soldiers of Christ Jesus, take their part in suffering evil.—1 Pet. 5:8, 9; 2 Tim. 2:3; Heb. 6:12.

Satan is very angry at the continued faithful service of God's witnesses in advertising the coming destruction of this system of things and he uses his influence as the ruler of the world to have the work curtailed if not stopped. Hence it is not surprising that from time to time he causes opposition that results in bans being placed on the work. During the year this occurred in the Congo Republic and in Indonesia, and there are rumblings in other places. This does not mean that Jehovah's Witnesses in such places give up or quit. No, they persist in doing what is fine, sowing with a view to the spirit, and leaving the results to the Great Rewarder. (Gal. 6:8, 9) Jesus equipped his followers to be prepared for exactly what has occurred in this day and age, saying: "You will be objects of hatred by all people on account of my name; but he that has endured to the end is the one that will be saved. . . . A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a slave above his lord. . . . Therefore do not fear them."—Matt. 10:22-26.

At the beginning of the service year, hundreds of our Malawi brothers were still in detention at Dzaleka, a camp in the north of the country, which had previously been used for political detainees. However, as the months went by, some were released. These brothers made their way back to their home villages and towns. What kind of reception awaited them?

In some cases the local village headmen allowed them to settle in their homes and begin recultivating their lands, which had been lying fallow while our brothers were in prison. However, in some cases the unbelieving relatives of Witnesses had taken over their lands and had begun cultivating them and these opposed our brothers' being allowed to return to their village homes. They reported the brothers to the police and to local political party officials, who have again harassed our brothers over the party-card issue. Some are still being held by the police without charge. Religious opposers have also added to the sufferings of our brothers, telling some of them that they will not be allowed to settle in their homes until they join other religions. Those Witnesses who were allowed to settle in their homes and cultivate their fields have been tormented in some areas by Youth Leaguers and party officials when these thought that the brothers would have money from harvesting their crops to buy political cards.

So the year ended with a number of our brothers in Malawi still homeless and without employment, having to move from place to place and eke out a living the best they could. We are pleased to report, however, that it is still possible to aid them spiritually and materially and that our Malawi brothers are extremely grateful to Jehovah and their brothers elsewhere for this loving assistance.

Those who must carry on under such adverse circumstances are not 'written off' by Jehovah. They are not forgotten. They are assured: "God is not unrighteous [unjust] so as to forget your work and the love you showed for his name." "I will by no means leave you nor by any means forsake you." And their brothers remember them too in their daily petitions to the Hearer of prayer. When our brothers in other lands suffer under persecution, we suffer with them. *The Emphatic Diaglott* says that "whether one member suffer, all the members sympathize." The "sympathy" has been shown not only by assisting them materially, but also by 'taking up the slack' and 'putting on more steam' in the preaching work.—Heb. 6:10; 13:5; 1 Cor. 12:26.

NATIONALISM

Even where there is no ban, some of Jehovah's Witnesses are plagued by nationalism. They are asked to elevate "Caesar" above God. This they cannot do, so they are falsely branded as "antigovernment." But this does not rob them of their joy, for they count it

a privilege to be in the same category as Jesus, who, along with the apostles, said that where obedience to the State does not conflict with that owed to Jehovah, then such obedience should be rendered, but that prior allegiance rightly belongs to Jehovah.—Luke 20:25; Acts 4:19, 20; Rom. 13:1.

"Bullies" like to take advantage of children who they feel have no recourse but to submit. But youths among Jehovah's Witnesses also are happy in "hearing the word of God and keeping it." (Luke 11:28) They have heeded the word of Jehovah, through Moses, to meet together in the congregation along with their parents, "in order that they may listen and in order that they may learn, as they must fear Jehovah . . . and take care to carry out all the words" of God's law. (Deut. 31:12) They have benefited from the experience of the three faithful Hebrews on the plain of Dura (Dan. 3:18) and the firm decision of the early Christian followers of Jesus (Acts 5:29) and are therefore equipped to face such "bullies."

An experience illustrates this. In Africa, a twelve-year-old Witness conscientiously refused to sing the national anthem. The annoyed headmaster pressed him for a reason. Having 'heard the word' and being intent on "keeping it," the boy said that the anthem was a hymn of praise to a false god called Nationalism and that his God, Jehovah, would be angry if he praised a false god. The headmaster, impressed by the sincerity and conscientious determination of the lad, commented: "If you had told me that earlier, I would not have sent you out of the class, because one should not make fun of the true God." It is fine to see that young publishers appreciate the privilege of properly representing their God. This also provides Jehovah with an additional answer to his reproacher.

What is it that motivates Jehovah's people, whatever circumstance they may be in, to serve him? The word they have heard and read commands them to be witnesses "to the most distant part of the earth." (Acts 1:8) That word they delight to keep. It pleases them to uphold Jehovah's sovereignty, to comfort mourning ones, to direct them to the only means of salvation. But underlying all of this is their love for Jehovah, based on the first commandment, and their love for neighbor. (Matt. 22:37-39) And what is the reward they expect? The same reward that Jesus keenly anticipated: "For the joy that was set before him he endured a torture stake, despising [disregarding] shame." Their joy in serving Jehovah is their strength. Rescuing persons of honest heart from the clutches of the evil one and assisting them to become

praisers of Jehovah bring great satisfaction of heart.—Heb. 12:2; Neh. 8:10.

FORSAKING WORLDLY PRACTICES BRINGS JOY

In the world today, when things go wrong, the temptation is to 'forget it all.' Many try to do this by using alcohol and drugs. The accelerated use of drugs is becoming an alarming problem all over the world today. Doctors are at their wit's end at the prospect of having to deal with a nation of drug addicts. Everyone knows that the taking of drugs only increases the problem. In this, Jehovah's Witnesses do not go along with the world's practice. They know what the remedy is and they endeavor to educate the people in their need of turning to Jehovah God and his Word, the Bible, so that they may hear it and keep it.

Among Jehovah's Witnesses are some who formerly were victims of such vile practices, some having been heavily involved in drug abuse. These were helped to 'make straight paths for their feet.' (Heb. 12:13; 1 Cor. 6:11) Now they have dedicated themselves to Jehovah through Christ and are declaring the good news of God's established kingdom. It happens occasionally that, by not remembering that "bad associations spoil useful habits," a person who had started out in the right way in association with Jehovah's Witnesses returns to his bad habits. (1 Cor. 15:33) He soon learns that he is miserable and yearns for the association of his brothers again. For example, in the Philippines, a brother was engaged in witnessing activity on the streets and noticed a bearded young man with a group of people. The young man looked somewhat familiar. It developed that he had formerly been associated with Jehovah's Witnesses but had gotten in with the wrong crowd and was now on drugs. He expressed his disgust and said that he wanted to come back. Arrangements were made for a study with him and he is now encouraging some of his associates to study too.

The truth helped a person in Canada to make his mind over. He was trafficking in drugs illegally. A nationwide warrant was out for his arrest. For several years he evaded it. Then he started studying the *Truth* book. His conscience, now educated by the Bible, caused him to turn himself in. His attorney tried to dissuade him, unsuccessfully. In the trial, when the judge noted his honesty and his complete rehabilitation achieved through his association with Jehovah's Witnesses, he gave him only a short suspended sentence. Now he is serving Jehovah, having given good attention to the Word, making his mind over, proving to himself the

good and acceptable and perfect will of God.—Rom. 12:2.

One cannot be in a close relationship with Jehovah and act dishonestly. In Liberia a sister who worked in an airline office was told by her employer to tell any caller that he was out. She declined, telling him that this would not be honest, and her Bible-trained conscience would not permit her to lie. He became angry and had her transferred to another department. Her honesty was tested there too, for her new boss asked her to cover up a shortage in his petty cash. She prayed to Jehovah that night and in the morning told him the same thing that she had related to her former boss. Upset, he said no department would tolerate her attitude. But several days later he entrusted her with thousands of dollars. More importantly, her fine conduct moved a fellow employee to join her in meeting attendance and field service.

LETTING THE BIBLE SPEAK

In northeast Thailand a young sister worked as cashier in a barbershop. She refused to violate her conscience and accede to the owner's request that she make out false tax declarations, and as a result was discharged. This freed her to enter the pioneer service. Later, the owner looked her up and asked her to return, as the cash register was always short. While appreciating this acknowledgment of her honesty, she preferred to remain in her chosen full-time preaching work. She was truly happy because she heard the word with understanding and kept it, treasured it and acted upon it. The Bible was her guide.

As a result of the fact that Jehovah's Witnesses use the Bible when they speak to people, whether in house-to-house visits, in witnessing on the streets, or at home Bible studies, the organization progresses. In many countries today, the Bible is the sole piece of equipment that can be used, at least initially, in calling on people at their homes. So Jehovah's Witnesses become proficient in its use, preaching the Word of God, having it at their "fingertips." That this is successful is attested to by a report from Belgium. There members of a sincere family, formerly active attenders at one of Babylon's churches, are now studying because Jehovah's Witnesses made good use of the Bible. The father sang in the choir on Sundays. When other members of the family accepted a Bible study, he was urged by the clergy and others to throw Jehovah's Witnesses out when they came to the home. Instead, he appealed to the priest to visit the family and straighten them out.

When the priest and several vicars used inappropriate language but made no use of the Bible, the father was annoyed. He attended a district assembly, noted the kindness of the brothers and their cleanliness and order, and that they used the Bible; so he decided to associate with Jehovah's Witnesses. He made tape recordings of the meetings and plays these for persons asking him why he quit the church.

When we make good use of the Bible, those we teach get the 'sense of the word' and start using it themselves. A newly baptized brother had been a part of a group of young people completely engrossed in doing the so-called "fun things of life." This included "shooting drugs" and swallowing them, getting drunk, in fact, engaging in every form of immorality. A friend, studying with Jehovah's Witnesses, impressed him with the great changes in his life. He told him what started it all. "He spoke to me from the Bible the things he was learning about Jehovah's purposes," he says. An unhappy, empty life for this seventeen-year-old became transformed into one filled with love for God and for neighbor. He now feels that he has eternal life before him, a life filled with meaning and purpose.

POSITION NOT IMPORTANT

When a person gets a knowledge of the truth and realizes that there is a short time in which to warn the people of the coming great tribulation and its battle of Har-Magedon, he often asks what he should do about his secular occupation. In this regard, he should consider his Christian responsibilities. If he is a married man, then he is obligated to provide for his family, and this may require his continuing in his present occupation. (1 Tim. 5:8) Some have been able to expand their share in Kingdom service without changing their secular employment. However, others have been able to make a change in employment that allows them more time for proclaiming the truth to others. Many are able to do regular or auxiliary pioneer work by adjusting their hours of secular work. For example, in Japan during this past spring, for four months in a row the total of pioneers reporting was more than 10,000, over 25 percent of all publishers, and many of these were elders and other family heads who had adjusted their regular employment in order to pioneer.

By careful planning and organization, housewives (with or without children) and young people, including those just leaving school and those on vacation, can enjoy precious privileges in the pioneer work, or otherwise reach out for more hours of service. Others on

learning the truth have found themselves enslaved to time-consuming careers. Preferring to be slaves of God, they have made changes. In faith they have 'tested Jehovah,' and truly he has emptied out on them a blessing beyond their fondest expectations.—Mal. 3:10.

In France, a brother who formerly was a ballet dancer decided to attend an operetta with a group of Witnesses. When he picked up the tickets at the box office, there was a card in the envelope. It was from the star actor, asking the brother to visit him during intermission. He kept the appointment and there renewed acquaintance with one he had known many years before. The man had lost his wife and hoped to receive some comfort from him in view of their past friendship. The brother informed him that he was now one of Jehovah's Witnesses and offered to study the Bible with him. His study soon convinced him that his life as an actor was shallow. He decided not to renew his contract to continue his twenty-year career on the stage. He soon found other employment, but, more importantly, he is now a faithful publisher of the Kingdom.

This experience is similar to that of a professional flamenco dancer in Spain. Her mother told her of an interesting conversation she had with a lady at their hotel about God and the Bible. The conversation was continued with the dancer herself the next morning. It so affected her that she immediately started witnessing to her troupe. Undaunted by insults and derision, she started studying, then attending meetings, and finally made her dedication. She canceled her contract. Thereafter, it took nine months before a steady job was obtained, but her new employment allowed her freedom to serve Jehovah and in this she has been richly blessed.

SOWING SEED

"In the morning sow your seed and until the evening do not let your hand rest; for you are not knowing where this will have success, either here or there, or whether both of them will alike be good." (Eccl. 11:6) This proved to be true in Chile. Back in 1936 two publishers followed the train route to Bolivia on foot. They stopped at an isolated home for some water. They "paid" for it with a copy of *The Harp of God*. Twelve years later, the son of the recipients, then twenty-four, found this treasure. For the next eight years, though unable to locate Jehovah's Witnesses, he studied and restudied the *Harp*, with ever-increasing appreciation. Some time later one of Jehovah's Witnesses called at

his house and offered *The Watchtower* to him on a subscription basis. He gladly subscribed and readily accepted the offer of a Bible study. As he progressed he dedicated his life to Jehovah and became an active preacher of the word. Overjoyed, he visited his parents' isolated home, shared his joy with the family of eight and assisted them also to make a dedication.

An experience from another South American country shows how the sowing of seed had success 'here and there.' A young girl started studying the *Truth* book that had been placed with her. Later she discontinued the study, but, valuing the book, she sent it to her mother. The mother thought it would make a good present and gave it to her sister, who was going on a trip. The sister, however, stored it in a trunk in her son's home. There her daughter-in-law found it and studied it. Her husband threatened to burn it, so she sent it to a friend who, in turn, gave it to his sister. What resulted from the seed sown and the much-traveled book? The "friend" has dedicated his life to Jehovah; the daughter-in-law is again studying and looking forward to baptism. Yes, indeed, the book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life* continues to have a tremendous circulation!

"YOUTH" BOOK A BOON

Now the book *Your Youth—Getting the Best out of It*, released at the district assemblies in 1976, is coming into its own. The way that this book has been received well illustrates the fact that when information that meets the needs of the people is made available, it is soon in great demand. To meet this demand there were printed in Brooklyn and shipped during the service year 9,003,062 copies of the *Youth* book.

This wonderful instrument provided by Jehovah through his "faithful and discreet slave" is greatly appreciated by young and old alike. When the book was released at the district assembly in Brazil, a seventeen-year-old remarked: "Our greatest pleasure was to see your interest in us. This book was the finest present I received in all my life. I am grateful to Jehovah and to you for giving us this book."

Young pioneers in England reported that while they had experienced difficulty in house-to-house witnessing where older people would often 'brush them off,' they could choose young people to approach in street witnessing and get good results, with great encouragement to themselves.

In Trinidad a sister accompanied her husband to a

dinner. During the evening a prominent member of a non-Christian faith asked her if Jehovah's Witnesses had any trouble with juvenile delinquency. She said it was rare, but if there were an instance it would be handled in accord with Bible principles. She mentioned the new *Youth* book, its purpose and its price. Impressed, he said that in view of the poverty in that area, and the probability that many youths might not be able to afford even the small amount asked, he wanted to contribute \$100 so that this fine book could be distributed among the youths.

A report from the Netherlands shows how young publishers can bring this valuable book to the attention of their classmates. A fifteen-year-old sister showed the book to two of her classmates. One immediately asked for a copy. Our sister, "just in case," took three extra copies to school. All four copies were placed and the girls got busy reading them during recess. Others, noticing this and seeing the contents of the book, asked for copies themselves. Our young sister was asked to relate her experience at a circuit assembly. Four other young publishers decided to follow her lead and in a short time placed twenty books in their classes.

In Barbados a Witness schoolteacher was asked to be chairman of a prize-giving committee. As prizes the committee wanted to give books. The chairman suggested the *Youth* book. The committee found its contents and price most acceptable. Some fifty books were given as prizes and each committee member obtained one for himself.

SERVING WHERE THE NEED IS GREAT

Publishers in various parts of the world are still responding to the 'Macedonian call.' Wishing to use their time, efforts, abilities and resources to the best advantage, and, with the field already being well cared for where they lived, they made themselves available to go where the need is greater. These have been doing a marvelous work. In many cases, they have had to learn a new language. In view of the increases in publishers, many have been of invaluable assistance in serving as elders in congregations. They have established new congregations and have assisted in the construction of Kingdom Halls. Some serve as circuit overseers and Branch Committee members. In many places they are the backbone of the organization. One of such "volunteers" said that he could not thank Jehovah enough for the privileges that he and his family enjoy in being so used. He expressed it: "Our life has real meaning now."

INFORMAL WITNESSING

Many who are now regular proclaimers of the Kingdom message became acquainted with the truth as a result of informal witnessing. Such witnessing, whether oral or written, continues to be an important means of reaching truth-hungry people. An experience from Portugal illustrates this. Family problems caused a pioneer's field service to be interrupted. She read in the newspaper about a woman who had lost a close relative. This woman needed comfort, so she wrote her a friendly letter, offering comfort and hope in God's promises. She did not expect to receive a reply. But seven months later this complete stranger telephoned her, belatedly expressing her appreciation for the letter. She said that, on receiving it, she had made up her mind that the next time one of Jehovah's Witnesses called at her door she would listen. Now she was calling to invite the pioneer sister to be present at her baptism the following Sunday! An informal witness can be given to one's unbelieving mate or others in the family, to one's neighbor 'over the back fence,' to one's fellow employee or fellow school student, or when traveling. There are the well-known Scriptural examples of Jesus' witnessing to the Samaritan woman at the well, and of the evangelist Philip's witnessing to the Ethiopian official in his chariot.

BRANCH COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Early in the service year, the Governing Body arranged for the branch coordinators and other members of the Branch Committees to attend, during October and November (1976), a series of meetings at the Brooklyn headquarters to consider various features of the branch activities and Kingdom service in general. The meetings proved to be informative and valuable. The discussion was of assistance to the Governing Body in getting a clearer picture of the work being carried on world wide by Jehovah's Witnesses, and to determine how the headquarters could give further direction and guidance to the various branches.

All-day sessions were held (with the exception of Saturday afternoons and Sundays). In addition to the lectures and question-and-answer sessions, tours were made through the Bethel home and factories, and a very enjoyable trip to Watchtower Farms, one hundred miles northwest of Brooklyn, was arranged.

As this report is being made, arrangements are being completed to bring many more members of the Branch Committees to school at Brooklyn so that

greater attention can be given to the needs of each individual branch.

ZONE VISITS

Also, during the service year, members of the Governing Body and others made zone trips to all the branches. There were rewarding discussions with members of the Branch Committees, as well as with district and circuit overseers and other full-time servants. This enabled the members of the Governing Body to obtain firsthand information as to the condition of each branch and to discuss any problems that may have existed. Arrangements were made, too, for the visitor to speak to large gatherings of the brothers and interested ones. For the first time arrangements were made for all the missionaries, with few exceptions, to be brought to the branch to meet with the visiting brother and to share in a general get-together with him and other members of the branch Bethel family. The meetings with these missionaries were mutually encouraging and beneficial.

Over the years the missionaries have done valiant service in their foreign assignments and this is greatly appreciated by God's people everywhere. They have had Jehovah's blessing on their unsparing work, and have had great success in bringing many people to a knowledge of the truth.

One of the branch coordinators remarked that the zone visits are long remembered. He and other coordinators commented on the humility shown by the brothers serving as zone overseers as they endeavor to aid the branches to take a more positive view of the work. Each zone overseer endeavors to imitate the example of Jesus as a servant to his brothers.

EXPANSION

There were other blessings during the year indicative of the forward expansion of the work. In order to keep up with the orders for literature from the field, so much needed to feed persons hungering for the truth, a number of branches have enlarged their facilities. Others are in the process of expanding their facilities or their operations. Among these are Australia, Brazil, Colombia, France, Greece, Japan, Kenya, New Caledonia, Nigeria, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Venezuela and Zambia. All of this is an indication of Jehovah's blessings upon his servants who are intent on "hearing the word of God and keeping it."

In the United States, arrangements were made for the Brooklyn factory to obtain two offset rotary print-

ing presses so as to keep up with the demand for books and magazines. Additionally, to care more effectively for the increased work, a computer system was installed in the bookkeeping department.

Along with the expansion of branch facilities there was a continuous construction of Kingdom Halls world wide. This was because new congregations were formed and because facilities became inadequate due to increased attendance.

BLESSINGS OF THE DISTRICT ASSEMBLIES

At the "Joyful Workers" District Assemblies the brothers were thankful for a provision made whereby they could be assisted in dealing with doctors and hospitals with respect to the blood-transfusion problem. There was released the new booklet *Jehovah's Witnesses and the Question of Blood*, and those present were informed that each congregation would be receiving a sufficient supply of the booklet so that every doctor, hospital administrator, nurse and lawyer could be supplied with a copy. The brothers have been looking forward with keen anticipation to a special campaign to place a copy of the booklet and a brochure in the hands of each of such persons, including each publisher's personal physician.

All were also thrilled to receive, as releases at the assembly, the two new pocket-size books *Life Does Have a Purpose* and *Our Incoming World Government—God's Kingdom*. Both books will be very fine aids to Jehovah's Witnesses in paying close attention to the Scriptures and in making such information available to others.

There were also some other surprises at the assembly. These had to do with congregation organization, and this was more fully explained in an insert printed with *Our Kingdom Service*. As shown therein, to give better care to the records and files of the congregation, a permanent secretary will now be appointed. Thus there will always be someone on hand familiar with such details. This secretary will also handle all correspondence in behalf of the congregation, compile the field service reports and keep the Publisher's Record cards.

Further, each congregation will now have a *Watchtower* study conductor and a Theocratic School overseer, each of whom will serve continuously. They may designate other elders to assist them or to substitute for them from time to time.

Another significant adjustment is the arrangement for the care of judicial matters. Instead of these being cared for by a stated committee of three (consisting of the presiding overseer, field overseer and Bible study

overseer as in the past), the body of elders will henceforth select, whenever there is a need, elders whom they deem most suitable and Scripturally capable of handling a judicial matter as it arises. The body of elders will basically make use of elders experienced in such matters.

As the greatest Educator, Jehovah assuredly cares for his servants insofar as their training and teaching is concerned. He furnishes the highest form of education—education that reaches the hearts of his children, education that is solidly based on an accurate knowledge of him and of his Son, Christ Jesus. To this end he has provided schooling arrangements whereby all of Jehovah's Witnesses can grow in understanding and in love. In addition to the Theocratic School in all the congregations, there is the Gilead School, which is operated by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., as a part of its religious activity. During the year a total of 51 students of the sixty-second and sixty-third classes of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead were trained for religious, missionary service. These students, assigned to various countries where the need is great, were equipped to go and make disciples of people in many lands, teaching them to observe the Word of God, and thus be in a position to enjoy life in God's new order.

KINGDOM MINISTRY AND PIONEER SCHOOLS

Most of the elders of congregations world wide had attended the Kingdom Ministry School, but since the time they attended there have been a number of organizational changes. So they, as well as elders who had not had the opportunity to attend, welcomed the announcement at the district assemblies that there would be an opportunity for *all* elders—whether they have previously attended or not—to receive instruction in a new revised course. This is a greatly abbreviated course. Initially all the traveling overseers have the opportunity of attending. A new textbook, *"Pay Attention to Yourselves and to All the Flock,"* has been prepared. Following the course, each elder is permitted to retain his copy for future benefit in caring for his responsibilities as an overseer.

Even though Jehovah's Witnesses have been very busy in preaching the good news of God's kingdom far and wide, there are territories that have not been reached. In some countries there are large towns and cities that have so far not had the opportunity of "hearing the word of God." In order to reach these

territories, pioneers are needed, as was mentioned in the closing announcement at the district assemblies. Even in the United States, in order to develop the Kingdom work in territory that is seldom visited, there is a need for regular pioneers and special pioneers. To that end, beginning in December 1977, Pioneer Service Schools are being organized in the United States. The course is for a two-week period. The textbook used is entitled *Shining as Illuminators in the World*.

The Entrant's School at Brooklyn Bethel is for the benefit of all who become members of the Bethel family. It has functioned well during the year. Periodically a group of new members embark upon a course of Bible reading and study that continues for an entire year. Studies and lectures are shared by each such group, these being conducted by older members of the Bethel family. Thereby an excellent groundwork of Bible knowledge and appreciation of God's dealings with humankind is imparted to these students.

Not to be overlooked as a regular provision for education of Jehovah's people are the circuit and district assemblies. Much research and study are put into the preparing of programs for these assemblies. It is truly amazing how Jehovah's spirit interacts upon his people, so that information and suggestions for these programs, after being given prayerful consideration by the brothers at headquarters, result in presentations that are most timely and practical. Thus, for example, there were expressions received from the brothers in many lands in appreciation for the blessings received at the "Joyful Workers" District Assemblies. Just in the continental North American field there was a total attendance of 1,060,747, and 8,563 symbolized their dedication by water immersion.

Jehovah also rewarded his congregation in the 1977 service year in that for the first time there were gathered together over five million persons to celebrate the Memorial of Christ's death. Many persons of honest heart, who learned of the truth through reading the publications produced by the Society and who attended the celebration, indicated that for the first time they understood the purpose of the celebration.

In Honduras where there are just 3,300 publishers, these made a special effort to invite all interested ones in the country to the Memorial celebration. The reward for their effort was an attendance of over 15,000! In order to accommodate the crowds, some of the congregations had up to ten or more celebrations in their territory.

1977 SERVICE YEAR REPORT OF

Letter and number following each country's name indicates the country's

Country	Population	1977 Peak Pubs.	Ratio, One Pub- lisher to:	1977 Av. Pubs.	% Inc. over 1976
Abu Dhabi (H-23)	235,662	9	26,185	8	
Afghanistan (G-24)	16,560,000	6	2,760,000	5	-38*
Alaska (A-49)	420,000	1,210	347	1,164	-3*
Algeria (H-17)	16,776,000	20	838,800	17	
American Samoa (N-40)	30,000	71	423	62	-27*
Andorra (F-17)	32,500	81	401	70	15
Anguilla (J-10)	6,524	14	466	12	-8*
Antigua (J-10)	70,794	208	340	189	15
Argentina (P-9)	25,050,000	31,846	787	29,111	-9*
Aruba (K-9)	62,288	354	176	332	-2*
Australia (M-31)	13,987,600	28,960	483	28,078	1
Austria (E-18)	7,521,800	12,613	596	12,349	1
Azores (G-14)	292,200	272	1,074	254	14
Bahamas (H-8)	210,000	504	417	463	-6*
Bahrain (H-23)	216,000	2	108,000	2	New
Bangladesh (B-28)	80,000,000	1	80,000,000	1	
Barbados (J-10)	254,000	1,314	193	1,220	5
Belgium (E-17)	9,754,576	19,126	510	18,180	-4*
Belize (J-7)	130,000	589	221	542	-3*
Benin (K-17)	2,700,000	1,113	2,426	975	-44*
Bequia (J-10)	5,400	25	216	22	-4*
Bermuda (G-9)	60,000	218	275	210	4
Bhutan (A-28)	1,304,774	1	1,304,774	1	New
Bolivia (N-9)	4,687,718	2,466	1,901	2,240	5
Bonaire (K-9)	8,983	31	290	29	-3*
Botswana (O-19)	661,000	275	2,404	249	-6*
Brazil (M-11)	114,000,000	106,254	1,073	102,503	1
British Isles (D-16)	54,640,200	77,593	704	75,136	-2*
Burma (B-29)	31,170,000	846	36,844	816	-1*
Burundi (L-20)	4,000,000	173	23,121	146	-2*
Cameroon (L-18)	6,500,000	12,085	538	11,449	-4*
Canada (D-4)	22,660,000	63,090	359	60,940	1
Canary Islands (H-15)	1,322,861	1,247	1,061	1,163	8
Cape Verde Rep. (J-14)	350,000	80	4,375	68	28
Carriacou (K-9)	8,500	31	274	27	13
Cayman Islands (J-8)	15,000	21	714	17	-19*
Central Afr. Emp. (K-19)	2,000,000	1,072	1,866	887	-20*
Chad (J-19)	3,870,000	155	24,968	131	3
Chile (P-9)	10,656,000	16,078	663	15,339	-4*
Colombia (L-8)	25,176,752	16,310	1,544	15,696	1
Comoro Islands (N-22)	306,000	3	102,000	2	100
Congo (L-18)	1,300,120	1,610	808	1,305	-19*
Cook Islands (P-41)	18,937	55	344	51	21
Costa Rica (K-7)	2,234,000	5,249	426	4,832	3
Curaçao (K-9)	156,209	711	220	691	6
Cyprus (G-20)	650,000	851	764	830	1
Denmark (D-18)	5,089,411	13,992	364	13,426	-3*
Djibouti (K-21)	125,000	6	20,833	4	-20*
Dominica (J-10)	70,302	199	353	188	-7*
Dominican Rep. (J-9)	4,977,701	6,503	765	6,324	-1*
Dubai (H-22)	206,861	21	9,851	6	-14*
Ecuador (L-8)	6,729,999	5,716	1,177	5,400	-5*
El Salvador (J-7)	4,290,037	6,055	709	5,768	2
Equatorial Guinea (L-18)	285,000	17	16,765	16	-36*
Ethiopia (K-21)	27,000,000	1,824	14,803	1,811	

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES WORLD WIDE

location on endsheet maps. Nos. 1-25 front and nos. 26-50 back endsheet.

1976 Av. Pubs.	1977 No. Eptzd.	Av. Plo. Pubs.	No. of Cong.	Total Hours	Av. Bible Studies	Memorial Atten- dance
8	1			322	2	37
8				965	1	13
1,196	70	89	22	186,267	548	2,753
17	3		3	1,079	17	34
85	2	5	1	12,430	54	168
61	7	5	1	10,149	31	142
13		3	1	2,950	7	36
164	9	15	4	36,573	150	546
32,079	1,072	748	612	2,493,704	18,781	58,575
338	11	9	5	46,394	211	1,002
27,936	1,330	1,816	527	4,778,969	11,263	56,823
12,172	557	626	214	1,924,439	5,826	22,409
223	61	26	12	58,154	252	715
492	36	19	8	68,992	426	1,697
				41		4
1				11	1	
1,159	77	55	16	164,735	742	2,908
18,870	832	761	281	2,686,829	6,451	37,034
557	40	51	14	117,486	504	2,043
1,733	10	15	72	85,472	301	2,158
23		1	1	3,250	13	50
202	17	13	4	35,787	162	484
2,133	251	364	62	674,366	2,433	8,864
30	1	2	1	6,620	34	95
266	14	23	11	61,222	251	879
101,298	8,051	4,488	1,990	13,543,567	65,748	296,322
76,694	3,527	4,086	1,108	11,001,459	33,901	153,227
823	39	166	62	290,912	791	2,061
149	19	4	4	23,043	132	207
11,886	740	5	411	735,430	7,345	13,855
60,573	2,307	3,156	1,033	8,819,565	25,016	120,958
1,075	126	83	25	214,687	745	2,749
53	18	17	4	32,422	203	430
24	1	4	1	6,424	29	64
21	1	2	1	2,742	18	58
1,112	38	76	48	134,403	536	1,925
127	11	34	11	61,132	232	579
15,947	1,601	940	278	2,355,676	14,352	46,013
15,608	1,138	959	277	2,734,104	15,554	62,490
1		1	1	923	3	
1,618	18	88	43	148,429	805	2,402
42	8	4	2	9,872	38	197
4,698	402	186	109	681,856	3,729	14,402
649	58	47	7	142,097	920	1,916
824	32	31	12	106,045	247	1,365
13,899	331	657	234	1,702,546	3,897	23,168
5		1	1	267	3	21
203	18	17	8	38,660	96	524
6,395	299	535	113	1,294,741	7,758	23,729
7				349	2	
5,712	483	446	105	1,077,403	5,595	23,094
5,632	681	342	118	1,059,835	6,069	20,263
25		1	1	3,307	30	57
1,809	85	136	50	367,290	2,174	4,974

Country	Population	1977 Peak Pubs.	Ratio, One Pub- lisher to:	1977 Av. Pubs.	% Inc. over 1976
Faroe Islands (C-16)	41,575	74	562	67	-8*
Fiji (N-38)	588,068	621	947	590	-1*
Finland (B-20)	4,733,000	13,131	369	12,592	-2*
France (E-17)	52,888,000	67,549	784	64,546	2
French Guiana (K-11)	45,000	230	196	218	12
Gabon (L-18)	975,000	339	2,876	306	
Gambia (K-15)	493,000	11	44,818	10	67
Germany, F. R. (E-18)	59,660,000	100,213	595	97,760	-1*
Ghana (K-17)	10,053,350	22,508	447	21,531	-1*
Gibraltar (G-16)	31,000	85	365	81	-2*
Gilbert Islands (L-39)	54,500	2	27,250	2	
Greece (F-19)	9,000,000	18,843	478	18,712	1
Greenland (A-12)	49,719	82	606	76	-11*
Grenada (K-10)	100,000	307	326	278	-2*
Guadeloupe (J-10)	324,000	2,649	122	2,535	3
Guam (G-36)	98,580	117	843	102	-6*
Guatemala (J-7)	5,626,273	5,211	1,080	5,079	3
Guinea (K-15)	5,143,284	249	20,656	210	-8*
Guinea-Bissau (K-15)	517,000	4	129,250	3	-40*
Guyana (K-10)	740,000	1,380	536	1,327	-3*
Haiti (J-9)	5,000,000	3,700	1,351	3,407	-2*
Hawaii (K-45)	865,000	4,803	180	4,653	-2*
Honduras (K-7)	2,656,948	3,243	819	3,149	5
Hong Kong (C-31)	4,500,000	691	6,512	640	21
Iceland (B-15)	220,918	154	1,435	144	-6*
India (J-25)	610,000,000	4,730	128,964	4,534	2
Iran (G-23)	32,000,000	61	524,590	49	44
Iraq (G-22)	9,498,362	20	474,918	16	
Ireland (D-16)	4,580,000	1,874	2,444	1,745	-2*
Israel (G-21)	4,763,000	261	18,249	250	-5*
Italy (F-18)	56,014,166	66,315	845	63,896	12
Ivory Coast (K-16)	6,670,000	1,207	5,526	1,168	4
Jamaica (J-8)	2,100,000	6,506	323	6,277	-2*
Japan (B-36)	111,969,603	41,695	2,685	40,176	11
Jordan (H-21)	2,560,000	65	39,385	54	15
Kenya (L-21)	14,000,000	1,972	7,099	1,929	12
Korea (B-35)	36,436,000	29,361	1,241	27,655	-13*
Kosrae (J-38)	3,989	21	190	18	New
Kuwait (H-22)	990,000	20	49,500	17	
Lebanon (G-21)	3,213,000	1,800	1,785	1,663	5
Lesotho (P-20)	1,181,900	599	1,973	568	-9*
Liberia (K-16)	1,300,000	1,009	1,288	979	-4*
Libya (H-19)	2,440,000	4	610,000	3	200
Liechtenstein (E-18)	24,169	21	1,151	1	-5*
Luxembourg (E-17)	424,677	831	511	799	
Macao (C-31)	375,000	9	41,667	8	14
Madagascar (N-22)	9,000,000	845	10,651	811	5
Madeira (G-15)	285,600	319	833	289	27
Malaysia (E-28)	13,001,900	464	28,021	433	4
Mali (J-17)	5,000,000	32	156,250	31	19
Malta (G-18)	318,500	90	3,539	75	-10*
Malvinas Islands (R-10)	2,089	5	418	3	50
Manus Island (J-35)	29,650	8	3,706	6	20
Marquesas Islands (P-45)	5,419	2	2,710	2	New
Marshall Islands (J-39)	25,044	192	130	173	3

1976 Av. Pubs.	1977 No. Bptzd.	Av. Plo. Pubs.	No. of Cong.	Total Hours	Av. Bible Studies	Memorial Atten- dence
73		14	4	12,193	27	125
594	58	65	23	137,367	582	1,992
12,908	432	879	251	1,844,933	5,221	20,905
63,428	4,582	2,249	1,194	9,305,816	32,444	123,774
194	19	13	3	41,980	261	678
305	20	15	11	42,687	259	690
6		4		4,324	19	32
98,648	3,194	3,213	1,398	12,684,570	31,814	162,458
21,776	1,191	1,174	433	3,652,404	19,117	70,797
83	1	4	1	11,120	35	168
2			1	108	4	30
18,571	455	811	454	2,750,799	6,578	31,887
85	3	22	8	19,459	41	143
283	16	26	5	55,626	242	628
2,470	175	55	36	339,569	1,834	6,650
108		15	1	27,082	97	336
4,940	421	265	80	856,569	4,654	16,597
228	14	69	15	110,364	459	713
5		2	1	3,400	56	41
1,367	57	180	33	308,796	1,186	3,516
3,492	251	260	73	693,851	4,319	17,805
4,750	211	730	58	1,159,909	4,410	11,226
3,013	372	277	67	720,872	4,236	15,297
530	100	132	9	231,518	897	1,367
154	7	11	3	25,230	87	274
4,449	488	530	267	1,028,781	3,233	11,388
34	2	12	1	18,983	76	92
16	3	1	1	2,081	6	32
1,774	96	304	66	519,338	814	3,350
262	8	17	5	44,110	142	483
57,255	8,289	3,649	1,222	11,547,790	44,388	147,341
1,127	135	99	41	259,735	1,538	3,865
6,383	323	227	169	845,984	4,382	17,843
36,180	4,762	10,195	947	15,176,223	55,813	87,497
47	4	2	1	5,461	32	142
1,868	204	240	90	551,797	2,052	5,584
31,393	1,418	2,376	509	4,579,918	16,962	54,620
		4	1	3,589	25	122
17			1	1,263	7	49
1,591	144	85	45	256,446	973	3,380
622	51	50	25	124,668	451	2,936
1,020	64	106	23	246,071	1,244	3,517
1				184	1	8
20		2	1	3,522	18	54
799	53	58	18	141,087	504	1,709
7		5	1	7,055	20	21
772	72	55	21	151,441	991	2,919
228	57	18	8	51,070	246	793
415	48	52	19	122,254	664	962
26	6	10	1	16,235	106	63
83	7	5	1	12,709	48	237
2			1	226	3	7
5		3	1	3,105	7	22
		2		473		
168	4	26	3	42,922	246	539

Country	Population	1977 Peak Pubs.	Ratio, One Pub- lisher to:	1977 Av. Pubs.	% Inc. over 1976
Martinique (J-10)	330,000	1,087	304	1,048	-1*
Mauritania (J-16)	1,500,000	2	750,000	1	-50*
Mauritius (N-23)	880,781	365	2,413	353	-3*
Mexico (H-5)	64,594,402	93,751	689	89,606	9*
Montserrat (J-10)	12,335	23	536	19	-27*
Morocco (G-16)	18,334,000	179	102,425	162	-8*
Nepal (A-27)	12,300,000	17	723,529	14	
Netherlands (D-17)	13,733,578	28,656	479	27,776	-4*
Nevis (J-10)	11,230	50	225	44	
New Britain (K-35)	199,225	216	922	184	1
New Caledonia (N-36)	135,000	387	349	370	11
Newfoundland (E-10)	530,000	1,149	461	1,086	
New Guinea (J-34)	1,531,300	459	3,336	433	-5*
New Hebrides (N-37)	99,325	57	1,839	48	14
New Ireland (J-35)	68,217	54	1,197	48	2
New Zealand (R-35)	3,140,100	7,089	443	6,606	-4*
Nicaragua (K-7)	2,200,000	3,432	641	3,282	4
Niger (J-18)	2,870,000	69	41,594	53	
Nigeria (K-18)	79,758,969	104,973	760	99,163	-8*
Niue (O-40)	3,969	18	221	14	17
North Solomons (K-36)	106,928	53	2,018	44	33
Norway (C-18)	4,044,386	7,352	550	6,982	-3*
Okinawa (D-34)	1,066,706	874	1,220	859	-3*
Pakistan (H-24)	70,380,000	191	368,482	181	1
Palau (G-33)	12,674	31	409	30	3
Panama (K-8)	1,700,000	3,030	561	2,927	
Papua (K-34)	739,200	723	1,022	681	
Paraguay (O-10)	2,646,000	1,505	1,758	1,439	6
Peru (M-8)	16,000,000	12,655	1,264	12,011	5
Philippines (E-32)	42,000,000	69,205	607	65,381	-11*
Ponape (J-37)	19,262	94	205	77	-10*
Portugal (F-16)	9,000,000	20,335	443	18,708	8
Puerto Rico (J-9)	3,030,000	16,761	181	16,402	1
Réunion (O-23)	479,600	523	917	503	2
Rhodesia (N-20)	6,740,800	12,429	542	11,592	-4*
Rodrigues (N-24)	27,049	14	1,932	13	18
Rwanda (L-20)	4,500,000	76	59,211	62	63
St. Eustatius (J-10)	1,335	3	445	3	New
St. Helena (N-16)	4,952	99	50	92	-4*
St. Kitts (J-10)	35,135	154	228	133	2
St. Lucia (J-10)	107,000	293	365	271	4
St. Martin (J-10)	10,423	65	160	51	31
St. Pierre & Miquelon (E-10)	6,200	4	1,550	3	50
St. Vincent (J-10)	95,000	150	633	130	-9*
Salpan (F-36)	14,335	23	623	20	-17*
San Marino (F-18)	19,621	60	327	57	10
São Tomé (L-18)	69,032	2	34,516	2	New
Saudi Arabia (J-22)	7,200,000	7	1,028,571	5	67
Senegal (K-15)	5,000,000	334	14,970	322	2
Seychelles (M-23)	62,000	50	1,240	46	2
Sierra (H-23)	88,188	8	11,024	7	New
Sierra Leone (K-15)	3,002,426	1,138	2,638	1,095	-5*
Solomon Islands (L-36)	196,708	580	339	524	-7*
South Africa (F-19)	26,129,000	29,072	899	27,149	-2*
South-West Africa (N-18)	850,000	315	2,698	288	-7*

1976 Av. Pubs.	1977 No. Bptzd.	Av. Plo. Pubs.	No. of Cong.	Total Hours	Av. Bible Studies	Memorial Attend- ance
1,055	88	41	17	158,083	871	3,013
2				151		
363	29	24	7	64,345	281	792
82,098	6,661	6,778	3,585	15,305,853	78,514	354,985
26	1	2	1	3,678	20	73
177	8	12	4	30,746	107	292
13				1,043	4	
28,954	797	1,960	287	4,640,611	9,045	45,329
44	4	5	1	9,854	23	122
183	9	29	13	61,500	196	699
332	46	10	6	45,518	257	887
1,086	44	104	33	205,637	499	2,170
455	32	51	22	99,896	334	1,588
42	6	2	3	8,647	64	125
47	1	4	4	8,911	21	270
6,903	282	376	116	987,987	3,144	14,624
3,144	318	227	63	627,092	3,732	10,985
53	4	23	6	36,348	102	110
107,924	5,248	5,106	2,097	15,953,016	69,794	248,271
12			1	1,163	15	114
33	9	4	3	10,535	49	100
7,201	201	225	197	784,191	2,033	12,697
889	93	166	21	287,058	1,005	1,903
180	13	31	5	56,581	191	469
29	1	12	1	19,008	112	109
2,931	306	206	68	557,800	3,346	9,253
680	46	55	34	129,304	620	2,305
1,363	161	142	47	304,441	1,162	3,500
11,465	1,231	1,243	254	2,650,893	12,645	38,695
73,223	2,825	5,782	1,952	10,503,159	25,822	166,256
86	1	11	1	19,425	69	223
17,319	1,836	784	355	2,630,914	15,043	47,787
16,161	878	518	227	2,280,838	10,722	41,981
491	66	25	10	84,561	861	1,280
12,127	735	621	527	1,917,089	8,025	33,811
11		1	1	1,225	5	43
38	12	21	4	37,985	137	212
		2		681	2	
96	3	1	2	9,076	35	199
130	5	13	2	25,446	103	354
261	9	18	5	45,927	242	744
39	3	4	1	8,636	49	179
2	1	2	1	2,793	7	13
143	9	14	3	31,033	112	346
24		8	1	13,477	39	63
52	1	4	1	10,797	28	120
			1	99	3	14
3				361	3	4
316	11	56	8	108,043	420	686
45	2	3	2	9,632	53	124
				115	1	8
1,155	71	273	51	462,450	2,298	3,803
564	26	72	30	130,889	527	2,507
27,770	1,572	1,570	842	4,610,841	17,128	77,357
309	8	19	11	52,925	213	639

Country	Population	1977 Peak Pubs.	Ratio, One Pub- lisher to:	1977 Av. Pubs.	% Inc. over 1976
Spain (F-16)	34,907,003	38,465	908	36,242	9
Sri Lanka (C-26)	14,000,000	552	25,362	535	1
Sudan (K-20)	17,500,000	96	182,292	89	-7*
Surinam (K-10)	375,000	908	413	886	-1*
Swaziland (O-20)	480,000	606	792	601	-7*
Sweden (C-19)	8,236,179	16,778	491	16,212	2
Switzerland (E-18)	6,297,600	10,112	623	9,873	1
Syria (G-21)	6,895,000	209	32,990	170	-9*
Tahiti (Q-43)	131,963	442	299	404	11
Taiwan (D-33)	16,678,145	1,067	15,631	987	-11*
Tanzania (M-20)	15,500,000	1,466	10,573	1,358	-10*
Thailand (C-29)	43,213,711	734	58,874	723	2
Tobago (K-10)	40,000	121	331	114	4
Togo (K-17)	2,312,100	2,628	880	2,418	-4*
Tokelau Isls. (N-40)	1,603	6	267	5	67
Tonga (O-39)	90,128	26	3,466	21	-5*
Trinidad (K-10)	1,041,550	2,947	353	2,801	3
Truk (H-36)	31,600	39	810	34	-6*
Tunisia (G-18)	5,772,000	47	122,809	45	2
Turks & Caicos Isls. (H-9)	6,000	17	353	16	
Tuvalu Isls. (L-39)	6,000	4	1,500	3	
Uganda (L-20)	11,400,000	151	75,497	139	-12*
U.S. of America (G-6)	214,714,000	554,018	388	530,374	-3*
Upper Volta (K-16)	5,258,141	77	68,288	69	28
Uruguay (P-10)	2,763,964	4,758	581	4,377	-6*
Venezuela (K-9)	13,400,000	13,835	969	13,310	3
Virgin Is. (Brit.) (J-9)	10,500	78	135	71	-7*
Virgin Is. (U.S.) (J-10)	75,500	488	155	453	3
West Berlin (E-18)	1,985,000	5,340	372	5,196	-4*
Western Samoa (N-40)	151,275	142	1,065	131	8
Yap (F-34)	7,869	39	202	37	9
Zaire (L-19)	25,000,000	19,446	1,286	18,153	-3*
Zambia (N-20)	5,700,000	55,288	103	52,629	-5*
198 Countries	1,996,881			1,909,297	-1.2*
† 18 Other Countries	226,657			207,897	1.1

GRAND TOTAL (216 countries) 2,223,538 2,117,194 -1.0*

* Percentage of decrease

† Work banned and reports are incomplete

WORLDWIDE REPORT

Speaking of the momentous times in which we now live, Jesus prophesied: "Also, in all the nations the good news has to be preached first." (Mark 13:10) This is what Jehovah's Witnesses are now doing throughout the entire earth. The accompanying chart shows how extensive is the work accomplished during the service year of 1977. Truly, it makes our hearts glad to see that God's people are so busy in proclaiming his kingdom in so many places. Rich blessings and fruitage have ac-

1976 Av. Pubs.	1977 No. Bptztd.	Av. Plo. Pubs.	No. of Cong.	Total Hours	Av. Bible Studies	Memorial Attende- ance
33,352	2,993	2,753	673	6,970,825	25,420	75,690
528	49	84	17	156,422	593	1,662
96	1	12	2	25,285	133	159
896	46	98	12	201,003	752	2,447
644	33	33	27	117,515	494	1,708
15,913	544	1,214	302	2,553,376	7,485	27,507
9,821	562	336	222	1,358,588	5,778	19,366
186	4	8	5	25,392	70	340
365	32	28	12	68,050	298	1,106
1,108	31	132	48	222,870	677	2,873
1,512	100	113	76	279,775	1,047	3,535
709	50	121	27	206,917	570	1,463
114	6	14	2	28,051	111	260
2,520	62	237	72	551,604	2,829	9,144
3	1		1	431	4	
22	3	2	1	3,946	18	75
2,811	206	198	42	476,076	2,498	6,959
36	7	1	1	10,594	64	264
44	3	1	1	4,457	25	77
16	2	1	4	4,765	39	69
3			1	515	3	45
158	23	18	10	40,240	195	394
544,644	27,995	29,160	7,438	76,065,701	273,564	1,270,172
54	7	25	5	43,695	201	349
4,634	442	344	90	823,305	4,111	12,228
12,951	1,137	666	167	2,213,269	12,137	47,121
76	11	2	2	8,656	66	242
452	33	16	9	60,731	329	1,263
5,387	130	154	62	648,845	1,647	7,773
121	12	16	4	31,704	145	566
34	5	8	1	16,380	92	200
18,696	1,901	1,930	630	4,758,561	25,431	73,807
55,616	2,399	1,680	1,162	7,081,752	50,296	217,770
1,932,823	114,786	115,845	37,645	301,958,665	1,185,055	4,773,100
205,714	9,673	3,444	3,990	19,465,640	97,191	334,418
2,138,537	124,459	119,289	41,635	321,424,305	1,282,246	5,107,518

MEMORIAL PARTAKERS WORLD WIDE: 10,080

companied their zealous witnessing, as they faithfully gather in the "sheep" for salvation during the time of the "great tribulation."

The report is set out in detail in the accompanying pages.

GLOBAL KINGDOM SERVICE ACTIVITY

During the 1977 service year there were several countries that went under ban, due to the wrath of Satan, as the preaching of the truth has further ex-

posed his organization. This brings to 46 the countries in which the spreading of the good news of God's kingdom is officially prohibited or is under restrictions. While this results in some curtailment in the preaching work, our brothers in those countries have not 'given up in doing what is fine.' Their determination to serve the interests of Jehovah's established kingdom is an inspiration to us all. In some instances the work has increased, with some who had become 'weary in well doing' waking up to their privileges and getting involved in providing an answer to Jehovah's reproacher. Some who had become lax in meeting attendance now clamor to make their homes available for the assembling together of smaller groups, in places where public assembling is prohibited. So the 'weak hands' and 'wobbling knees' have been strengthened by Jehovah. —Gal. 6:9; 2 Thess. 3:13; Prov. 27:11; Isa. 35:3.

Kingdom preaching activity from 216 countries under the supervision of 96 branches reached a peak of 2,223,538 publishers. This was a decrease when compared with the year 1976. There are various factors contributing to this. With a decrease in the number of those reporting, it is understandable that the hours spent (321,424,305) of those reporting would be less. The number of those engaged in the pioneer service has increased nicely over last year, this year there being an average of 119,289 pioneer publishers, to compare with 113,926 the previous year. According to reports from congregations, many brothers and sisters have welcomed the new arrangement for auxiliary pioneer service. Some regular pioneers, being unable to reach the quota of hours suggested for them, due to health, age and other factors, transferred to the auxiliary pioneer service. There has been good support for the auxiliary pioneer service world wide and it is hoped that more will enroll and enjoy the blessings of Jehovah that attend it.

As has been seen from the foregoing report, Jehovah's people are a publishing, printing and preaching society (Matt. 24:14; 2 Tim. 4:2), a teaching society (Matt. 28:19, 20; Col. 3:16), an evangelizing society (2 Tim. 4:5), and a witnessing society. (Isa. 43:10; Acts 1:8) All of this is reflected in the very gratifying report of the work of Jehovah's Witnesses during the year 1977. What a privilege to represent the King of Eternity as the old system of his adversary nears its end! We look forward with keen anticipation to the continued favor of Jehovah as the blessings of his kingdom become more apparent.

ACTS OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES IN MODERN TIMES

Jehovah's Witnesses are a people with a purpose. They know why some 40,000 Christian congregations exist world wide. Theirs is a work of *witnessing*, of 'declaring abroad the excellencies' of Jehovah God. (1 Pet. 2:9) And this they do with joy, enthusiasm and dependence upon the God whose purpose they serve.

This activity is carried on despite hardship and persecution. Certainly, the slanderer Satan does not want the excellencies of Jehovah declared abroad. But the Devil has been foiled in all his efforts to silence proclaimers of the good news.

Why, persecution of Jesus Christ's first-century followers actually served to spread the good news! Yes, for after the stoning of faithful Stephen, "those who had been scattered went through the land declaring the good news of the word."—Acts 8:4.

Those early believers were well aware of their chief purpose in life—to serve to God's praise. Moreover, they were not afraid to face hardship and persecution. They knew that their foes 'would not prevail against them, for Jehovah would deliver them.' (Jer. 1:19) In fulfilling their commission to declare the good news today, Jehovah's Witnesses have the same conviction.

But could you maintain integrity to God and continue witnessing amid primitive conditions in the face of religious opposition? Well, Jehovah's Witnesses in Papua New Guinea have done just that, as succeeding pages reveal.

With firm determination and dependence upon God, Christians in the Philippines have survived the hardships of World War II. They have persevered as witnesses of Jehovah, and he has granted them spiritual prosperity. You will thrill to their account of faithful deeds in declaring the good news.

Jehovah's Witnesses in Spain have endured years of religious opposition and persecution. But they have been delivered by God and have been used mightily in 'declaring his excellencies' throughout that Catholic land. Now, through these pages, you can accompany them in their joyful and enthusiastic work of witnessing.

These faithful acts of modern-day Christians prove that foes of God's people cannot prevail against them. Witnesses of Jehovah have a real purpose in life and can be confident that he will be with them as they carry it out. Indeed, Jehovah never abandons those relying on him, for he is "a God of saving acts."—Ps. 68:20.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA AND THE SOLOMON ISLANDS

Come along to a remote series of forest-clad islands lying just northeast of Australia. The eastern portion of one of these is mainland Papua New Guinea. East of it lie the islands of Manus, New Britain, New Ireland, the North Solomons and hundreds of other islands comprising the Independent State of Papua New Guinea. To the east are the Solomon Islands, with their subsidiary group, the Santa Cruz Islands. On the mainland and in these far-flung islands east of Irian Djaya (part of Indonesia) live over 2,800,000 people. But, just think! They speak more than 700 different languages!

The Portuguese and the Spaniards were among the first European explorers to discover these islands back in the sixteenth century. "Papua" is a Malayan word meaning "frizzy-haired." That name was first given to the island by the Portuguese explorer Don Jorge de Meneses. Is the name appropriate? One may certainly think it is when he sees Papuan men with their great masses of hair. On the other hand, the Spanish explorer de Retez is said to have thought that the people living here closely resembled those he had seen on the Guinea coast of Africa. Thus it was that the name "Papua New Guinea" came to be applied to this intriguing part of the world.

Papua (to the south) and New Guinea (to the north) were administered separately prior to World War II. Thereafter both were administered by the Australian government. Finally, after a period of self-government, Papua New Guinea emerged as an independent nation on September 16, 1975. The Solomon Islands now have self-government and are approaching independence.

LAND AND PEOPLE

The mainland of Papua New Guinea has at its center one of the earth's great mountain systems. A number of peaks rise above 13,000 feet (3,960 meters), with lofty Mount Wilhelm rising to 14,793 feet (4,509 meters). Between these peaks lie broad, grassy, well-populated highland valleys. This area enjoys a climate with two seasons—rainy and dry.

Much of the country is covered with rain forests. Insect life is abundant, with huge and often vividly colored moths and butterflies adding color to the jungle scenery. Among the more than 600 varieties of birds

is the beautiful bird of paradise. Of the 100 species of animals, marsupials (animals with pouches to carry their young) predominate. In different parts of the country are found 70 species of snakes, many of them venomous. Here, too, are large numbers of both freshwater and saltwater crocodiles, some of the latter being among the largest in the world.

When European explorers first came to these islands of the South Pacific, they found them inhabited by tribesmen ranging in skin color from light brown to jet black. These are thought to have migrated from Asiatic regions. Possibly the first to come to these islands were a short, heavyset people. It appears that many of their descendants now are found in the interior highlands of mainland Papua New Guinea and other large islands. Due to the remoteness and inaccessibility of most of this vast area, these are some of the very last people on earth to have been contacted and influenced by the modern way of life.

The next ones to arrive could have been the Melanesians who are taller and thinner. Many of their descendants are to be found in the coastal regions of all these islands. These have had considerable contact with modern ways of living during the past half century or so. To the north, in the Manus Island area, are found many peoples of the Micronesian type, resembling more closely the Mongolian-featured people to the west. To the east are found Polynesians of Caucasian ancestry. However, today, with more intermarriage, it becomes increasingly difficult to classify the various inhabitants of these islands.

"LIGHTBEARER" BRINGS SPIRITUAL LIGHT

Please turn attention now to the mid-1930's. The Watch Tower Society's branch office in Australia then had the responsibility of spreading the Kingdom message among the inhabitants of the many South Pacific islands. How could this be done? By using a well-equipped boat named "Lightbearer."

Manned by a carefully selected crew of brothers, this boat set out from Sydney in late 1934, heading north, with Indonesia as its destination. Just above Cairns in northeastern Queensland, however, engine trouble developed, and the remainder of the voyage to Port Moresby, Papua, had to be made under sail. With great danger of being thrown onto the reef by the huge breakers, the "Lightbearer" finally was taken through the narrow channel in the reef and was safely anchored in the bay just off the town of Port Moresby.

The year was 1935. Then, for the first time, many inhabitants of Papua heard the Kingdom message. For several evenings a program was presented using sound equipment aboard the "Lightbearer." This presentation began with the playing of a musical record. Thereafter, recorded talks on Bible subjects were broadcast. People on shore manifested quite some interest.

At that time a considerable amount of literature was placed with the people of Port Moresby. In fact, some who later became proclaimers of the good news in Papua received their first taste of the truth on that occasion over forty years ago. After several days of witnessing in the area, and with the engine now repaired, the brothers on "Lightbearer" continued their journey to the west.

Sixteen years were to pass before any of the seed then planted could be watered. But by that time a much greater planting and watering work could be done. (1 Cor. 3:5-7) How would this come about?

VOLUNTEERS ENJOY RICH BLESSINGS

In 1951 Brothers N. H. Knorr and M. G. Henschel served an assembly in Sydney, Australia. All who were interested in assisting with the announcing of the good news in the islands were invited to attend a special meeting with the visiting brothers. At the close of that meeting thirty brothers and sisters volunteered to proclaim the Kingdom message to the inhabitants of the islands.

Among these individuals was a middle-aged man, one of the anointed remnant, Tom Kitto, and his wife, Rowena. There were many hazards associated with serving in the islands, but Brother Kitto was able to get a doctor's certificate of good health, and, finally, on September 22, 1951, he left Sydney aboard a DC-3 plane for a long overnight flight to Papua. Just think, at that time, in this part of the earth with its more than two million inhabitants, there was not a single witness of Jehovah!

The next day, when the plane landed and the door was opened, a hot blast of air greeted Brother Kitto. Yes, he was in the tropics. During the seven-mile (11-kilometer) trip from the airport to Port Moresby, he took note of dry grass, stunted trees, and old buildings that had been used by military forces during World War II. Many relics of the war days could still be seen.

Only six weeks after Brother Kitto settled into his job as a radio technician with the Department of Civil Aviation, his wife arrived in Port Moresby. At that time a few hundred Europeans, mostly from

Australia, and several thousand Papuans were living there.

How could the Kittos begin telling these people about Jehovah and the Kingdom? "Start witnessing to the Europeans," was the advice given by the Society's branch in Australia. This is exactly what the Kittos did. However, the European population as a whole was very indifferent to the Kingdom message. Yet, one sheeplike person was found among them late in 1951. How did this come about?

Since Brother Kitto was interested in radio, he could not resist the urge to visit the local radio station. There a young man sat at the controls watching program levels and supervising the operation of two broadcast transmitters. "Hello!" said Brother Kitto. "May I come in? My name is Tom Kitto."

"Not *the* Tom Kitto?" came the response. "My name is Geoff Bucknell." Who was this young man? Why, as a child he had been in association with God's people! He had worked in the Society's Bethel home in Strathfield, Australia, and also at one of its radio stations. But as he had grown older he had lost interest in the truth and eventually came to Papua.

After hearing Geoff's story, Tom said: "Don't you think it's about time you got down to some real study?" Evidently Geoff thought so. Hence, Tom began holding a regular Bible study with him. Before long Geoff was accompanying the Kittos in announcing the good news to the people of Papua.

ON TO THE "BIG VILLAGE"

The Kittos and Geoff Bucknell started witnessing in a village of several thousand inhabitants. Its name is Hanuabada, which in the Motu language means "Big Village." Most of this village is built out over the water of the local bay. To reach the houses it was necessary to walk on wide and often rickety ramps and then over planks or logs. Frequently, our intrepid Kingdom proclaimers thought they were taking their lives in their hands as they walked over those wobbly logs and planks, with the sea several feet below. And, what about the people in those homes? Well, in those early days many of the Papuan women wore only their homemade grass skirts. Men wore long *ramis*, large pieces of cloth wrapped around the waist, and, for the most part, were shirtless. Most of the smaller children wore no clothing at all.

For many years religious organizations such as the London Missionary Society had been teaching these people the Trinity, immortality of the human soul and

the hellfire doctrine. The local pastors and deacons held much power over their parishioners. European missionaries, from their houses on the hill above, kept close watch over the whole village. But there proved to be some sheeplike persons among the villagers.

Near the mission's building was a house built on stilts. Underneath the house it was cool, and women-folk loved to gather there, talking and making mats. To this little group of women came our pioneer sister. By simple language and many gestures, she tried to convey to them an idea of the wonderful blessings ahead in God's new order. Among those listening was Geua Heni, who later became a dedicated witness of Jehovah and still fearlessly declares the Kingdom message to her neighbors in Hanuabada. Her granddaughter, Rei Rapilla, now is a member of the Bethel family, along with her husband, Francis.

Geua's husband was Heni Heni. An enthusiastic Bible study was held with him, and as the truth unfolded, he could not contain himself. Boldly he spoke to all about God's kingdom. In a short time an intensive training program began as, night after night and week after week, home Bible studies were conducted with many villagers.

To one of these early studies Heni Heni brought a young Papuan boy about fifteen years of age. He was Oda Sioni, a very shy lad who sat by himself with his head down and his face partly covered with his hands. But Oda had quite a good grasp of English, and he listened intently. Gradually, he came into closer association with the little group. As the import of what he was learning dawned on him, his shyness disappeared. Soon he was helping Brother and Sister Kitto by translating their simple English into the Motu language.

What fine occasions these studies were! Imagine thirty to forty brown-skinned people, some old and some young, men and women alike, sitting in a circle under two gas lamps, all peering with interest at that one white Witness and the young Papuan who completed the circle. Oda's face was beaming, and his gestures were most impressive as he translated from simple English into his beloved Motu. He was translating: "No, we will not all be going to heaven. Jehovah will make this earth into a beautiful paradise. Our loved ones are not in a hellfire, nor are they in heaven, but they are sleeping in the grave and will soon be awakened by Jesus." How this message thrilled and gave faith to many of those Papuans,

strengthening them to share the good news with others!

As the nightly studies were progressing in Hanuabada, gradually certain individuals stood out as helpers in the witnessing work. They were Heni Heni, his wife Geua, Lou Eno and his wife Baeau, Ono Rose from Kido, and Maia from Manu Manu. Our young Papuan, Oda Sioni, became a special pioneer in 1958 and later served as a circuit overseer for a time.

EXPANDING THE WITNESS

Many people with whom Bible studies were conducted in Hanuabada were from various villages scattered along the Papuan coast. When they returned to their homes, they told their friends and relatives about the things they had been learning. Some were very impressed. For instance, there were the excitable Kerema people, a group of whom came requesting that a Bible study be conducted with them.

Early in 1952 the Kittos were visited by a headman from Haima, a village about fifteen miles (24 kilometers) from Port Moresby. His name was Bobogi, and he came from a mountain tribe known as the Kolaris. Though unable to read, he could understand some English and pleaded: "Please come and teach my people about the truth!" Soon, in their old utility car, the Kittos were making their way along the road through mud and bogs to Haima, a neat village of fifteen to twenty houses. Bobogi assembled his people and, as Brother Kitto spoke Bible truths to them, Bobogi did his best to translate what was said.

That was the beginning, and many blessings followed. In fact, it was at Haima that the brothers built the first of over ninety Kingdom Halls now in use throughout the territory supervised by this branch office of the Watch Tower Society. At this same village our first circuit assembly was held. And it was here that our first and only international assembly convened years later, in 1969, when more than a thousand people from over sixty language groups gathered peacefully. Incidentally, Brother Bobogi continued as a faithful Witness, eventually serving as an overseer in the Haima Congregation until his death in 1974.

MORE WORKERS FOR THE FIELD

In 1953 Tom and Rowena Kitto attended a national assembly in Melbourne, Australia. Part of the convention program was devoted to a discussion of serving where the need for Kingdom proclaimers was greater. During that session Tom gave a stirring talk about

Papua New Guinea. The result? Before long Brother and Sister Donald Fielder were on their way to Papua by boat, arriving with just five shillings left between them.

Learning a new language was a big, but very necessary, job confronting the newcomers. "Oh, I'll never learn this language!" lamented Sister Fielder. But Brother Fielder was determined that they would learn ten new words each day, write them on a blackboard and put the blackboard in their bedroom. "We'll sleep with the words, talk about them as we're going to sleep, look at them and use them as soon as we wake up, and if sometimes we are not able to sleep during the night, well, you know what we can do!" With such an attitude, Don eventually became a fine translator of our publications into the Motu and Hula languages.

INTEREST KINDLED IN THE SOLOMON ISLANDS

During 1953, the first spark of interest in Bible truth was being kindled in the Solomon Islands under very unusual circumstances. This seems to be a good place to tell you about these developments and, for that matter, to round out the account of the spread of the Kingdom good news in the Solomons for the past quarter of a century.

To begin with, please consult the map on this book's back endsheet. It will help you to follow our story of Christian progress in Melanesia, including the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea.

First a description of the Solomon Islands. They are comprised of six large islands and many small ones, all very beautiful. Most of them have high and rugged mountains and are of volcanic origin. As a whole, the climate is hot and humid, with an average temperature of 85 degrees Fahrenheit (29 degrees Celsius) during the day and an average rainfall of 120 to 140 inches (300 to 360 centimeters) a year. Dense forests cover much of the islands.

Since the beginning of this century, Britain has controlled most of these islands. The total population now is about 196,708 and is mostly of Melanesian origin, with sprinklings of Polynesian, Micronesian, European and Chinese people. Since many languages are spoken, one common tongue is needed and this is now Solomon Islands-Pidgin, a type of Pidgin English.

In the early days, residents of these islands lived in small groups, most of them independent and isolated. People of one village fought with those of other villages and took the heads of their enemies. In places the people were cannibals. In fact, originally Malaita

Island often was called "Cannibal Island." As a result, there was so little friendly contact that many villages developed their own dialects and had difficulty in understanding the speech of people in nearby villages. The first European to discover the Solomon Islands was the Spanish explorer Mendana, who landed at and named Santa Isabel, Guadalcanal and other islands in 1567. He is said to have given the name "Solomon" to these islands to suggest that this was where King Solomon of ancient Israel got his gold.

Traders and missionaries came after the explorers. Because of the demand for labor on sugar plantations, Solomon Islanders were recruited in large numbers and taken to Fiji, and to Queensland, Australia. Bad treatment of these islanders by some of the recruiters made the islanders fight back, resulting in the death of village people, traders and missionaries.

During the second world war, many of these islands were invaded by the Japanese, who were repelled after much hard fighting by Allied forces. When the United States armed forces landed on Guadalcanal and other islands, the people saw unbelievable quantities of every kind of equipment, from blankets to bulldozers. This great display of wealth confused the people, who had lived a quiet life in their villages, with little money and few machines. When the war was over and the men went back to their villages, they were discontented and this gave rise to a strong political movement. This movement was called the "Marching Rule." Many people joined the movement, and they believed that big ships would come from overseas full of cargo to be given out to the people.

But what about those unusual circumstances we mentioned earlier, those factors that first sparked interest in the truth in the Solomon Islands? Well, at the height of this "Marching Rule," Clement Fa'abasua, a young Malaita man, became involved in the movement and later was arrested and jailed for fifteen months in Honiara. Clem, as he was called for short, had always liked the Bible and even in jail he would spend time reading it with some of the prisoners. One night he was explaining how he and his church, the South Sea Evangelical Mission, believed in a literal hellfire and in the Trinity doctrine. A fellow prisoner, a Fijian man, listened quietly. At the conclusion of the discussion, however, he spoke up and said: "In Fiji there is a new religion called Jehovah's Witnesses and they do not believe in a literal hellfire. Nor do they believe the Trinity doctrine."

The Fijian man was not one of Jehovah's Witnesses, but he did have a copy of our book "*Let God Be True.*"

Clem read it avidly, soon filling a notebook with the facts and scriptures he was learning. Upon his release from jail, Clem wrote the Society for literature. He went back to his home on Malaita Island to await the arrival of the two books *"Let God Be True"* and *"This Means Everlasting Life."* How happy Clem was to receive this spiritual food! Then a fine letter came from Brother Bert Gardiner in Western Australia. He was a regular pioneer, but was confined to a wheelchair due to an infirmity. For the following few years by mail he carried on a Bible study with Clem and others in the Solomon Islands.

The years 1954 and 1955 found Clem working secularly on the Russell Islands and witnessing to both Europeans and Malaita people. One man from Malaita Island was Caleb George, who listened with appreciation and was later to become a special pioneer and an overseer for a time.

PROBLEMS DEVELOP

When Clem went home later for his leave, he took literature with him and found others searching for the truth, among them Timotheus Ansa and Siru. At that time a certain man belonging to the South Sea Evangelical Mission slept in Clem's house. He read *"Let God Be True"* and enjoyed it, but he also read some of Clem's personal letters. When Clem returned to the Russell Islands, this man went to a conference of the South Sea Evangelical Mission, at which he spoke out strongly against their teachings. The mission leaders were angry about this, and when they asked him how he knew about these things, he told them about Clem. The result was that they made complaints about Clem to the district commissioner.

A few days later the district commissioner arrived to see Clem and wanted to know what he was doing buying the Watch Tower Society's books with his own money. Clem replied that he thought this was his own business. After a discussion, the district commissioner left, but a few days later the police visited Clem. They made a list of all the books he had and took them all with them except his Bibles and the book *"Make Sure of All Things."* Still later, while Clem was at home on Malaita Island, the police told him that he was to report in person to their headquarters in Honiara. As it turned out, publications Clem had placed with others had got him into trouble.

To comprehend the underlying reasons for Clem's problems, we need to consider the experiences of Brother Liston (Les) Carnie, who had come to the Solomons early in 1954 to preach the good news. On

April 3, 1954, he began working on a coconut plantation. The next day, Sunday, Brother Carnie needed some stamps and so went over to the nearby Methodist Mission to obtain some. There he met the woman who had attended to his documents the day before, as well as another woman. They asked him to remain for their religious services, but Brother Carnie declined, pointing out that although he believed in God, he did not belong to any of the orthodox religions and did not favor many of their doctrines. He also gave a Kingdom witness. However, no sooner had he left than these women informed the government authorities that the Communists had come. Then they informed individuals at their Methodist headquarters that Jehovah's Witnesses were in their midst.

Two days later a policeman visited Brother Carnie, accusing him of being a Communist. After a lengthy discussion, the policeman left, but Brother Carnie knew that the matter was far from settled. He continued with his witnessing activity in surrounding villages and also gave close attention to his secular employment.

Because of the good work that he was doing on the plantation, his firm gave him a promotion and sent him to the island of Guadalcanal. However, instead of a good house, better furniture, and so forth, Brother Carnie found no conveniences there. His living quarters were only an old copra shed and he had no furniture, no mosquito net, no supply of food! Night came with what seemed to be millions of mosquitoes. In a few days, Brother Carnie had malaria and, lacking assistance, he recognized several days later that black-water fever was developing. He needed help, but could not even write a note to ask someone to come to his aid.

One morning when the heat had become intense, Brother Carnie thought that he had come to the end of his life. But faintly he heard a native man say that a large canoe was approaching. Aboard was the manager with supplies of medicine, food, a mosquito net and the like. Within a week or so Les Carnie was back to normal. He continued his work as manager of that plantation and pressed on with his witnessing to the villages up and down the coast.

In November 1955 Brother Carnie informed his company that he was not going to renew his contract with them and would be leaving in March 1956. During March he received a job offer from a firm of builders, but was unable to obtain a permit to remain in the Solomon Islands.

On March 30, 1956, Brother Carnie went to Honiara. The next morning he was picked up by two police

inspectors who said they had to search him to see whether he possessed seditious literature. Upon looking through his bags and boxes, they found several of our books and booklets, as well as copies of *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* The inspectors had a long list of Watch Tower publications that, unknown to Brother Carnie, had been put under official ban on March 23, 1956, allegedly as seditious literature. Hence, all the literature that Les Carnie had with him now was prohibited in the Solomon Islands.

The following Thursday, April 5, 1956, Les Carnie received a summons to appear in court the next morning. The district commissioner presided as judge. Brother Carnie pleaded "not guilty" to the charge concerning the alleged seditious literature. A radio announcer was called in and gave evidence that he had read, over the radio, a government proclamation banning and declaring as seditious the publications of Jehovah's Witnesses. Brother Carnie had not heard this announcement, nor had he seen any notification to this effect on the public notice board at the Post Office. However, the judge found him guilty and imposed a fine of ten pounds. Brother Carnie did not want to pay the fine, but, as he had some letters and books ready to send to native folk who were interested and he had had no time to collect them and his personal property, he felt it was the wisest course to pay. As soon as he had paid the fine, the police told him that he would have to leave the Solomon Islands on the first plane out, as he would not be given a permit to remain any longer.

So it was that on April 9, 1956, Les Carnie was aboard a plane heading for Australia. However, he had the satisfaction of knowing that he had given a witness to Jehovah and the Kingdom to the best of his ability, and that under trying conditions. Time would tell whether or not some of the seed thus sown would bear fine fruit.

PROGRESS DESPITE A BAN

A few months after the government ban had been placed on the Society's publications, Clement Fa'abasua was ordered to appear before the court. At the hearing, the judge asked Clem to speak about what he had done, but Clem had nothing to say. Then he asked Clem if he had any questions. Yes, he had. "Is there any law against freedom of worship in the Solomon Islands?" "None," was the reply. "Is there any law against one changing his religion if he wants to?" "There is no law," was the answer. Then the judge

asked the police if they had anything to say—had Clem made trouble for them? No, he had made no trouble. "Then," said the judge, "what shall we do about this matter?" The police said that the Watch Tower publications were banned in the Solomon Islands, and therefore Clem had been breaking the law by having them.

The judge imposed a fine of five pounds. As yet, Clem had not associated with any of Jehovah's Witnesses, but he had heard about Brother Carnie's court case and how he had been forced to leave the country. So, he paid his fine. He was strongly warned about carrying on any longer with his new religion. Of course, that did not stop his activities.

Upon returning to his home on Malaita Island, Clem again met Caleb George, who was diligently studying the Bible with the aid of some of the Society's literature. At that time word came through that a circuit overseer, Brother T. Sewell, had come to Honiara and had been able to witness to the people there. He had also had an interview with the high commissioner with a view to having the ban lifted, but with no success.

About the time that Brother Les Carnie was having his trouble with the authorities in Honiara, the "Triumphant Kingdom" District Assembly was held in Sydney, Australia. At that assembly Brother N. H. Knorr held a meeting with all persons interested in serving in the islands. Brother Ray Paterson heard this thrilling talk and was determined to serve where the need was greater. By early 1957 he and his wife, Dorothy, were actively declaring the good news in the Solomons.

It was also early in that year that Caleb George traveled to Honiara and was baptized. Immediately, he got busy in the witnessing work. A month or so later, Brother Paterson took a ten-hour boat trip to Malaita Island, where he first met Clement Fa'abasua. And just think, Clem had been active in announcing the Kingdom for nearly four years, but this was the first time he himself had ever met one of Jehovah's Witnesses!

Brother Paterson's visit was short. But it was not too short to give a baptismal talk. Thereafter, Clem was baptized in symbol of his dedication to Jehovah God. Yes, there was a ban, and there were many difficulties, but rich blessings were being bestowed upon God's people.—Prov. 10:22.

Once the brothers and interested people knew that Ray and Dorothy Paterson were settled in Honiara, their home became a center for those few who were

thirsting for the truth. Frequently, visitors from Malaita came to the Paterson home for Bible studies. Regarding this, Sister Paterson wrote:

"This pattern of having interested ones from Malaita Island come to our house in Honiara continued for some time, and it is wonderful to look back now and compare them as they were then with the way Jehovah has molded them over the years and is now using them in various capacities in his organization. I recall vividly that one day, not long after my arrival, a ferocious-looking man with a thickly bearded face came climbing up the hill toward our house. Still being unaccustomed to the local people and feeling very conscious of the fact that I was all alone in that old house on the ridge outside of town, I kept an eye on his progress and hoped fervently that he was just passing by. But, no, he came to the door. I stood there ready to shut it as quickly as possible, if necessary. Then this man looked up at me and expressed gratitude that his prayers had been answered and that he had been able to come and find us. I felt ashamed when I realized that I had been judging him from his outward appearance. It was the first of many lessons I was to learn from observing the operation of Jehovah's spirit upon the sheeplike ones in these islands."

Despite the joys, however, being a Witness brought many problems. Brother Paterson was unable to find secular employment. Hence, the Patersons decided to sell their old car so that Dorothy could fly to Rabaul, New Britain, and find work there, while Ray continued to look for work in Honiara. She found work and accommodations in Rabaul, but after a few months Brother Paterson sent for her, as he had obtained work.

But not all was going well. When Sister Paterson returned she found Ray ready to face a court case. Since some of our literature had been banned in the Solomon Islands, Brother Paterson had carefully avoided ordering these books from the Society. However, a strange situation developed. Only after he had sent an order for the book *"Make Sure of All Things"* did Brother Paterson see a public notice stating that this book had been banned in the Solomons. Immediately he cabled the Watch Tower Society's branch office in Australia to have the order canceled. Later, and quite unexpectedly, the recently banned *"Make Sure of All Things"* reached him in the mail. Evidently his cable had been sent too late to cancel the order.

Brother Paterson was just wrapping the books with the intention of sending them back in the next mail when a policeman arrived with a search warrant and confiscated the books. Consequently, in early 1958,

Brother Paterson was taken to court and given the alternative of paying a fine or spending a month in prison. He chose to go to jail.

With Ray Paterson soon to be jailed, another problem arose. The old house in which the Patersons had been living was due to be demolished and they had been searching for another home. Nothing seemed to be available in town, but there was an old deserted house a couple of miles out of town, and Ray was able to rent this. They had just moved in when a policeman arrived to make the arrest. Now Dorothy was all alone. Shortly thereafter, two local men interested in the truth took on the responsibility of looking after her safety. How grateful she was for their thoughtful help! For that matter, loving assistance in the way of some funds even came from God's people in Australia.

The month passed slowly as Ray served his sentence. Yet, there was a good side to all of this. He did have many opportunities to share the good news of the Kingdom with others while in jail.

CIRCUIT WORK IN THE SOLOMONS

The situation was very tense, since most of the Society's literature had been banned. Three brothers had been given fines or jail sentences and one of them had been forced to leave the country. Nevertheless, spiritual encouragement was received when Brother John Cutforth came to the Solomons as a circuit overseer.

Since most of the interested ones lived on Malaita Island, where Clem Fa'abasua and Caleb George were witnessing, it was decided that Brother Cutforth should visit them. Brother Paterson was pleased to go along with him. After a rough overnight trip on a small coastal boat, they pulled into Auki, the main town on Malaita Island. There Clem, Caleb and a number of newly interested people were waiting on the wharf. Immediately, Brother Cutforth went with Clem to some of his Bible studies. What a joy it was to see the good teaching ability Clem displayed! Next they walked a few miles out to Clem's village, named Magi. There the small, leaf Kingdom Hall was full of smiling villagers, ready to greet their visitors and drink in the satisfying Kingdom truths.

The circuit overseer's visit in 1958 was a short one. But it laid a foundation for hundreds who would become proclaimers of the good news. In August 1958 the first congregation in the Solomon Islands was formed in Honiara.

Brother John Cutforth was able to return for an-

other circuit visit in May of 1959. He then walked across Malaita Island for the second time. On this trip, he organized meetings and helped prepare the interested ones for field service. The first congregation on Malaita Island was formed at Magi in August 1959.

During that 1959 circuit visit, Brother Cutforth visited a number of villages. One of these was Gwari, where he gave a public talk. In the audience was Mahlon Mokofi, a pastor associated with the South Sea Evangelical Mission. He was quiet and listened thoughtfully. Later, at another village, Mahlon Mokofi again was in the audience. When the talk was over, he quietly slipped out into the darkness and went back to his own village. He knew the Witnesses would be returning the next morning and, because he felt that this was the truth, he organized his people and prepared a very good meal for Brother Cutforth and those traveling with him. When they had finished eating, Mahlon invited Brother Cutforth to go over to their church building and give a public talk. Well, this was the beginning of what was to become the Gwari Congregation some five years later. The church building eventually had its pagan symbols removed and was turned into a fine Kingdom Hall, with Mahlon becoming a witness of Jehovah and the first overseer of that congregation.

ABANDONING 'THEIR OWN RELIGION'

Late in 1960 the brothers in Honiara were busy preparing the site for a Kingdom Hall. They also were busy in the witnessing work, and one day some of them called on Early Dainau, a northern Malaita man. This call was to have far-reaching effects on the growth of our work in the Solomon Islands.

To understand how this was so, we need to go back to the late 1940's. In northern Malaita the people also were caught up in the "Marching Rule" mentioned earlier. Many of their leaders were put in prison. Among these were Shem Irofa'alu and his son Timotheus, as well as many other teachers and leaders in the South Sea Evangelical Mission. Upon being released and returning to their homes, they found that they were not looked upon with favor by their mission and were not welcomed back. What would they all do now?

Many of them came to Shem Irofa'alu, upon whom they looked as their leader. They decided to form their own religion, calling it "Boboa," meaning "Foundation." Among this group were about forty mature men who constituted a teaching organization for the thousand or more who had broken away with them. Fortunately,

Shem was a humble, God-fearing man. Regularly he visited people in their villages and homes and spent much time in prayer, seeking God's direction upon his people.

Early Dainau was one of Shem's associates. After coming in touch with Bible truth in 1960, Dainau started attending meetings of Jehovah's people and soon realized that he had found the truth. In December 1961 he wrote to Shem about his discovery and sent him some of our literature, including the book *From Paradise Lost to Paradise Regained*.

Shem read the publications, meditated and prayed over matters. As he progressed in knowledge, he realized that someone had been lying to him. He gathered together the many teachers under his jurisdiction and told them about the things he was learning. Timotheus, his only son, was inclined to argue about points, but possibly this was good, because then these matters were clarified. Shem wrote to Dainau for information and sent five of his teachers over to Honiara to learn more about Jehovah's Witnesses. These men had all their questions answered and, in their own words, felt like babes as far as their knowledge of God's Word was concerned.

Brother Norman Sharein, a special pioneer, was sent to Malu'u in northern Malaita, to follow up the interest there. He met Shem and his son Timotheus and gave a public talk attended by about 500 people. At his invitation, about 300 returned for a Bible study that began about 7 a.m. on Monday.

There was considerable arguing, but during the next few days nine outstanding Bible themes were discussed by means of a large blackboard with illustrations, and supporting scriptures were listed. The pastors and teachers listened, looked up the scriptures, and made copies of the Bible presentations. All their questions were answered satisfactorily. On Thursday Shem took the teachers aside and asked them what they thought of this religion. All except a certain Abiathar agreed that this was the truth. At that Shem suggested that they all think about matters prayerfully and ask for God's guidance. The next day even Abiathar was convinced. Brother Sharein reported: "They then called me over and told me that now they all wanted to become Jehovah's Witnesses. This decision meant that many hundreds of people were ready to be taught the truth."

The pastors took the points of the nine Bible topics they had learned back to their respective villages to teach the residents there. "Soon," reported Brother Sharein, "crosses were being broken off and taken out

of the churches and the buildings were being transformed into Kingdom Halls of Jehovah's Witnesses. The beautiful large church structure in Bokolo was converted into an assembly center for large circuit and district assemblies that would be held in northern Malaita."

Shem was the first person from northern Malaita to be baptized as a witness of Jehovah. Eventually he became an elder in the congregation and has been serving Jehovah faithfully for a number of years.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE SOLOMONS

The first circuit assembly of God's people in the Solomon Islands was held in October 1961. It took place on Malaita Island, at Kwainaketo village, and 215 were present for the public talk. Fifteen persons symbolized their dedication to Jehovah by water immersion at that gathering.

Over the years, the Society's motion pictures and slides did a fine work in making the public aware of what Jehovah's people are doing. Often over 1,000 attended showings in the Solomon Islands, and on one occasion 1,511 gathered to see the film "God Cannot Lie."

The brothers were saddened at the death of Ray Paterson in the latter part of 1962 and by Sister Paterson's subsequent departure to serve in the New Hebrides Islands. However, God's people in the Solomon Islands pressed on with their witnessing work. To supply them with publications, in 1965 a literature depot was established in Honiara.

Circuit overseers also provided further encouragement during their visits. Mind you, these brothers and their wives (where married) had to be physically fit. One relates: "During the mid-1960's, the circuit was so large that circuit overseers and their wives seemed to spend their 'weekend' time walking. It was quite common to spend from 4 to 6 hours on a Monday walking from one congregation to another."

The spiritual feeding of sheeplike persons in the Solomon Islands long was a problem because of the government's ban on *The Watchtower*, *Awake!* and other publications of the Society. But spiritual food was provided in the form of a small publication that began to be published in January 1968 and eventually was called "Bible Study Guide." In time, over 700 persons were subscribing to it. But its last issue was released in December 1976.

"Its last issue?" you ask. Yes, because, as a result of a 650-signature petition to the governor, the eighteen-

year ban on *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* was lifted in the Solomon Islands on December 30, 1974. English editions of these were circulated thereafter for some time. Then, happily, as of January 1, 1977, *The Watchtower* began to be published in the Solomon Islands-Pidgin language.

This was followed by another fine development. For some time, we had been trying to get our work registered in the Solomon Islands. When the solicitors indicated that our chances were quite good, a meeting was held at a district assembly, in August 1975. There members were selected for the prospective legal trust. In 1976 a constitution was drafted and this was adopted at a general meeting of members in February 1977. Members of the Bethel family were pleased indeed to receive this message from the registrar of companies: "I hereby certify that Jehovah's Witnesses of the Solomon Islands Trust Board (Incorporated) have been duly incorporated under the provisions of the Charitable Trusts Ordinance." The certificate of registration was dated April 18, 1977. It is hoped that our being registered as a Charitable Trust will open the way for missionaries to enter the Solomon Islands and will otherwise promote Kingdom-preaching work there.

During the 1977 service year there was a peak of 580 Kingdom proclaimers in the Solomon Islands. Also, 2,060 attended three "Sacred Service" District Assemblies there. But there appears to be even greater potential for theocratic progress there because 2,507 persons attended the Memorial on April 3, 1977. Along with their hundreds of fellow believers, the 64 pioneers continue working in 31 congregations, zealously proclaiming the good news to residents of the Solomon Islands.

FINE PROGRESS IN PAPUA

Now let us return to the year 1953 and pick up the thread of our story about Christian progress to the west in Papua. By that time a number of Papuan men and women in Port Moresby had begun bearing witness to the good news alongside the brothers who had come there to serve where the need was greater. By March 1954 our work had progressed so well that the Hanuabada Congregation was formed in Port Moresby.

In July of 1955, John Cutforth, as a traveling overseer from Australia, visited the congregation in Hanuabada village. On that occasion, "The New World Society in Action," one of the Watch Tower Society's films, was shown in Hanuabada. And just imagine, well over a

thousand persons came to each of the two showings in that village! During Brother Cutforth's three-week visit the film was shown on thirteen different occasions. In outlying villages, where there was no electricity, the brothers hooked up the batteries of four or five automobiles and thus had enough power for good showings. This film was an eye-opener to many hundreds of Papuan people. For many, it was the first time they had seen a film of any kind.

To climax this fine visit, arrangements were made for the first circuit assembly in Papua. It was a one-day assembly held at Haima. At that gathering sixty-five persons symbolized their dedication to Jehovah God by undergoing water baptism. Following the final assembly talk, which presented appropriate spiritual counsel, the truth-loving Papuan people lined up one by one and presented Brother Cutforth with gifts—grass skirts, combs carved from wood, shell necklaces and beautifully woven fans decorated with feathers. Brother Cutforth felt he would like very much to remain with these Papuan Witnesses. But he had to return to his assignment in Australia.

DECLARING THE GOOD NEWS IN NEW BRITAIN

The Kingdom message had never been proclaimed on the island of New Britain. But that was to change when John and Lena Davison arrived there in July of 1956. They settled at Waterfall Bay, where they were to remain for two and a half years. And those were to be busy and fruitful years.

"Interest in the truth quickly became manifest," wrote Brother Davison. "But most of the people were illiterate and we were hard pressed to think of ways of getting the truth across to them. We typed out many Bible presentations and, after teaching the ones who could read a little, we got them to help us to teach those who could not read at all. Soon these typed presentations were carried far and wide up and down the coast by interested boat crews that we met. . . .

"Brother Cutforth came to visit us, and it was during his visit that a method of teaching was discussed that made a fine contribution to the preaching and teaching work. We began to use simple pictures drawn on any material that came to hand. Later, we were to find that using chalk and a blackboard made of plywood was an excellent way of getting the meaning of the good news down into the hearts of the people.

"A natural extension of this means of teaching was the use of school exercise books, which were made up with picture presentations drawn in crayon or pen. Dozens of books were made up. But what a job we let ourselves in for! We spent many, many hours drawing up Bible discussion books for all associated. Each time a new subject was taught, it meant adding a new picture with all of its details to everyone's book. But the hard work that went into the preparation faded into the background as we saw our Bible students become the first local publishers in New Britain. How thrilled we were to have them go with us on the weekends and give their Bible presentations!"



John Cutforth teaching Bible truths by pictograph

But do not think that witnessing in New Britain was activity of the easiest type. Why, the area is one of the wettest in Papua New Guinea, and often as much as ten inches (25 centimeters) of rain falls in one night! This can have quite an effect. "Once," reported Brother Davison, "owing to rough seas, the ship that brought our supplies had to put them ashore a few miles along the coast. To get them, we had to cross a flooded crocodile-infested river. The dugout canoe tipped upside down right in the middle of the racing waters. I was underneath, completely submerged, but I held on to part of the outrigger of the canoe. Eventually I got my head above the water. Another canoe put out for us far down the river and managed to pick up all of us just before we were swept out to sea."

RELIGIOUS OPPOSITION PROVES FUTILE

While the Davisons were busy at Waterfall Bay, other brothers were moving into Rabaul, New Britain, to help with the Kingdom work. Brother Henry Nickey was among them and stated: "The Catholic and Methodist missions were strongly entrenched here. The land on the roads leading out of Rabaul had been so divided that one section was allotted to the Catholic Church and then the next section to the Methodist. Whether the local people, the Tolais, would be Catholic or Methodist was decided by whichever section they happened to be in. According to a 'gentlemen's agreement,' neither would trespass on the other's territory."

By the end of July 1957, the group of Kingdom proclaimers had grown to six and the first congregation in New Britain was formed at Rabaul. In witnessing from village to village, the publishers found enthusiastic groups of Tolais gathering to hear the message. "But," reported Alan Gannaway, "on return calls either we were met by the village leader and told not to return again, or we would drive up to a village and, before we could get out of our car, the cry *Kalamana lotu* ('the new religion') would echo throughout the grass huts. You would think we had the plague, for the villagers just vanished into the jungle and left us in a deserted village."

False religious opposition to our work erupted into violence at Vunabal, a village about thirty miles (48 kilometers) from Rabaul. The villagers were of the Sulka tribe, and they were living in among the Tolai community on land the ownership of which was under dispute. Brother and Sister Davison were among those conducting studies in Vunabal. Sister Davison says: "These humble people that we had been studying with

were progressing very well. Then the Roman Catholic Church decided to do something to stop the work."

So it was that on Sunday, April 5, 1959, while John Davison was conducting a Bible study with a big group of Sulka people, a large mob of Tolai Catholics under the leadership of a certain catechist suddenly pushed their way into the house and brought the study to a halt by their shouting and abuse. In the meantime, other members of the mob disrupted Bible studies being conducted in other homes. The mob threatened to take stronger action if the Witnesses returned the following Sunday. This interference was reported to the police officer at Kokopo and he investigated the matter.

This, however, was not the end of the story. Sister Davison reported: "The next weekend we were busy preparing to go to the village as usual when one of the interested men from the village arrived very short of breath, having ridden his bicycle in great haste the thirty miles [48 kilometers] to town. He came to tell us that there was going to be trouble, as the European priest had sent a number of his people to the village the day before to erect an altar. He was going to hold a service in the village at the same time we usually were there to conduct our studies. This was done in spite of the objections of the local villagers."

"As we were expecting trouble that Sunday morning, we called in at Kokopo to inform the police about what was happening. The sub-inspector ordered six local policemen into the police van and went ahead of us to the village. The road was lined for miles with jeering Catholics. When we arrived at the village, we found this priest, with several hundred Tolais, about to start his service. The sub-inspector pushed his way through to where the priest was standing and asked him to leave, taking his followers with him, as they had not been invited by the villagers to conduct a service there. The priest ignored the police and went ahead with his service, which took about an hour."

"When he was finished, the police opened a path through the mob and called us to go into the village. We did this with misgivings. By this time the interested Sulka people seemed dazed and very much afraid, but they followed us into the house and seated themselves. We could hear the priest talking loudly in Tolai to his 'flock,' which by this time had swelled to several hundred in number. The shouting outside became louder, making both Sister Gannaway and me very uneasy. We were comforted, though, in the knowledge that the police had surrounded the house. About

twenty minutes after we had started our meeting, the sub-inspector entered the room with a very worried look on his face. He asked whether we could close the meeting soon, as the mob was getting out of hand and he did not have enough police to protect us. So, the brothers closed the study and we went outside.

"Then there was pandemonium! The mob seemed demonized, and rushed toward us swearing, spitting and shaking their fists, while the priest stood with folded arms and smiled. The police managed to get us to the road. Then Sister Gannaway and I were left without protection as the police went back to get some of the interested villagers who were being molested by the mob. I looked up and, to my horror, saw a wild-eyed man filled with hatred walking toward us. We did not panic, but walked at a normal pace. I prayed to Jehovah to remember us in the resurrection.

"Just then a tall man rushed up, took my arm, and said: 'Don't be afraid. I won't let them touch you!' He hurried us to the car, opened the door and pushed us in. Just as we reached the car, Brothers Davison and Gannaway came along with the sub-inspector. The police put some of the interested villagers into the police van and we managed to drive away slowly. We drove a few miles and then stopped to talk over the incident. The sub-inspector was still shaken from the experience. He said: 'This is the closest shave I have had since I have been in the police force.'"

Back in the village the mob broke the blackboards and ripped up the Bibles, roughly handling the remaining villagers before going off to their own villages. The sub-inspector took the matter to court, but the local catechist was not punished. Although many persons were scared off by this mob action, Paulas Lamo, one local individual who went through this trouble, continued to progress in his knowledge of the truth and has been a faithful dedicated brother for some years now. At present the Davisons are faithfully serving in the circuit work.

Our work has continued to progress in New Britain. Many who were illiterate and originally had to be taught by means of illustrated Bible presentations on blackboards took advantage of the weekly literacy school in the congregation. As a result, a number were able to come to the point where they could read the Society's publications for themselves. In addition to such individual progress, Jehovah's organization as a whole has moved ahead in New Britain. For instance, despite difficulties and opposition, it was possible to obtain land in Rabaul and to construct a fine Kingdom Hall there. Since that took place in the

mid-1960's the work has spread, so that now there are congregations established in twelve places in New Britain. Recently a peak of 216 publishers was reached on that island and 699 attended the Memorial of Christ's death observed there in April 1977.

NEW IRELAND HEARS THE TRUTH

Northeast of the Papua New Guinea mainland and the island of New Britain is New Ireland. Its residents also needed to hear the good news. So in August 1956, Brother Ken Frame and his wife, Rosina, arrived in Kavieng, New Ireland, to extend our work into that area. With the help of a Papuan man who was interested in the truth, Brother and Sister Frame were able to search out other interested people. Soon there was a group of about six men who desired to be taught the truth. How to teach them was the problem.

In February 1958 Brother John Cutforth visited this group. He gave Brother and Sister Frame some good suggestions for overcoming the teaching problem. Brother Cutforth demonstrated how to present Bible teachings with the aid of pictures on a blackboard. Progress became more rapid thereafter as students learned to express themselves and draw stickmen Bible presentations. Witnessing to others, they left brief pictures, in much the same way as a tract is placed with people in other lands.

During Brother Cutforth's visit the Society's film "The Happiness of the New World Society" was shown in a local theater. The proprietor waived any charge in view of its being a religious film. Although the brothers had explained that they wanted a private filming, admission being only by invitation, the proprietor told his workers that there was a free film showing that night. Consequently, when the brothers arrived with a number of interested Papuans, they found that not only was the building full, but that many were standing outside trying to find a viewing spot through the wide ventilation shutters that had been thrown open. It was necessary to have two policemen make their way through the crowd so that a loudspeaker could be placed near the screen. Instead of an anticipated audience of fifteen or twenty persons, two hundred and thirty-four were present for this film showing!

Through the years the work of announcing the Kingdom has advanced steadily in New Ireland. Toward the close of 1976 a fine new Kingdom Hall and flat were completed in Kavieng and Brother and

Sister Wilkinson have moved there to lend a hand. During the month of January 1977, there was a peak of 53 publishers in New Ireland's four congregations, and 270 attended the Memorial there on April 3, 1977.

GETTING STARTED

ON THE NORTHERN HALF OF THE MAINLAND

With the witnessing work now under way in New Britain and New Ireland, the brothers turned their attention to getting our activity started on the northern half of the Papua New Guinea mainland, formerly known as New Guinea. Oda Sioni, one of the first Papuan publishers in Port Moresby, went to visit two of his fleshly brothers in New Guinea in August 1957. While at Wau, New Guinea, Oda did a lot of talking about God's Word. One of his listeners was a Papuan man named Jack Arifeae. Before long many New Guineans who worked for the same company as Jack were listening also to what Oda had to say. He would speak in Motu and Jack would translate for him into Melanesian-Pidgin.

On one occasion, after the regular religious service in a local church, Oda gave a splendid witness, with Jack faithfully translating what was said into Pidgin. When the pastor could take it no longer, he asked them to stop, and went on to advise the congregation of over 600 persons that they should have nothing to do with Jehovah's Witnesses.

But even in the face of such opposition Oda continued to have fine Bible discussions at the home where he was staying. Late one night, as a study was in progress, Oda and Jack were surprised when police sergeant Jerika walked into the room. He was on patrol duty, had seen the light, and had been listening to the discussion from under the house. He liked what he heard and eventually Oda was conducting a Bible study with the police sergeant and his wife. They, in turn, invited police constable Namona and his wife, Managu, to join the study. Later, Managu became a dedicated publisher who still serves faithfully in that area. Jack still is a faithful brother, although now confined to a wheelchair.

Early in 1958, Brother and Sister John Endor came from Australia to serve in Lae, New Guinea, hopeful that they would have Jehovah's blessing in opening up a new field of activity there. "We could see immediately the tremendous potential of the work in Lae," wrote Brother Endor, adding: "Brother [James] Baird had arrived earlier and had already commenced studying with a number of people. This made us all the more

determined prayerfully to pursue all avenues to try to stay. In a matter of some two or three days, some local people showed us an old army hut made of curved iron. It had been crudely converted into 'living quarters,' which we were able to rent. It had no lining, and iron flakes of rust from the roof continually descended as the temperature changed. By ten o'clock every morning the temperature inside would soar up to 110 degrees [Fahrenheit (43 degrees Celsius)], which was as high as our thermometer went. But we were very thankful that we had a roof over our heads, and a place where we could study with interested ones without interference."

Christian progress was being made. Hence, by July 1, 1958, a congregation was established at Lae, as well as another at Madang. By April of 1959 the third congregation in New Guinea was formed at Wau. And a year later district assemblies were held for the first time in New Guinea at both Lae and Madang.

Indicative of the interest shown in our work is what happened in December 1958 when the Society's film "The New World Society in Action" was shown at a theater in Lae. Though there were only 15 brothers and sisters in the congregation there at the time, a crowd of 1,200 attended the film showing!

To supply spiritual food, by mid-1960 a 16-page edition of *The Watchtower* began to be published in Melanesian-Pidgin. The magazine was enlarged to 24 pages in January of 1970 and its circulation now has risen to over 3,500 copies of each issue. We received an added thrill when a 24-page edition of *Awake!* was first published in Melanesian-Pidgin during January 1972.

By 1962, the Madang Congregation, on the coast, still was on the edge of a vast ripe field ready for harvesting. Only closer villages were being looked after, and many persons from villages farther away had to walk miles to hear God's truth being taught. Just how was the truth progressing in this area?

When pioneer Matthew Pope and his family arrived from Canada in May 1960, the way was opened to bring special pioneers in to care for the increasing interest. So, Brother and Sister Davison, who had served on New Britain, were able to offer help in an area where the work was beginning to develop very quickly. This was about thirty miles (48 kilometers) up the north coast from Madang. Much interest was shown among people in a village built on government land adjoining the Tagildig government school. The headmaster of the school was opposed, however, and prevented the brothers from studying with the inter-

ested people on this government land. Nevertheless, studies were continued with these people on a beach farther away.

Next, the education officer in Madang ordered everyone on the property to move within just nine days. While they were able to salvage some of their goods, on the ninth day, December 24, 1962, the police arrived and set fire to all the houses and parts of houses that remained. At the nearby village of Bagildig, Udim, the village chief, heard of their trouble and allowed them to stay on his land.

Now there is a fine congregation, as well as an assembly hall, in the village of Bagildig. Recently, over 500 attended the "Sacred Service" District Assembly held there. Due to the fine work of the Davisons and other special pioneers, about 140 publishers and a number of pioneers now are active in six congregations scattered over fifty miles (80 kilometers) of territory along the coast and coastal ranges extending north from Madang. Ulpep Kalip, one of the boys who grew up in the village of Bagildig, now works at Bethel, and another from a nearby village is a district overseer.

HARDWORKING CHRISTIANS REAP BLESSINGS

At this point it seems quite appropriate to tell you at least something about the earnest efforts made in recent years to proclaim the good news in some of the village areas of Papua New Guinea. For example, consider what took place in the Hula area in the late 1950's.

In 1957, Brother Donald Fielder, his wife, Shirley, and their daughter, Debbie, decided to share the good news in the Hula area. Brother Fielder leased some land and built quite a comfortable home on it. Later, however, the government informed him that he could not continue to live on native property. So what would the Fielders do? Why, they would build a boat and live on it near the mouth of a nearby river! Yes, there were problems, such as washing with no conveniences, going long distances by canoe to get fresh water, and battling mosquitoes so abundant that meals had to be eaten under a mosquito net much of the time. While living under those circumstances, a second girl was born to them in September of 1958. With only Brother Fielder's special pioneer allowance to feed four mouths, food was very scarce at times. In fact, sometimes bananas were the only food that they had. But there were real reasons for joy as they saw their spiritual garden begin to bear fruit. A fine congregation of 18 publishers was formed in November

1958, and today that congregation at Hula has 40 Kingdom proclaimers associated with it, although 114 persons attended the Memorial there on April 3, 1977.

In the latter part of 1957, Brother John Cutforth returned to Papua New Guinea permanently to serve with the brothers here. As a traveling overseer, he has had many grand experiences. For example, there was the time he visited an isolated publisher at Kido, about 30 miles (48 kilometers) up the coast from Port Moresby. Brother Cutforth and his traveling companions made the trip by Papuan outrigger canoe. On one occasion during this trip old Brother Diho was thrown off the back of the canoe by rough waves and had to be fished out of the sea. After many hours, however, they rounded Redscar Point and ahead of them lay Kido village built out over the sea.

"I was very happy to meet Ono Rose, the only Witness in the village of Kido," wrote Brother Cutforth. "He had a very kindly smiling face. Because of his fine principles, he was entrusted with the operation of the village store. The pastors of the London Missionary Society had so frightened the people of the village that most of them were opposed to the truth, but the younger boys enjoyed going to the store and there Ono lovingly gave them an insight into the Kingdom and its blessings."

That first evening Brother Cutforth sat on the floor with others, explaining the truth to Ono and his family, as well as to quite a number of teen-age boys to whom Ono had talked at the store. Wrote Brother Cutforth: "Then there was a pause, after which Ono talked to them in their local language. Ono then placed his hand on my arm and pointed to a mat on the floor in the corner of the room. When asked, 'What are you telling them about, Ono?' he replied: 'I am telling them that among Jehovah's people there are no divisions and even though we have different colors of skin, we are the same, eat together and sleep in the same room together.' This was something very unusual because at that time a big barrier existed between the European pastors of the missions and the local people. This was very evident, as the European pastors always ate apart from the local parishioners and mixed with them only for a short time when they had some meetings. As the European Witnesses worked along with their Papuan brothers, lived with them and walked together with them, a wonderful bond of love grew up. This bond has helped to overcome many hardships they have had to meet."—John 13:34, 35; Acts 10:34, 35.

Ono still is in Kido looking after the group there. He and his wife are the only Kingdom publishers in that village. However, for their two decades of endurance as isolated Witnesses they have enjoyed rich blessings. They were happy that eight persons from their village attended the Lord's Evening Meal on April 3, 1977.

ON TO THE OUTLYING VILLAGES

June 1958 saw the arrival in Papua New Guinea of two young brothers, James Smith and Stephen Blundy. Soon they were deeply involved in learning the local Motu language, and before long were speaking it well. These brothers have had a fine share in opening up our work in new areas of Papua.

We were very anxious to expand the Kingdom witness to outlying villages. So, in 1960 special pioneers were sent out from Port Moresby to some of those areas. Brother Smith, accompanied by Lionel Dingle, was assigned to Kerema in the Gulf District. Although Brother Smith was fluent in Motu, he found that very few people in Kerema knew that language. So, this meant learning another tongue. Adding to the difficulty was the fact that these people had no written language. Hence, Brother Smith spent many nights with the Kerema people who did speak Motu. He tells us:

"I would give them a Motu expression, which they would translate into their Kerema language. This I would then write down, spelling out each word phonetically in Roman letters. In this way, not only did I build up a small vocabulary, but I was able to write out a Bible presentation in full. The people in the area were amazed, as no other European in the district could talk the language. The very fact that we tried to converse with them in their language created a favorable impression, as the people could see that we were interested in them. In our assignment, we continued to write down words and expressions; gradually, I compiled in a notebook a grammar of the Kerema language. In three months, we could converse quite freely with the people, and in 1961 it was possible to give public talks and to translate the material for the *Watchtower* studies on Sundays. Later, the brothers were thrilled to receive a tract in their language and then the booklet *'This Good News of the Kingdom.'* These have proved to be valuable instruments in aiding the local people to learn the truth."

One thing that Brother Smith admired greatly was the effort put forth by the brothers and interested ones in order to get to the meetings. It was necessary for many to cross a bay some two miles (3 kilometers)

wide in order to get to the meetings, and in bad weather this often was risky. On one occasion the Memorial celebration and the circuit overseer's visit coincided. Brother Smith reports: "Torrential rain was falling, the wind was up and the water in the bay was very rough. Meeting time came, but not many were present; so we waited a little. Sure enough, out of the darkness and pouring rain some fifty people came into sight, drenched to the skin. None of them had a change of clothing, but all sat down happily to hear the talk. Later, they told us that when they were halfway across the bay the water was so rough that their large canoe began to sink. The men and single persons jumped overboard, leaving the mothers with little children in the canoe. They had just been able to make it across. Because of the danger of such incidents occurring, later it was decided to have two sets of meetings, with one on each side of the bay."

There were hazards aplenty. On one occasion Brother Smith was to look after a book study on the other side of the bay. The ferryman said it was too late to take him across. So he set out in a canoe, although the sky was overcast and the water was rough. Brother Smith had gone no more than 100 yards (90 meters) when he saw that the canoe was leaking badly. Should he jump out and swim back to the shore? Well, fortunately, these canoes are buoyant enough not to sink completely. So, he stayed with the little vessel. But suppose we let Brother Smith tell us what happened. He states:

"At one stage, I could see nothing but the whitecaps of breakers. Later, I found that these were breaking on a sandbar, and when I went over it, it seemed as if I were on a wild horse. Finally, the strong tide swept the canoe in among some mangroves and I was able to climb up a mud bank, pulling the canoe up after me. Not being able to see anything and knowing that there were crocodiles in the area, I really was frightened. To make matters worse, the rain began to pour. All I could do was huddle under my rain cape and wait. After midnight the tide began to turn, the rain eased off and the waters calmed down. Using my handkerchief, I patched up the holes in the canoe and paddled back to the ferryman's house. I finally arrived home about 2:00 a.m. When I received strong counsel to the effect that pioneers should not take unnecessary risks, I needed no persuasion to accept it."

Later, other pioneers, such as Glenn Finlay, joined in developing the work in that area. Three congregations now function around Kerema Bay, and these were hosts to well over 400 persons attending the

"Divine Sovereignty" District Assembly there in late 1975. Among these were other people of the Gulf Province, including representatives from five congregations in the Toaripi-speaking area. How were these five congregations established?

Well, about the time that Brother Smith was assigned to Kerema, Stephen Blundy and Allen Hosking received an assignment to Savaiviri, a village about forty miles (64 kilometers) further east. How had that assignment come about? Earlier, in Port Moresby, Brother Blundy had found some Toaripi-speaking people from the Moveave area of the Gulf of Papua. He recalls: "They had come to Moresby to sell sago and reed mats and were now waiting to board a ship to return to their village [Savaiviri]. I arranged a study the very next day and after that I studied with them almost every day until they returned to their village."

After that, Brother Blundy continued to study by mail with one of the group, a certain Miviri, whose face had been deformed by the disease yaws. Miviri was respected among his people, and sent a list of names of interested persons.

Finally, Brother Blundy wrote to the Society, and before long he and Brother Hosking were aboard a boat heading for Savaiviri. Commenting on their arrival, Brother Blundy says:

"Miviri ran over to greet us. He took us to his house where we had a cup of the strongest tea I have ever tasted. We had a tent with us and many willing hands quickly erected it under the shade of a big mango tree.

"It wasn't long before we realized that our new home was in the middle of a large swamp. It was the delta area for two of the largest rivers in Papua, the Lakekamu and the Tauri, and the area proved to be a haven for crocodiles and mosquitoes!

"Right from the start it seemed that it was Jehovah's will that the good news be proclaimed to the Toaripi people. The number of our Bible studies grew quickly until we were conducting as many as twenty each."

Even in Port Moresby film showings were a rarity to many in the mid-1950's. So, imagine how much more unusual it would be to see them in villages located on deltas and rivers some 120 miles (190 kilometers) to the west during the early 1960's! Little wonder, then, that 800 excited people turned out at Moveave in 1962 to see the Watch Tower Society's motion picture "Divine Will International Assembly of Jehovah's Witnesses." And over 1,000 at Kukipi on the coast clicked their tongues and uttered exclamations of surprise while viewing the same film.

When Brother Hosking got married, his wife was able to aid many of the womenfolk in the vicinity. What joy it now brings these ones to look back and see how Jehovah blessed the work so that now a number of Christian congregations function in the area and some of the young ones from there are pioneers in other places!

CHRISTIAN PROSPERITY DESPITE OPPOSITION

On May 25, 1960, the government officially registered the International Bible Students Association. This had the effect of putting our work on a much more solid basis. For instance, through this registration we were able to apply to the government for land on which to build Kingdom Halls. An even greater step in ensuring that the organization would be recognized by the Independent State of Papua New Guinea, formed in September of 1975, was the timely incorporation of the International Bible Students Association of Papua New Guinea Incorporated, in May of that year.

At the close of the service year in August 1960 there were 440 publishers in Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. With this fine growth in activity, it was thought advisable to establish a branch office of the Watch Tower Society in Papua. Brother John A. Cutforth, who had spent most of his fifty-seven years in association with God's people, was appointed as the first branch overseer. The Papua branch was to look after our work in Papua, Manus Island, New Britain, New Guinea, New Ireland and the Solomon Islands.

Preparations for getting the new branch office into operation were interrupted when adverse publicity arose over the distribution by the brothers of a pamphlet dealing with the question of blood transfusion. Considerable opposition flared up. For instance, the administrator and the commissioner of police were opposed to the distribution of the pamphlet. And on August 30, 1960, the *South Pacific Post* carried the headline "Churches Angry on Blood Question." In the accompanying article church leaders struck out against Jehovah's Witnesses for their stand on blood, and they also used the occasion as an opportunity to condemn us for our Christian neutrality.

Brothers Cutforth, Fielder and Arthur Morris called on both the administrator and the commissioner of police with a view to explaining our position. But these brothers were not well received. News releases were provided for the radio and newspapers, but we relied mostly on door-to-door contacts with the people to counteract the attacks made upon us.

As matters developed, Brother Cutforth was finally able to get everything organized and the branch office started operating on September 1, 1960. Incidentally, it then was housed in a room at the home of Brother Jim Dobbins at Port Moresby.

So, Christian progress was being made despite opposition. Why, in 1961 foes even went to the extreme of saying that we took advantage of a solar eclipse to frighten people! And during March of 1962 enemies of the good news got busy again seeking to work up public opinion against our activities. According to the *South Pacific Post*, the Port Moresby subbranch of the Returned Servicemen's League made a motion stating: "That Congress deplores the activities of the Jehovah's Witnesses, bordering on sedition, and recommends that at the earliest opportunity the sect be evicted from the Territory." The Goroka subbranch of the same organization was quoted as stating that if reports of Jehovah's Witnesses' activities could be proved, "steps should be taken to have the sect banned." Of course, the charges were false and members of this opposing organization must have been quite frustrated to read this headline in the *South Pacific Post* of March 27, 1962: "Hasluck 'No' to Sect Ban." In the article under that headline the newspaper stated: "Territories' Minister Mr. Paul Hasluck today rejected an RSL request to ban Jehovah's Witnesses in the Territory." It further quoted him as saying: "I have not had any convincing evidence that activities of the Jehovah's Witnesses are a security risk . . . There is no clear ground to justify banning of the sect."

INTO THE HIGHLANDS

In May of 1962 the branch office was transferred to the fine new home that Brother Kitto had built in Port Moresby. It had been vacated when Tom and Rowena Kitto moved to the highlands of Papua New Guinea to serve where the need was greater. Brother and Sister Kitto headed for Wabag, in the very heart of the highlands.

As Tom and Rowena Kitto traveled, both of them were stricken with malaria. Arriving at Mt. Hagen, they still had another 70 miles (110 kilometers) to travel before reaching Wabag. During the night both of them became ill, but Tom got worse and was unconscious by morning. A doctor was summoned and said that Tom should not move on for two weeks. Finally, however, the Kittos traveled on to Wabag.

Despite hardships, the Kittos had come to Wabag to share the good news of the Kingdom with others. Later, they were blessed when a congregation was

formed there. The Kittos have found that all through the years they have had to "fight" against false religion and demonism. But some people wanted to learn and do Jehovah's will. So they still press on declaring the good news there.

Due to interest even farther up the road, a Kingdom Hall has been built on a site at the head of a beautiful valley at an elevation of about 8,000 feet (2,400 meters). A special pioneer, Brother Michael Saunga, who is assigned to the Wabag Congregation, helps Brother Kitto in caring for those showing interest there.

Other fine work has been done by many brothers and sisters in establishing congregations at Asaro, Banz, Baiyer River, Goroka, Kainantu, Kundiawa, Mendi and Mt. Hagen in the highlands. We cannot relate all the details here due to insufficient space. However, we will mention a few of the highlights.

Because of the fine efforts of Sister Elsie Horsburgh in witnessing to two young soldiers in Port Moresby, the foundation was laid for a congregation to be established at Asaro in the Eastern Highlands. This is the home of the famed "Mudmen" of Papua New Guinea, so named because of their mud masks.

After much resistance on the part of superior officers, these two young men received discharges, progressed to the point of baptism and, in mid-1970, were assigned as special pioneers to the Asaro area. This was the home of one of the young men, Gunure Um-maba. Quickly a Kingdom Hall was built and, after just three months, the circuit overseer reported that three new publishers were reporting field service and that twenty-one persons attended his public talk. Recently, a larger hall was constructed, one suitable for conventions.

Two other lovely Kingdom Halls also were erected in recent years at Goroka and Kainantu, with the Beyer, Bennett, Gosson, Kowitz, Linke and Colbran families all having a large share in such construction. Early in 1977, everyone in the highlands was delighted to have their first Melanesian-Pidgin district assembly in the area, with 267 attending and six getting baptized. So, our work is moving ahead in the interior.

OPPOSITION DOES NOT DETER US

During 1964, 261 Kingdom proclaimers were sharing in field service in New Guinea. The increased activity of the Witnesses did not escape the notice of those opposed to the truth. So, late in the year these opposers tried to stop us from offering our magazines on the streets in Wewak. The police inspector there

made a charge against two local brothers of interrupting the free passage of persons on the public road. When the case came up for a hearing, the inspector did not appear, but sent the local sub-inspector in his place. As the proceedings commenced, he was so unprepared that the magistrate took over from him and questioned those who were appearing for the prosecution. All three were policemen, and all admitted that those charged had not interrupted their free passage. The magistrate obviously was annoyed and brought the proceedings to an end by saying: "I cannot understand why the inspector brought this case before the court. Case dismissed."

However, the inspector persisted in his efforts to stop our work. In February of 1965, as the brothers were witnessing from house to house in Wewak, they called on a group of houses where married members of the police force were living. In the course of their witnessing, they were told by a police constable that they were not to preach to the people in those houses, as the inspector had forbidden them to have anything to do with Jehovah's Witnesses. He told Brother Otto Eberhardt that he should go to see the inspector. As Brother Eberhardt was getting the publishers together in order to do that, the inspector appeared and told them: "I will charge you with being unlawfully on these premises." Brother Eberhardt and Sister Edith Teynor later received a summons ordering them to appear in court on February 17, 1965, to answer charges that they had been found in an enclosed yard without lawful excuse.

We found that since the defendants had been charged under a criminal section of the law, in order to be acquitted all that was necessary was to show that they had no criminal intent. Evidently the police had not thought of this, for in all their comments in court they insisted that the point at issue was that we had not obtained the permission of the inspector to go into the police quarters. In his final statement to the court, the inspector said: "I don't say the activity of the defendants was criminal." It was not until the brothers had made their final statement, citing legal precedents, that the police realized that they had knocked the basis out of their whole case by affirming that the brothers' presence on the property was lawful and not criminal. Later, on May 28, 1965, the judge delivered his finding of "Not guilty." Since then we have had no problems with the authorities with regard to our house-to-house witnessing work. We certainly thank Jehovah for this fine victory, and it has been very encouraging to the brothers and sisters.

FLAG SALUTE ISSUE

Early in 1966, seven children of local Witnesses were told by their teacher at the Milford Haven Primary School that they would be tested as to whether or not they would salute the flag. On Monday morning, before an assembled group of about 300 students, they were asked to salute and told that if they did not do so their names would be struck off the register and they would be expelled. None of the children saluted and no action was taken. But they were informed that they would be tested again on the following morning. The same thing took place and again the children refused to salute. But this time they were taken away from the group and expelled from school. All of this took place because these children were determined to ascribe salvation to Jehovah and adhere to his Word. (Ex. 20:4-6; Ps. 3:8) It might be added that exemption from these ceremonies had been requested in writing by the parents of the children, but this had been refused by the teacher under the orders of her superior.

R. L. Stevens, the presiding overseer of the Lae Congregation, spoke with this superior, but he was adamant in his position that any child who refused to salute the flag in the schools under his jurisdiction would be expelled.

Brother Stevens then wrote to the Education Department to get help in the situation. Three weeks later, on March 18 and 19, 1966, Brother Stevens appealed to Mr. Niall, the local member of the House of Assembly, and to the Department of Territories in Canberra, Australia, forwarding copies of the information concerning the matter to the United Nations.

On March 23 the school authorities received a direct telephone call from the Administrator of Papua New Guinea advising them that the children should be returned to school immediately. On March 26 Brother Stevens received the following cable from Paul Hasluck, Australian Minister of Territories: "I refer your cable of 19th March. Am informed children already reinstated." So it was that high-level concern for the rights of these children on the part of the Australian government and the local House of Assembly contributed to this victory for freedom of worship.

It might be mentioned that a fine provision was made in the 1970 Education Ordinance of Papua New Guinea. It was specified that no school can "exclude a child solely on the ground of religious or doctrinal affiliation." (Part II, Division 1, Section 7, Subsection 3, a and b) Certain authorities have quoted this in connection with the religious feeling of Jehovah's Wit-

nesses toward the saluting of flags. Few teachers make an issue of the flag salute these days. Another benefit that has been derived from this provision is that since 1970 Jehovah's Witnesses have been given the same opportunity as other religions to conduct religious instruction periods for their children during the allotted school times.

Fine potential still exists among the one and a half million inhabitants of the mountains and northern part of the Papua New Guinea mainland. This is shown by the fact that 1,588 attended the Memorial and a peak of 459 publishers were active in 1977. As the brothers have conducted over 400 Bible studies in New Guinea, we look forward to continued increase in this field in the future.

MANUS ISLAND, BALUAN AND THE NORTH SOLOMONS

Through the years we have endeavored to reach outlying islands with the Kingdom message. For instance, during 1958 Liston Carnie opened up our work on Manus Island, the largest of the Admiralty group. When witnessing in some villages, at times he had as many as 75 persons listening to one of his Bible discussions. Later, he and Brother Lon Bauman built there one of the loveliest Kingdom Halls in all our branch territory. So well kept was the garden that one year the congregation was awarded the prize for the best institutional garden!

Brother Carnie also declared the good news on Baluan, a neighboring island. During the past service year, there were eight Kingdom publishers sharing in witnessing on Manus Island. Other brothers have moved elsewhere.

Bougainville was an island on which no witnessing had yet been done when Alan McRae and his family moved there back in 1969. Others later moved to copper-rich Bougainville to serve where the need was greater, and today over 50 publishers are declaring the good news in two congregations on that island and in one congregation on the adjacent island of Buka, both islands now being known as the North Solomons.

LITERATURE IN THE VERNACULAR LANGUAGES

As our activities have increased, so have our efforts to provide Christian literature in the tongues of the local people. In that regard, one fine step forward was made in April 1958 with the publication of the first issue of *The Watchtower* in Motu. Of course, it would be impossible to produce literature in the more than 700 languages and dialects spoken here. So, the

Society has concentrated on translating its literature into the two trade languages, Hiri Motu and Melanesian-Pidgin. And an excellent provision, first received in 1970, was *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life*, published in both Hiri Motu and Melanesian-Pidgin editions.

A TIME FOR FURTHER EXPANSION

Besides increased literature production, we have seen other expansion. During October of 1962 the Society made its first application for land on which to build a Kingdom Hall. This was at Koki in Port Moresby. The first application was refused. When the second application was made the Land Board recommended that we be granted the lease. However, the Administrator's Advisory Council caused the recommendation to be deferred for further consideration. The then director of lands, Mr. D. E. Macinnis, established the fact that the Australian government recognized Jehovah's Witnesses as a Christian religion. He then presented this information to the Advisory Council, and on November 27, 1963, we learned that the application for land had been approved. We feel that the presentation of the information prepared by Mr. Macinnis has gone a long way in ensuring continued freedom for us to declare the good news in this land.

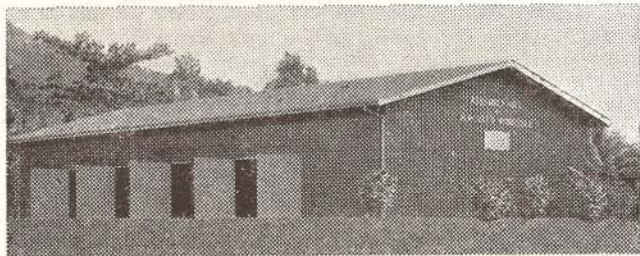
In January of 1964 the Papuan branch enjoyed a zone visit by Clyde Canty of New Zealand. Brother Canty recommended that a branch office and missionary home be built in conjunction with the Kingdom Hall that the brothers proposed to erect at Koki. This recommendation was approved and, in October 1964, work commenced on a fine two-story building to house the branch office and a Kingdom Hall. In January 1965, Brother N. H. Knorr visited us and was able to check on the progress being made on the new branch building. During this visit, Brother Knorr suggested that Brother Cutforth spend more time in the field as the first full-time district overseer. Accordingly, beginning in April of 1965, Brother Charles Isbill assumed responsibility for the work being done in the islands under this branch's jurisdiction.

Early in 1972, Brothers N. H. Knorr and M. H. Larson visited Papua New Guinea. They were able to see what was being done in the construction work at the branch and to suggest some changes. At that time Brother James E. Smith was appointed as branch overseer to relieve Brother Isbill, who had returned to the United States due to sickness. Later, in August 1972, when the "Divine Rulership" District Assembly

was held in Port Moresby, some 150 visitors expressed appreciation as they inspected the additions that had been made to the branch structure and realized that this was tangible evidence of Jehovah's blessing on the expansion of the preaching and disciple-making work.

As the Kingdom work has made advancement through the years, the work at the branch office has also increased. For instance, the year 1976 saw a peak of 731 publishers in Papua, a 17.5-percent increase over the previous year's average. The branch building had been partly remodeled by that time and a new office and printing room had been completed, nicely blending into the existing structure. Nine persons now serve at the branch building, caring for office, shipping, printing, translating and other duties. At the present time a branch committee shares the responsibility of caring for the activities of the Papua New Guinea branch office.

It was also during the year 1976 that Jehovah's people in Port Moresby completed and dedicated a fine Assembly Hall. On one occasion during that year, 600 persons were accommodated at a circuit assembly there. Inasmuch as sections of the walls of this building



Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses at Port Moresby

are on hinges, they can be opened like large doors to accommodate even larger crowds. In this way, 983 were able to attend a district assembly held there recently.

A GLANCE AT THE KINGDOM MINISTRY SCHOOL

As in other lands, the Kingdom Ministry School functions here for the purpose of training Christian overseers. Through the years, classes have been held under varying circumstances. For example, back in 1961 a certain class was conducted beneath a thatched

palm roof in an open area. One day a written review was temporarily interrupted by a "visitor." You can just imagine the surprise of the brothers as a poisonous snake threaded its way around their feet as they were seated at a table! One of the brothers spotted the creature and raised an alarm, but with self-control all continued to sit quietly. Perhaps realizing that it had been seen, the snake headed for the bush with practically the whole class after it!

In a way, the Kingdom Ministry School is a good indicator of the theocratic progress we have made in Papua New Guinea. For instance, consider the classes of the school that were held during a period in 1974 and 1975. In all, 193 brothers participated in the course, 129 in Papua New Guinea and 64 in the Solomon Islands. How wonderful it is to see so many local brothers qualified to attend this school for overseers!

SPIRITUALLY REWARDING ASSEMBLIES

As we look back over the years, we recall many Christian assemblies, some of them real milestones in theocratic progress. The first international assembly ever held in Papua New Guinea took place in 1969. Let us tell you a little about it.

There were no stadiums or buildings capable of handling the expected attendance of about 1,000. So, a site was chosen in the bush country about fourteen miles (23 kilometers) from Port Moresby. It was just an open, grassy area, and we had to construct thirty-six buildings to house everything required at the assembly. Twelve accommodation blocks had to be prepared to house over 1,000 persons expected to live right on the assembly grounds. Water had to be provided for drinking and bathing. Meals had to be furnished, and we supplied electricity as a means of lighting. About five full months were spent in the preparation for this assembly. Was it worth it? Indeed it was!

Brother F. W. Franz, from the Society's headquarters in Brooklyn, New York, visited Papua New Guinea for the first time in that year. And the attendance exceeded expectations, with 1,116 persons in the attentive audience that heard his public talk "The Approaching Peace of a Thousand Years." Seventy persons symbolized their dedication to Jehovah by water baptism at that assembly. Even though some years have gone by since then, the brothers still think and talk about that wonderful spiritual event.

Interestingly, in January of 1977, Brother M. G.

Henschel, from the Society's headquarters in Brooklyn, visited Papua New Guinea for the first time. Over 1,100 attended his talk at the stadium and later 1,000 viewed slides he showed at the Assembly Hall. How amazing to think that this crowd of brothers and interested people just from in and around Port Moresby was equal to the crowd that attended the international assembly just seven years earlier!

Among the notable conventions held in the islands were the national assembly in Port Moresby and the district assembly in the Solomon Islands during 1973. At these two gatherings a total of 96 persons presented themselves for baptism. Considering the "mountainous" transportation problems, the combined attendance of 3,500 for the public talk was thrilling indeed. One group of about a dozen persons, including a mother, father and two small children, walked about 150 miles (240 kilometers) across the backbone of Papua New Guinea to get to the assembly. They passed 13,000-foot (4,000-meter) Mount Victoria and walked the historic "Kokoda Trail" on the way to Port Moresby.

At the assembly in Port Moresby, history was made as far as this branch office was concerned. Three audiences heard the dramas in their own languages. One set of actors performed according to the English tape recordings. However, the appropriate voices for each character could be heard simultaneously in Hiri Motu and Melanesian-Pidgin. So, viewing the dramas from each language section, it appeared as if the actors were acting out one's own language!

STILL REACHING OUT

The 1970's have found us still reaching out with the Kingdom message. Though we cannot tell you about all the hard work and earnest efforts put forth by our many brothers and sisters who have been declaring the good news here, please permit us to tell you about certain recent developments.

Several years ago, Karapa, a Papuan brother, was assigned by the government to work in the Western Province of Papua New Guinea. Because he took advantage of every opportunity to give a witness, there are now true Christians in the heart of Papua New Guinea at Ningerum, in the foothills of the Star Mountains. Also, there is a flourishing congregation on Lake Murray, near the Indonesian border on the mighty Fly River in what is reputed to be the largest swamp in the world! Most of these people were illiterate. However, due to the fine efforts of Brother

and Sister Soostmeyer, many of them are learning to read and write, and there are twenty-eight Kingdom publishers in the congregation at Buseki, Lake Murray. Twenty have been baptized in the last couple of years. Incidentally, the nearest congregation is some 250 miles (400 kilometers) away and the only outsiders the Witnesses of this remote area see in a year are perhaps the district and circuit overseers.

Some time ago the congregation went witnessing in isolated territory. Brother Siegmur Soostmeyer reported, in part: "It took us nine hours to get to this village where Pari and Supe people live. Once they were cannibals. This village was 65 miles [105 kilometers] down the Kaim River. This river was full of fish. We saw 'pukpuks' [crocodiles] and plenty of birds of all kinds. It was a terrific trip."

There were seven Witnesses in the canoe, and they were delighted to share the good news with the local residents. Brother Soostmeyer remarked: "The Buseki brothers and sisters were so enthusiastic that it was a pleasure to see each of them witnessing to someone."

We would also like to take you back to the year 1972 and to the eastern end of Papua New Guinea, where the island tapers off like a crocodile's tail. That province, including surrounding islands, has a population of more than 100,000, many of whom love the Bible. In fact, a number of tribes have the complete Bible in their own language. Some of these translations contain vernacular forms of the divine name, such as "Iehova" and "Ieova."

Two small congregations began functioning in that area in 1972. And during 1975 Brother Burt Stanford, a circuit overseer, visited the area. Leaving his wife behind in one of the coastal villages, Brother Stanford walked about six hours to reach a group of interested persons. The weather was fine, although the river was running fast and had to be crossed twelve times! The track went through rugged and dangerous terrain. But was the trip worth it? Well, judge for yourself.

Reports Brother Stanford: "We received a warm welcome up there. They were happy to see us. I was surprised and happy to see the fine Kingdom Hall/pioneer home they had built. Each week they had a *Gima Kohorona* [Hiri Motu Watchtower] study, which a young man was conducting to the best of his ability. On Tuesday morning we had a group study and I gave a public talk to an audience of 84."

Apparently this young lad, who had been associating with the congregation in Port Moresby for a while

in 1971, also taught that group quite a few of our songs, which they sang well in the Hiri Motu language. The circuit overseer commented: "I was amazed, at the opening of the study and public talk, when they all burst into Kingdom song loud and clear. At times it seemed like . . . those illustrations in *The Watchtower* of groups of people singing in paradise."

Since 1976 special pioneers have been working in this rugged mountain assignment. By early 1977 twenty Kingdom publishers were sharing in witnessing and over a hundred were attending the meetings of the Govigovi Congregation. This activity has angered the local Anglicans, and, on Saturday, February 5, 1977, a mob of decorated warriors brandishing spears and other weapons stormed this Witness village. They struck a number of brothers and interested persons, including women, wounding them and drawing blood in a number of instances. The Kingdom Hall was razed to the ground by fire. Imagine the feeling that descended on the group!

The next day, all the Witnesses held their meeting at the desolate site where the Kingdom Hall had stood. When the time came for singing the first song, all that could be heard was the music coming from the record player, along with the sound of sobbing from all those in the audience. Even the conductor could not contain himself. Throughout the study, he and others sobbed intermittently. After a prayer, all returned to their homes and slept, or tried to do so.

However, Brother Agi Geno, one of the special pioneers, could not sleep. Concerned that there was no hall, although their village was to be the site of the forthcoming circuit assembly, he called everyone together and asked what they thought about building another Kingdom Hall. All replied that they were willing to start work the next day!

With that, this former carpenter organized men, women and children to gather timber, grass for the roof and bamboo for the walls. Just two weeks after the former hall was burned down, a bigger and better one stood in its place, to the praise of Jehovah and to the amazement of all passersby, including opposers!

The planned circuit assembly was held in this hall just prior to the Memorial, with 185 in attendance and 17 being baptized. As a sequel, 138 attended the Memorial. All of Jehovah's people associated with the Govigovi Congregation are determined to continue their disciple-making work in spite of opposition.

As we kept reaching out with the Kingdom-preaching

work, we enjoyed further expansion in yet another part of this Milne Bay Province in 1975. In that year, Brother Mainaki Tokwaimai, an elder, and his wife, Gwen, moved to their home on the tiny island of Vakuta. It is situated about 100 miles (160 kilometers) north of the eastern tip of Papua New Guinea, and is one of the group of islands known as the Trobriands. A year passed and the branch office had received little correspondence from them. How were they faring spiritually? The circuit overseer, Brother Stanford, found them "in good health spiritually." Brother and Sister Tokwaimai had been rejected by some of their relatives. But they were taking advantage of their opportunities to tell others the good news. On that occasion we received all their reports for that year's activity at the one time!

PLENTY OF WORK AHEAD!

How the work of announcing God's kingdom has progressed in this part of the world since 1951! In earlier years, brothers and sisters came from Australia, Canada, America, Germany, England and New Zealand to serve here. These brothers had to carry the main load of responsibility as overseers. Now, however, in the 128 congregations and isolated groups, there are 226 elders and 218 ministerial servants, most of whom are local brothers. In fact, a number of local brothers have been appointed as circuit overseers.

In retrospect, we are moved to express gratitude to Jehovah for the way he has blessed the Kingdom work in the Solomon Islands and on the Papua New Guinea mainland and its islands of Manus, New Britain, New Ireland and the North Solomons. Just think! From only two publishers in 1951, our ranks have grown to a peak of 2,096 Kingdom proclaimers in the 1977 service year. Due to their fine efforts and Jehovah's blessing, 7,491 gathered for the Memorial in 1977.

There is still plenty of work to do. (1 Cor. 15:58) As late as 1971—just six years ago—almost 90 percent of the population here had not received a witness. While the situation has improved greatly since then, with probably over 1,500,000 having been reached with the good news in some measure, we still have much to do. Perhaps as many as 1,300,000 persons, or 46 percent of the 2,850,408 inhabitants, still need to be reached with the good news. Hence, we intend to keep busy in our work of aiding inhabitants of these many islands to "rejoice" at the news that "Jehovah himself has become king!"—Ps. 97:1.

THE PHILIPPINES

To the south of the Chinese mainland, strung out like pearls over 1,854 kilometers (1,152 miles) of the Pacific Ocean, lie the 7,083 islands that comprise the Republic of the Philippines. Smaller than Japan yet larger than Great Britain, the numerous islands of the Philippines have a coastline more than double that of the United States. Of over thirty good harbors, by far the most prominent is Manila Bay, which has 160 kilometers (100 miles) of coastline and is considered by many to be one of the finest natural harbors in Asia.

Due to its location just north of the equator, the Philippines has a tropical climate, but pleasant sea breezes keep the temperature at an average of from 26 to 29 degrees Celsius (78 to 84 degrees Fahrenheit) throughout the year. The warm, humid climate, combined with plentiful rainfall, makes for rich, tropical greenery, and there are no wholly arid sections in the country. The entire archipelago is ruggedly mountainous, the islands in reality being an upper portion of a partly submerged mountain chain. The majority of the people live either on the coastal plains or in the rich valleys that cut through the mountains. Being located in the volcanic belt surrounding the Pacific Ocean, the Philippines has several active volcanoes, the most awesome of which is Mount Mayon, considered by some to have the most beautifully formed cone in the world.

The country is divided into three main geographical sections: Luzon, the Visayas and Mindanao. Luzon is the largest island, located to the north and having a "tail" of land that extends southeastward. Mindanao, in the southern part of the Philippines, is the second-largest island. Sandwiched in between is the group of islands known as the Visayas.

The beautiful islands that make up the Philippines are home for 42 million Filipinos, a friendly, outgoing people, principally of Malay descent. They are a gregarious people with a sense of humor. They love to talk and exchange ideas on almost any subject imaginable. Their zest for life is expressed in their love of music and dancing. Family ties are very close, but the Filipino is hospitable to strangers and his door is always open to neighbors and visitors. Outside the cities, life in the agricultural Philippines remains leisurely. All these characteristics of the Filipino have in some way contributed to the rapid spread of the message of God's truth in the islands.

By the sixteenth century of the Common Era, due

to the migration of Mohammedan Malays to the Philippines, the religion of Islam was dominant in many parts of the country. However, when Spain claimed the country, Catholicism was introduced and spread widely, so that today 83 percent of the population claim to be of the Roman Catholic religion. Spain controlled the islands for over 300 years until she was removed by a Philippine revolution in 1898 with the aid of the United States of America. The Filipinos subsequently established a government, but this was not recognized by America and in a peace treaty signed with Spain in Paris on December 10, 1898, the Philippines was ceded to the United States. Thus the country changed hands from one colonial master to another.

America brought with her the English language and a more liberal climate in regard to religion, factors that were to have a profound effect on the planting and developing of the seeds of Bible truth during the dawning twentieth century. English became the medium of education and business, and remains such to this day, having been superimposed upon the already-existing 87 local languages and dialects of the country. Hence, it is common for a modern-day Filipino to speak English and one or more other languages, which facilitates communication among the diversified ethnic groups.

THE KINGDOM MESSAGE REACHES THE PHILIPPINES

So it was that in 1912, when a renowned American minister visited Manila, he was able to deliver a lecture in English to a largely Filipino audience. The speaker was Charles T. Russell, president of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, who was then on a worldwide lecture tour. On Sunday, January 14, 1912, he gave the talk "Where Are the Dead?" at the Manila Grand Opera House. With this event, the Kingdom message reached the Philippines for the first time, and the modern history of Jehovah's people in this country began.

Even before Brother Russell and his party arrived, there had been much publicity. Paid advertisements appearing in the *Manila Times* on January 8, 11 and 13 created much interest in the lecture. However, some newspapers published derogatory statements about Brother Russell, no doubt basing their reports on false charges that had been made by the *Brooklyn Eagle* and other American newspapers. Some claimed that he was making money, that he was a "grafter," an



itinerant preacher who was making capital of the religious enthusiasm of the ignorant. Others even falsely reported that the group had failed to arrive as scheduled.

All this adverse publicity did not dampen interest in the lecture. Rather, this seemed to kindle interest, and about 1,000 persons were present. Announcement was made at the meeting that free literature would be sent to any who would write their name and address on slips of paper.

Since Brother Russell had been introduced at the Opera House by none other than General J. Franklin Bell, the commander in chief of the 20,000 American troops stationed in the Philippines at that time, a subsequent issue of the *Philippines Free Press* commented: "When such men as Major-General Bell and General Hall [a traveling companion of Russell who had lived in the Philippines ten years previous] identify themselves with Pastor Russell and his propaganda, there cannot be anything very seriously wrong with it."

There is no doubt that this first preaching of the good news in the Philippines had a powerful impact on the people of Manila. The lecture became a topic of conversation among all kinds of people. Also, the literature distributed, and the talk itself, planted seeds of truth and gave a mighty witness, a fitting start to the history of Jehovah's people in the Philippines.

ISOLATED CONTACTS IN THE 1920'S

Following Brother Russell's visit, the next representative of the Society to come to the Philippines was Brother H. Tinney. In 1922 or 1923 he left Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, to do missionary work in the Philippines. After serving here diligently for about a year, distributing much literature and organizing a Bible study class in Manila, he was forced to return to Canada due to ill health. The Bible study class was continued by Filipinos and the interest thereby generated evidently continued to grow. How do we know? Well, by the mid-1920's a person named Petronilo Salazar was regularly receiving literature from the Society's headquarters in New York and was distributing it. Weekly Bible classes were held at his home on San Marcelino Street, Manila, and an outdoor sign identified it as the meeting place of the International Bible Students Association. Around ten persons attended the weekly studies during this time and down to the early 1930's, and the Memorial of Jesus Christ's death was celebrated annually.

Contact with Jehovah's people and their message was also made through American servicemen (or their relatives) assigned to the Philippines for a while. One elderly sister of around eighty whose son was an army officer got sick while in the Philippines and was treated in the Post Military Hospital at Fort Mills on Corregidor Island. A Filipino nurse became interested in what this elderly woman told her from the Bible. So, after being released from the hospital, the old sister conducted a Bible study with the nurse and about five others twice a week, calling it an "Inner Circle."

When the old sister, Annie D. Barrett, left for the United States, the nurse heard no more about the Bible Students (as Jehovah's Witnesses had been called) until 1932, when another American patient by the name of Mrs. Lampert gave her the booklet *Liberty* and the book *The Harp of God*. Before completing the literature, she was shocked by comments that false religion is a means used by Satan to blind the minds of men. So she took the matter up with the army chaplain, who was acquainted with the Bible Students in the United States and who told her of their growth there in spite of the fact that they were severely persecuted. He told her, 'You will not find any real Christians but these people in the whole United States.' Encouraged again by this, the nurse ordered three sets of our books through Sister Lampert's husband who was a sergeant in the United States armed forces. When these were received, the nurse distributed them to her friends.

That nurse, Purificacion Bennett, later left the military hospital on Corregidor and eventually contacted the Society's office in Manila. She became a pioneer in 1935, played an active part in spreading the truth in Luzon and Davao City during the next ten years and continued serving as a faithful pioneer until her death in May of 1977.

ORGANIZED WORK BEGINS

Another early contact was Van Bolin, an American serviceman who found the Watch Tower Society's booklet *Where Are the Dead?* in a trash can while on a tour of duty in Shanghai, China, in 1932. The booklet had been thrown there by his lieutenant, who had received it from a relative in the United States but was not interested in it. Later, the same lieutenant received the book *Government* and the booklet *The Kingdom, the Hope of the World* and gladly gave them to Van Bolin. Still later that year, Van Bolin's regiment returned to home base in Manila and he immediately

wrote the Watch Tower Society in Brooklyn, New York, requesting more literature and asking if the Society could provide some contact in the Philippines. He was sent the address of Sergeant Lampert on Corregidor, but the Lamperts already had left the Philippines by the time he tried to get in touch with them.

Van Bolin continued reading the books he had received until one day, when listening to radio station KZRM in Manila, he heard a brief announcement regarding the work of the Watch Tower Society, inviting people to read its literature. An address on Lealtad Street was given. Upon going there, he met a Watch Tower representative and began associating with Jehovah's people. Apart from the meetings held on Lealtad Street, during this time public Bible lectures were arranged in a number of locations throughout the Manila area.

Around this time, another Watch Tower representative was on his way to the Philippines. This was Joseph Dos Santos, an American of Portuguese descent, who had been a pioneer in Hawaii since 1929. He left Hawaii in 1933 aboard the steamship "Great Northern," with the intention of circling the globe and stopping at major cities en route to proclaim the Kingdom message and place literature. He carried some publications with him and requested that more literature be shipped to Manila for use there. When the boat docked at Yokohama, however, his entire stock of literature was confiscated by Japanese authorities. Evidently some clergymen traveling with Brother Dos Santos had falsely accused him of being a Communist, notifying the Japanese authorities by telegram before the boat arrived.

This false charge of being a Communist followed Brother Dos Santos to Manila. On arrival, he was immediately summoned to see the Director of Customs, who wished to see one of the Society's books. The Communist party had been officially organized in the Philippines in November 1930, and so the government was watching all those suspected of being Communists. After reading one of the books in the space of a week, the customs director apparently was satisfied that it was religious, not communistic. However, for several months afterward the Intelligence Bureau had a secret policeman follow Brother Dos Santos in his witnessing activity, while a lawyer in the Customs House went so far as to request a Bible study in his home just to find out if this work was communistic or not. Finally they were satisfied that the work was

purely Christian, and so Brother Dos Santos was able freely to join the already-existing group of around ten brothers in their meetings and witnessing activity in and around Manila.

BRANCH OFFICE ESTABLISHED

Brother Dos Santos' plan to travel on to Brazil and around the world was abruptly altered by a letter from Joseph F. Rutherford, the president of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. The letter asked Brother Dos Santos to take charge of the Kingdom-preaching work in the Philippines and to establish a branch office of the Society there. He gladly did this, renting a place at 1132 Rizal Avenue, Santa Cruz, Manila, to serve as the first branch office. Thus it was that the Philippine branch began to operate on June 1, 1934.

With the establishment of the branch office, meetings and field service became better organized. An English *Watchtower* study was conducted every Sunday evening by Brother Dos Santos. Later, a Tagalog study was added on Friday evenings, using the booklets that had been translated into that language, such as *The Kingdom, the Hope of the World; Escape to the Kingdom; The Crisis and Beyond the Grave*. The brothers in the entire Manila area attended this one meeting place. Travel in Manila then was not difficult, since the city was not as crowded as it is today and there was much transportation available. The *trambia*, or streetcar, ran right past the branch office and a ride cost only six centavos (3c U.S. at that time). For only 10 centavos, a horse-drawn rig (*calesa*) could be hired for a short trip. But, if the brothers wished to economize, they could ride on a horse-drawn *caretela* for just two centavos (1c U.S.). Or they could simply walk, which they often did.

The small group by no means limited themselves to meeting together for Bible study, however. Brother Dos Santos spent a half day in the house-to-house witnessing work daily, besides taking care of the branch office. He thus set a good example for the others. Among those who first heard the truth through his witnessing were Agustin Dagdag and Narciso Samson, both of whom are still faithfully serving Jehovah.

At that time a testimony card was used in witnessing. After the householder read this, the literature was presented to him. As a result of their zeal, the small group of no more than twenty Kingdom proclaimers distributed a total of 23,405 books and booklets during 1934 alone.

Additionally, when new publications were released, copies were distributed to government officials and public libraries. This also bore fruitage. In fact, two of those who served as "zone servants" during the second world war learned the truth from literature obtained in the libraries. Fulgencio de Jesus borrowed the booklet *Dividing the People* and the book *Deliverance!* from the National Library in Manila and contacted the branch from the address stamped inside the book. Salvador Liwag was a schoolteacher in Cabanatuan City, over 100 kilometers (60 miles) from Manila, when he saw the book *Creation* in the National Library's branch there. He had previously obtained the booklet *Where Are the Dead?* and it had freed him from religious superstition and the influence of the demons. They had been troubling him every night, causing loss of sleep and impairment of his health. Hence, when he saw the *Creation* book and the address stamped inside the cover, he was very eager to learn more and immediately traveled to Manila, locating the branch office on Rizal Avenue. He acquired all the books available and subscribed for *The Watchtower* and *The Golden Age* (predecessor of *Awake!*). In October 1934 Brother Liwag gave up his teaching profession to become a full-time proclaimer of the good news. His full-time service continues to this day, and he now serves as a member of the Bethel family in Quezon City.

While the branch was still in its infancy, God's servants were tested as to their loyalty to his organization. Some resented the appointment of Brother Dos Santos as the branch director and so they withdrew themselves from the other brothers and met separately. In the late 1930's, at least two other groups apart from those at the branch called themselves "Jehovah's Witnesses," and one of these was organized locally as the Watch Tower Bethel and Pulpit Society. While this caused confusion, God did not allow it to stumble those sincerely searching for the truth, and those loyal to Jehovah stayed with his organization, refusing to be drawn into personality conflicts. Interestingly, since the dissident groups basically used material from the Society's literature in their lectures and debates, many who listened to them later came in contact with God's true servants and are still loyally serving Jehovah today.

EXPANSION ON LUZON FROM 1935 TO 1939

Although, at first, the work was concentrated in and around Manila, the need to expand into the provincial

areas was soon seen. An early pioneer, Pablo Bautista, had done some work in the provinces of southern and central Luzon in 1933 and 1934, but it was primarily from 1935 onward that expansion took place outside Manila. The branch director encouraged all who could do so to enter the pioneer service so as to witness in the untouched areas of the Philippines.

Many who became pioneers in those days did so without having been baptized. Even the branch director, Brother Dos Santos, was not baptized until October of 1935. It was not until the book *Riches* appeared in 1936 that baptism began to be given the proper emphasis in the Philippines. On page 145 of that book it was made clear that "submitting to be immersed in water is an act of obedience illustrating how one has fully put himself in the hands of the Lord, and therefore baptism is necessary and proper to be performed by all who have agreed to do the will of God."

Pioneer groups were organized and sent out first to various parts of Luzon Island. Among these were the Bautista and Lacson families, Brothers Salvador Liwag, Jose Medina, Virginio Cruz and Benjamin Sampana and Sisters Elvira Alinsod and Purificacion Bennett. They spread out from Manila, covering the territory speedily, since more emphasis then was given to distributing our literature from house to house than to developing the interest. Yet, if a person showed a sheep-like disposition, the brothers would stay in his home for several hours to teach him the truths from God's Word.

Later in the 1930's, the pioneer ranks were swelled by others who learned the truth and saw the urgent need to proclaim the good news. One of these individuals was Isabelo Taea. He recalls that the pioneers in his group in northern Luzon spent from 250 to 280 hours each month in field service, far surpassing the required 150 hours. Showing the wholehearted devotion of these early pioneers, most of them new in the truth, Brother Taea says: "We walked an average of 80 to 100 kilometers [50 to 60 miles] a week witnessing up and down the mountains of Bontoc and along the Abra River." As far as the pioneers were concerned, some of the tribal mountain folk ate unfamiliar foods such as unskinned frogs. So, the full-time proclaimers of the Kingdom message often brought along molasses to sustain themselves. When funds ran low, Brother Taea, a family man at the time, sold part of his farmland and personal property so as to be able to keep on pioneering.

Wherever the pioneers went, they found the same eagerness to learn about God's Word that Brother

Russell and his companions had observed among the Filipinos in 1912. Although return visits were not often made in the 1930's, the vast amounts of literature placed resulted in the planting of seeds of truth in all parts of Luzon, and, even without personal contact, many of these bore fruit in the hearts of those hungering spiritually.

One of these persons was a construction foreman in Baguio City. His wife obtained the book *Riches* and some booklets from one of the pioneers. Immediately, he began reading the book and, after discussing the matter heatedly with his wife the whole night through, both of them accepted the truth from what they had read. He began talking to his workers in the Dangwa Transportation Company, and some of them listened, eventually becoming Jehovah's Witnesses. When the book *Children* was published this man was able to obtain a copy and used it to teach his children the Bible. He studied and discussed religion with others for four years, although he had not been in contact with the brothers and had not attended a single Christian meeting. This brother is Alfredo Estepa, who later associated with the brothers and entered the Bethel home in Quezon City in 1949, having lost his family during the war. He is still serving faithfully at Bethel.

After working for more than two years with the literature and testimony cards, the pioneers received an added provision in 1937 when Brother Rutherford's recorded Bible talks began to be used. A portable phonograph was available at a cost of P20.00 (\$10) and it could be paid for in weekly installments of P1.00, if desired. In addition to this, the branch office in Manila obtained a transcription machine in order to play the longer recorded lectures in public. Brother Dos Santos bought a panel truck to carry the transcription machine and serve as a sound car. By 1939 there were two sound machines and twenty-four phonographs in use throughout the Philippines.

REACHING THE VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

Once the opening up of our work in Luzon was under way, Brothers Salvador Liwag and Jose Medina were assigned to spread the Kingdom message for the first time in the Visayas and Mindanao. They started in Cebu City. While they were witnessing on the ground floor of the Student Center building there, a Presbyterian pastor, who had just finished religious services on an upper floor, engaged them in a heated discussion and finally threw their literature bags outside in anger. One of the pastor's "flock," a man by the name of

Florencio Udog, observed this and noticed the Scriptural arguments presented by the pioneers. So he approached them and obtained the booklet *Who Shall Rule the World?* Later, he took all the books they had. By June 1935 Florencio Udog was alone, the pioneers having moved on. Serving as an unbaptized publisher, he wrote the branch office for instructions and was sent a copy of the *Bulletin* (now *Our Kingdom Service*). Although there then were just the few interested ones he had contacted, Florencio was appointed as the service director of the small group.

After leaving Cebu City, the pioneers moved on to Bacolod City on Negros Island. There they met up with Brother Narciso Samson who had moved there from Manila to do secular work. While in Bacolod City the three brothers waited until the early morning hours of June 3, 1935 (June 2 in the United States), to hear the broadcast of Brother Rutherford's lecture "Government" beamed directly from Washington, D.C., U.S.A. They were thrilled to hear the discourse clearly. Back in Manila the branch director and other brothers went to a radio studio to hear the same broadcast, but were unable to hear clearly due to static interference. In San Pablo City, on Luzon Island, another group of pioneers heard the broadcast that morning. This truly made the brothers in the Philippines feel more closely united with Jehovah's people earth wide at that time when they were so few.

After working on Negros Island for several months, the pioneers moved southward to Mindanao, reaching Zamboanga City for the first time. There Conrado Daclan, a Philippine Constabulary trainee, took books from the pioneers, but lost touch and could not later locate the pioneers. He presumed that they would need to report to their Manila office by mail and so he stationed himself near the post office and waited for them. After several days of waiting, the pioneers finally came and he immediately asked for help in studying the Bible. After three months of study this man was baptized in the Zamboanga River. Not long after this, he joined the pioneer group in the Visayas and during World War II played an important part in spreading the truth as a "zone servant."

AIDS IN EXPANDING THE WITNESS

Apart from witnessing from house to house with the literature or phonograph, during the 1930's the brothers used another means of proclaiming the truth throughout the entire Philippines. This was by public debate. Filipinos of those years were very much in-

terested in public discussions and almost anyone could stand up in the public plaza to speak, especially about religion, and draw a sizable crowd of listeners. Thus the brothers would give a public lecture with an open question period being allowed afterward. At other times, debates were officially arranged with leaders of other religions, although this was discouraged by the branch office. The public forum style of discussing the Bible did much to attract people to the truth, and many of those now Witnesses first heard the Kingdom message during a public debate or discussion.

On one occasion in Zamboanga del Sur, for example, when Brother Liwag met a local pastor in a public discussion, the timekeeper of the debate became interested in the truth and is now a witness of Jehovah. Although the debating style disappeared in the 1940's, the custom of holding talks in the public plazas and parks was still popular down to the 1950's, and this method of advertising the Kingdom certainly was fully utilized by Jehovah's people in this land. Another big help in reaching more people with the good news was the publishing of more literature in local languages.

It can be readily seen, therefore, that the period from 1935 to 1939 was one of vigorous activity for the small band of Kingdom proclaimers in the Philippines. During that five-year period, almost 500,000 books and booklets were distributed to the people in all parts of the islands. By 1939 fourteen congregations had been established and 159 publishers were reporting field service. With few exceptions, virtually every province in the country had received a Kingdom witness to some extent and the seeds had been planted for a rich harvest in later years.

WORK INTENSIFIED AS WAR CLOUDS GATHER

A joyful event in the history of Jehovah's Witnesses in the Philippines took place at the Manila Grand Opera House on March 21 and 22, 1940. There, in the same hall used by Brother Russell in 1912, the Society's branch office arranged for the first convention of Jehovah's people to be held in this land. Brothers from various parts of the country attended and participated in advertising the public talk "Government and Peace," which was to be a recording of the talk delivered by Brother Rutherford at Madison Square Garden in New York city on June 25, 1939.

By information marching with placards an impressive witness was given to Manila residents. Walking six to nine meters (20 to 30 feet) apart, the brothers

wore placards that in front read, "Religion Is a Snare and a Racket" and at the back urged, "Serve God and Christ the King and Live." Handbills also were used to advertise the public talk. When, on March 22, the talk "Government and Peace" was played on the transcription machine, an audience of over 300 listened attentively.

Following this first assembly, in order to carry on the work more efficiently, nine pioneers were appointed as "zone servants," today called circuit overseers. In those days, however, they covered a wide area in their travels. The appointment of these zone servants was certainly timely, as they were to play a vital role during the next few critical years.

With the zone servants serving systematically in their respective "zones," our activities moved ahead faster and more smoothly than ever before. Nine new congregations were established in 1940 and eight in 1941, bringing the total up to 31 congregations having 373 publishers in that year. Over 300,000 books and booklets were distributed in 1940 and 1941, and 108,548 persons heard the recorded talks of Brother Rutherford. The Memorial on April 11, 1941, was attended by 621 persons, 16 of whom partook of the emblems.

In January 1940 the cramped branch office on Rizal Avenue in Manila was expanded a little by the renting of additional space in the same apartment building. But even this did not suffice to keep pace with the growing needs. At that time Brother Dos Santos, his wife and their two children were the only persons permanently living in the Bethel home, although other brothers would come in and help occasionally. Toward the end of 1940, a larger, two-story house was purchased for P4,500.00 (\$2,250), almost half the amount being paid by the branch overseer and the rest being loaned by an interested German man. The new property, located at 1736 M. Natividad Street, Santa Cruz, Manila, was spacious, well ventilated and away from the noise and dust of Rizal Avenue, which is a main thoroughfare. The basement floor served as a storeroom for the literature, and the office and living quarters were on the second floor. The *sala* or large reception area served as the meeting place for the Manila "Company." —Ps. 68:11, *Authorized Version*.

Soon after purchasing this property, a new Bethel member was added. He was Narciso Delavin, who had been serving as zone servant in the southern provinces. In 1941 two sisters were added to the branch office staff, thus making five Bethel workers in all, excluding the two children of Brother and Sister Dos Santos. None of these workers requested any allow-

ance, since they had sufficient for their needs from the contributions received for the literature they placed when participating in the field service. At that time living costs were very low in Manila. For instance, a breakfast consisting of a fried egg, rolls and coffee cost less than ten centavos (5c U.S.). So it was not until after World War II that Bethel workers in the Philippines began to receive a small allowance for their personal needs.

In the midst of such spiritual growth and prosperity, however, the threat of war began to make itself felt. The second world war was already raging in Europe, and by July 1941 the Japanese imperial armies had the Philippines virtually surrounded. The fear of the enemy within caused some to suspect that Jehovah's people were spies or were Communists, and this brought some pressure on the small group of brothers in this land.

In Balaoan, La Union, a group of pioneers were arrested because they did not obtain a license to publish the good news in the town. When other pioneers protested this unjust action as being a curtailment of their freedom of speech and religion, they, too, were arrested and accused of being Communists. The brothers used the Society's booklet *Order of Trial* in defending themselves and, after a week, they were transferred to the provincial jail in San Fernando, La Union. After spending a month in prison, through the aid of a liberty-loving American lawyer who offered his services free of charge, they were released and found not guilty of the charges.

In other provinces the brothers were accused of being "fifth columnists" or spies for the Axis Powers. Religious newspapers encouraged this by falsely stating that the Society's purpose was to undermine and overthrow man's governments. Such unjust accusations were not limited to the island of Luzon, but were reported in Mindanao and the Visayas as well. The accusations sometimes were accompanied by physical abuse of the brothers.

On two occasions the branch office was visited by Intelligence Bureau representatives who were checking on the activities of Jehovah's Witnesses. After reading some literature, they recognized that the work had no political connections whatsoever, but was purely Christian. One of the representatives advised the branch overseer that "in case of any misunderstanding from the Commonwealth officials regarding your work, you may just refer the matter to the bureau."

The nearness of war also increased feelings of nationalism, and there was much discussion about

making the flag salute compulsory in public and private schools. As early as 1939 some children of Jehovah's Witnesses had been expelled from school because of not saluting the flag and, in view of their religious objection to saluting any national emblem, they were often mentioned prominently in the newspapers when this matter came up. Finally, a circular was issued to all schools making flag saluting compulsory on the strength of an opinion rendered by the then Secretary of Justice, Jose Abad Santos. No doubt this was influenced somewhat by the outcome of the *Gobitis* case in June 1940, when the Supreme Court of the United States decided against Jehovah's Witnesses.

WAR REACHES THE PHILIPPINES

All these events came to a head when the Japanese Air Force bombed Pearl Harbor in Hawaii at a little past 2 a.m. on the morning of December 8, 1941, Philippine time. A few hours later an air attack was made on Davao City in southern Mindanao, and at noon of the same day the United States bases in Clark and Iba on Luzon Island were bombed by Japanese aircraft operating out of Formosa. War had reached the Philippines.

A few days after the first bombing raid, the Society's Philippine branch sent to the Brooklyn headquarters a telegram that read: "Greetings. Work paralyzed. Brethren determined to 'comfort all that mourn!'" This was the last communication this branch had with the Society's headquarters in New York until the war ended.

Four days after the Pearl Harbor bombing, at around 10 a.m., two Philippine Constabulary officers went to the branch office on M. Natividad Street and took the branch overseer in for questioning. Malicious religious elements had falsely reported to the authorities that the branch overseer was the No. 1 fifth columnist in the Philippines. A few hours later, three Filipino brothers who were at the branch office that day were also taken into custody by the same officers. Upon arrival at the headquarters, they were fingerprinted and photographed like common criminals, then interrogated on the following day. During the investigation, if they refused to answer particularly tricky questions directly, they were often beaten. Following this, the three brothers—Narciso Delavin, Agustin Dagdag and Melchor Maninang—were thrown into the Old Bilbid prison on Azcarraga Street (now C. M. Recto Avenue). Brother Dos Santos, the branch overseer, was already there by that time, although he was kept separate

from the Filipino brothers. No food was given them for two days, but Brother Engracio Alinsod brought them some provisions.

After this, all four of the brothers were taken by truck to the National Penitentiary in Muntinlupa, Rizal, around 25 kilometers (16 miles) south of Manila. There they were again fingerprinted and photographed and their hair was shaved on top in the shape of a cross, supposedly to indicate that they were traitors against the government. Again Brother Dos Santos was kept away from the other prisoners. He was placed in solitary confinement and not allowed out in the sunlight.

Brothers Delavin, Dagdag and Maninang were put in a large cell with several *Sakdalistas*, members of a rebel movement advocating the overthrow of the government. The brothers witnessed to these men fearlessly. Toward the end of December 1941, it was announced that all *Sakdalistas* would be released if they would henceforth support the government and renounce their political beliefs. The three brothers immediately told the guards that they were Jehovah's Witnesses and were not traitors against the government and so had nothing to renounce. As a result of this firm declaration, they were separated from the *Sakdalistas*, given better treatment, and later that night, released along with Brother Dos Santos.

While Brother Pedro Navarro of San Fabian, Pangasinan, about two hundred kilometers (124 miles) north of Manila, and several others were cycling to Manila to get literature for field service, they learned of the bombing of Pearl Harbor. On their way back, they saw that the American forces (USAFPE—United States Armed Forces in the Far East) were deploying themselves along the roads and beaches and that people in general were evacuating to the hills. So, upon reaching Pangasinan, these brothers also left their homes and went with their families to the hills of Lobong, to San Jacinto, Pangasinan.

On December 14, 1941, seventeen of these brothers were arrested. They were asked by the Filipino military authorities if the Kingdom they were proclaiming was the Japanese government and if Jehovah was the name of a Japanese god. The brothers answered clearly that the Kingdom was God's and that Jehovah is the God of the entire universe. The army sergeant then spread both an American and a Filipino flag side by side on a tree trunk and ordered Brother Navarro to strip to his shorts and kneel and kiss the flags. When he remained standing he was beaten mercilessly in front of the other brothers until he fell down. Told to

stand up, he was immediately knocked down again. The brother was beaten by alternating groups of four soldiers from nightfall until 1:30 the following morning, with only brief intervals in between. Brother Navarro suffered a dislocated rib as a result of the mistreatment.

This display of brute force did not make the observing brothers afraid as the soldiers had hoped. Since these Witnesses, too, refused to compromise, they also were beaten, were burned with cigarette ends, and had bullets placed between their fingers before these were squeezed together very hard. The next day the seventeen brothers were taken to Manaoag cemetery and told they were to be shot. Instead, they were left out in the tropical sun without cover from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. before being questioned again by the officers. Thereafter, the brothers were taken to the Dagupan City jail and released after two or three days, only to be rearrested a day later and imprisoned in Tayug, Pangasinan.

After further mistreatment, during which Brother Navarro and his uncle were chained together and regularly beaten in an open plaza, the Witnesses were finally transported to Manila in an army truck. Since the Japanese were frequently bombing bridges and highways at that time, whenever an air raid came the soldiers would take cover by the side of the road, but, with their guns trained on them, they would leave the brothers in the truck, hoping they would be bombed on the highway. They survived, however, and, upon reaching Manila, were investigated at the USAFFE headquarters, where they were cleared of the charges against them and were released.

The freed Witnesses remained in Manila for a few days, trying to contact the brothers, but the first time they went to the branch office, it was closed. The following day they went again and were happy to meet Brother Dos Santos, who had just arrived after being released from the National Penitentiary. On December 26, 1941, however, the American forces had declared Manila an open city. The Japanese armies already were marching toward the capital city and in a few days they would be in complete control of Manila. Realizing this, the branch overseer urged Brother Navarro to return to Pangasinan, taking along as much literature and other supplies as he could carry. How the brothers and sisters in San Jacinto rejoiced when Brother Navarro and the others arrived back home safe and sound, since they felt sure the entire group of brothers had been executed!

Back in Manila, with the Japanese occupation impending, the branch overseer took steps to protect the

Society's interests. Since alien-owned property would no doubt be confiscated by the invading forces, it was arranged that the branch office property on M. Natividad Street be sold. Literature was distributed to the homes of a number of brothers in Manila, and the branch records were destroyed. When the Japanese soldiers entered Manila on January 2, 1942, they posted notices throughout the city ordering all "enemy" aliens to report at once for internment at the Santo Tomás University. So it was that on January 26, 1942, the branch overseer entered this improvised prison camp, there to remain for over three years, until March 13, 1945. His wife, being a Filipino citizen, was not imprisoned with him.

At the beginning of his imprisonment, Brother Dos Santos was able to have occasional visits from his wife and other Witnesses, and this gave him opportunity to provide helpful advice. Later, when the camp came under military control, this was no longer possible. On one occasion, he received a letter from Brother Nathan H. Knorr, the new president of the Society, informing him of the death of Brother Ruthford on January 8, 1942.

CONTINUED GROWTH DURING JAPANESE OCCUPATION

During the prewar trials from the combined American and Filipino forces and the subsequent persecution caused by the Japanese occupation of the Philippines, the Witnesses maintained strict neutrality. In the 1938 and 1939 *Yearbooks* they had read how their persecuted brothers in Nazi Germany were maintaining faithfulness to God, and this was a real source of encouragement. Additionally, Jehovah providentially had arranged for the booklet *Neutrality* to be on hand here for the brothers' use even before the war came to the Philippines. Hence, they were aware of their Scriptural position in the face of the overlapping, and often co-existing, opposing forces.

The imprisonment of the branch overseer and the closing of the Society's office in Manila did not stop the proclamation of the good news of the Kingdom; nor did it slow down the growth of the number of Jehovah's people. The appointed zone servants for the most part remained in their assigned areas during this difficult time and faithfully cared for the Kingdom interests entrusted to them as best they could under the circumstances.

In tracing the steady growth of the Kingdom work during the three dark years of the Japanese occupation

(1942-1945), it seems fitting to view the matter from the standpoint of five different sections of the country, each with its own distinctive story: (1) Central and Southern Luzon, including Manila; (2) Northern Luzon; (3) Western Visayas; (4) Northern Mindanao and Eastern Visayas; and (5) Southern Mindanao.

CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN LUZON

Once the Japanese occupation forces entered Manila, life became hard in the city. Hence, many people evacuated to the provinces. A number of Manila brothers moved to an evacuation center in the town of Bay in the province of Laguna, around seventy-five kilometers (47 miles) south of the city. There the brothers all stayed together, thus, in effect, transferring much of the Manila Company (Congregation) to the town of Bay. They held regular studies in the latest publications that were available. Every Sunday they would share in the field service, systematically covering the towns and barrios (villages) around Bay. Being close to Manila, they were able to get literature that had been stored in the homes of brothers before the war and they used this in the witnessing activity until the supply was exhausted. After that the brothers lent books to interested people.

As a result of this spreading of the good news from Bay, the Rubio family, living in Makiling, Calamba, about twenty kilometers (12 miles) away, was contacted and soon all of them accepted the truth and were baptized. Being a large family, they were formed into a separate congregation in Makiling. Later, when it became dangerous in Bay due to Japanese attacks, the brothers moved from there to Makiling and stayed with this family on their large tract of land. From there they witnessed to surrounding areas, reaching into Batangas province, often leaving home at 3 a.m. using torches to light their way so that they could reach their territory by daybreak. Because of danger from Japanese patrols or Filipino guerrillas, the brothers often got separated from one another. So they always took a count before moving out and when returning home.

However, not all brothers left Manila when the war broke out. Some remained in the city, met together for study in various homes, and continued declaring the good news to the extent possible. In adjoining Pasay City, there was an active group of publishers, and in 1943 they even arranged a small assembly with Witnesses present from Pampanga province.

To the north of Manila, in the central plains of Pam-

panga and Bulacan, a young brother named Ruben Lacanilao was appointed as zone servant during the war. This brother was instrumental in aiding many to learn the truth, including his own family members. Realizing the importance of water baptism after reading the book *Riches*, these new disciples were immersed while wearing white clothing and singing Kingdom songs (composed by Brother Lacanilao and put to worldly tunes). During the first year of the occupation, fifty were baptized in this group, with fifty others showing much interest and associating with the brothers. Although there was only one congregation in that area, meetings were held in three different locations by rotation, namely, in Mandili, Batasan and Pampangsapa.

During this time, the *Hukbalahap* movement was formed to fight the Japanese. This is a contraction of the Tagalog expression *Hukbo ng Bayan laban sa Hapon*, or "People's Army against Japan." These were called *Huks* for short. Following the war, they remained active in subversive activity against the Philippine government, and for this they were later outlawed.

On one occasion, when about eighty-five brothers were gathered for study in a private home, a fierce encounter took place between the *Huks* and the Japanese soldiers just thirty meters (100 feet) away from the house. The brothers remained where they were, feeling that it would show a lack of faith in Jehovah to run away and hide. Not one of them was hurt, although several civilians were killed by stray bullets during the fight, which lasted five hours.

Because of their refusal to join the *Huks* in fighting against the Japanese, the Witnesses were often suspected of being pro-Japanese. The *Huks* would regularly attempt to recruit the brothers for guerrilla warfare. Especially were they interested in Brother Lacanilao, since he was a fluent speaker and good organizer and they believed he possessed some "hidden wisdom" because he had dabbled in spiritism and forecast future events before he learned the truth. At first they tried to entice him with offers of high position in their organization; later they used pressure. But he steadfastly maintained his neutral position and continued serving the brothers as zone servant, visiting congregations in all the central Luzon provinces to strengthen them.

This brother translated past *Watchtower* articles regularly into Pampanga for the benefit of the brothers. He would type or write out his translation. Then this would be lent to different families. The family heads would prepare questions on a certain section and sub-

mit these to the study conductor. The daily text was translated from the latest *Yearbook* available, and this would be discussed by each family after singing songs. Little by little, Brother Lacanillao also translated the Society's book *Children* into Pampango, doing so orally while a battery of fourteen brothers in a circle around him copied down what he said. Since he was wanted by the *Huks*, he would do this translation work in hiding, at one time working in a hut in the center of a watermelon field, while brothers kept watch outside in case visitors should come. If people did come around, Brother Lacanillao would hide his typewriter underneath other things in a wicker basket and pretend to be doing something else.

Because material being translated was selected to build up the brothers in the faith, they were well fortified spiritually for the difficulties they faced. Since they were captured and investigated many times, often they escaped death only through the intervention of relatives who were with the *Huk* movement. On one occasion, however, Brother Armando Sarmiento, a presiding overseer, was captured, hung upside down from a tree and used as a knife-throwing target until he was killed. Thus he died faithful to Jehovah as a person who refused to violate his Christian neutrality.

In spite of the critical situation, the brothers were able to meet together for "zone assemblies" from time to time. In September of 1943, they met in barrio Mandili in Candaba, Pampanga. Brothers from Pasay City and Manila, as well as a large group from Angat, Bulacan, were invited.

Thus the brothers in central Luzon kept active and strong in faith during the war. When the war ended, Brother Lacanillao continued to build up the brothers under the direction of the branch office until one day, July 9, 1945, when a band of *Huks* broke into his home and demanded at gunpoint that he go with them in their fight against the Philippine government. When he steadfastly refused, the *berdugo* (executioner) counted to three and fired at him point-blank in front of his brothers and sisters. He lived for a half hour after this, and to comfort him his family sang a Kingdom song entitled "Forward, March Even unto Death!" This faithful brother spent his dying moments encouraging his family to faithfulness and discussing the sure hope of the resurrection.

In February of 1945 the American forces arrived, and the prisoners in the Santo Tomás University in Manila were released. Brother Dos Santos was given treatment by the United States Army and was finally released on March 13, 1945. He weighed only thirty-six

kilograms (80 pounds) at that time, to compare with sixty-one kilograms (135 pounds) when interned. Telling of what he experienced in prison during the latter part of his stay, he says: "In the last months there was acute starvation. A bowl of thin rice water with salt was given to every person every day. Anything, such as camote peelings, weeds and other greens that could be gathered in the camp yard, found its way to our empty stomachs to lessen at least the horrible feeling of hunger."

Although Brother Dos Santos had been the only Witness in the prison camp at the outset, in January of 1944 he was joined by two others, Brother Van Bolin and his twenty-year-old son John. Brother Bolin had been discharged from the American armed forces and had returned to the Philippines in 1941. Along with his son, he was determined to pioneer. They were assigned to Zamboanga City, but shortly after they arrived the war came and in May 1942 they were imprisoned by the Japanese in Zamboanga City. In 1944 they were transferred to Santo Tomás University where they were met by Brother Dos Santos. They arranged to study together regularly and they held the Memorial celebration that year inside the prison camp.

During their confinement these three brothers had used every opportunity to share the truth with fellow inmates. They had also kept their integrity to Jehovah God.

As soon as Brother Dos Santos was freed, he set up the branch office in temporary quarters in the apartment of a doctor on Oroquieta Street, Manila. Here he had a happy reunion with the brothers who came from various provinces, and he rejoiced at hearing of the fine work that had been done in southern and central Luzon during the war years. Brothers also visited him from northern Luzon.

NORTHERN LUZON

During the early part of the occupation the brothers in northern Luzon enjoyed a relatively trouble-free period, and so the work was able to proceed smoothly. Memorial time afforded opportunity to assemble together, and this was done during each of the four years. The first Memorial was celebrated in Caba, La Union, not long after the occupation began in 1942, and around 100 persons were in attendance.

From 1943 until 1945, the zone servant, Brother Benjamin Sampana, arranged for "zone assemblies" to be held at Memorial time. At these gatherings instructions were given for the following year's service and pioneers were assigned to witness in specific towns.

Although accurate counts were not kept in those days, it is clear that the attendance at the 1945 assembly was more than five times that of the Memorial in 1942. This showed that Jehovah was bringing in the increase during the war years.

In between these memorable assemblies the publishers and pioneers kept on declaring the good news and meeting together to study the *Children* book, the latest available publication of the Society. In some places the brothers found it advisable to change the meeting place each week, both as a convenience to them as well as to avoid attracting the attention of the Japanese authorities.

Toward the end of 1944, the Americans began periodic bombing raids on the Philippines. This caused the Japanese occupation forces to institute harsher controls on the people. At the same time, guerrillas had been mobilized, and Jehovah's Witnesses found themselves between two fires, as it were. So, in some areas the brothers were forced to flee from their homes. Those in La Union took to the hills and jungle, and in Baguio City Witnesses took refuge in caves as a protection from the bombing. Wherever they went, they took along their literature and continued studying God's Word.

In spite of the precautions taken, the brothers could not avoid all contact with the opposing forces, and many times they were beaten by either Japanese spies or Filipino guerrillas. Up north in Bucay, Abra, Brother Isabelo Taeza and his pioneer group, fourteen of them in all, were arrested by the Japanese. The fourteen brothers were imprisoned, to be executed after a few days. Every evening they were beaten with a piece of wood or a pick handle. No food was given them for three days. When the day of their execution came, the Japanese notified the town mayor, as was their custom. The mayor, in turn, informed the brothers' relatives, but, when he found that some of these were his close friends, he intervened on behalf of the condemned Witnesses. Happily the execution was stopped and the brothers were freed. Certainly, on that occasion they felt the protecting hand of Jehovah over them!

Later, the same group fell into the hands of the guerrillas, who demanded that they either join them or be killed. Out of fear, one or two of these pioneers compromised on this occasion, but the majority stood firm and were not harmed. This pioneer group did much zealous work in those difficult times, and they were privileged to establish the Abulug and Claveria Congregations in Cagayan province, as well as to fortify the brothers in the Bucay, Abra, Congregation.

So, the work of Jehovah's people progressed steadily during the occupation on the island of Luzon. But how did the brothers fare in the southern islands, such as the western Visayas?

WESTERN VISAYAS

By the time the war broke out, congregations had been established in Bacolod City, Iloilo City and Cebu City, one on each of the three main islands of the area. Let us see what happened to the brothers in these places from 1942 to 1945.

When war erupted, the brothers in Bacolod City moved out to the mountains of Kabatangan and continued witnessing and meeting together there. They lived in small huts, camping as a group, and functioned just like a congregation, having regular meetings and arrangements for field service. On one occasion, the people in the area learned that a Japanese patrol was approaching and all except the Witnesses went into hiding. The brothers closed all the doors and windows and quietly remained inside their huts, praying to Jehovah. All who fled and hid were captured by the Japanese, but God's people were not touched. After staying for a short time in the mountains, it became possible for the group to return to Bacolod City, where they remained, continuing their service to Jehovah, for the duration of the war.

When the Japanese occupied Iloilo City the brothers evacuated to barrio Buntatala in Leganes, just outside the city. There they met together for meetings in the home of the Gustilo family. On one occasion they held the Memorial there and it was attended by a few brothers from Bacolod City. Later, when it became too dangerous in that place, the brothers moved to the land of Brother Blas Pamplona in barrio Bilidan, Santa Barbara, Iloilo, where things were more peaceful.

In Bilidan the brothers built their homes on the land of Brother Pamplona, and a Kingdom Hall was constructed for meetings. During the day they would farm the land, with each family sharing in the produce, and in the evenings they would study God's Word together, using the *Salvation* and *Children* books, which Brother Manuel Enicola would orally translate into Hiligaynon as they went along. Later, one of the group put up some capital and the brothers went into a little buy-and-sell business to help support themselves. They would travel to various towns to sell their goods, and would witness as they did so, sometimes giving public lectures. In this way they were able to witness to the towns of Dingle, Santa Barbara, Cabatuan,

Lucena, Leganes, Zarraga, Barotac Nuevo, Lambunao, Janiuay and Calinog.

Since Brother Manuel Enicola had been a court stenographer previously, the army invited him to be stenographer for the court-martial in that area. Thinking that this was an opportunity to give a 'testimony before kings and rulers,' he went to the camp to explain why he could not accept the position offered. (Matt. 10:18) This resulted in his being imprisoned in the Regimental Detention Camp, where he was fed only rice broth. Later, even this was not forthcoming, so that the prisoners took large gulps of water to ease the pangs of hunger. Signs of the American forces' arrival saved this brother from a worse fate, and charges were never filed against him. Later, he studied at Gilead School in New York and for a time served as a member of the Bethel family in Quezon City.

Over in Cebu City, the brothers encountered much difficulty right from the beginning of the war. Brother Leodegario Barlaan and Sister Natividad Santos, who later became his wife, were pioneering in Cebu along with several others at the time. They were accused by the government authorities of being fifth columnists and were imprisoned for five days in Tuburan, Cebu. Samples of their literature were sent to army headquarters, but a telegram came back ordering the release of Jehovah's Witnesses, thus clearing them of this false charge. They were told not to witness to the people, but the brothers 'obeyed God rather than men' and carried on with their work, using their good supply of the book *Children* and the booklet *End of Axis Powers—Comfort All That Mourn*. (Acts 5:29) Two weeks later, they were arrested again and imprisoned, this time in Cebu City. Although the officer in charge was kind, he explained that if they were allowed to proclaim their message publicly, they would discourage others from fighting the war. However, when the Japanese began bombing the city, all prisoners were released. So again these Witnesses were free.

Around the end of 1942, Brother Barlaan and Sister Santos were arrested again, this time by the Filipino guerrillas who tried to get the brothers to sign an affidavit stating that they were Japanese spies. Upon refusing to do this, these faithful Christians were given a mock trial, were sent to the guerrilla headquarters and then were moved around to various guerrilla camps for a period of eight months, doing forced labor. On one occasion they were required to sing a patriotic song, but they sang a Kingdom song instead. In July 1943, these persevering Witnesses were re-

leased, having finally convinced the guerrillas that they were neutral Christians, not Japanese spies.

Even though Brother Barlaan and Sister Santos had only the worn-out clothes they were wearing when released, they immediately began declaring the good news again. Providentially, a young boy told them of a person nearby who also was a Witness. He turned out to be an interested man who had read the Society's book *Creation*. This hospitable person invited the entire group of pioneers to stay with him, and for a time they used his home for weekly studies. The brothers would spend one week witnessing and earn their living the next, Brother Barlaan by planting corn on the householder's land and Sister Santos by weaving hats that she would sell in the market for ₱1.00 each (50c U.S.). In this way, through the generous assistance of the kind householder, they were able to buy new clothes. After two months of study, this interested man was baptized by Brother Barlaan.

By now the group of pioneers had reached eleven in number. They worked in the mountains of Tuburan and covered the towns of Sugod, Catmon, Carmen and Danao, eventually reaching Toledo City on the west coast of Cebu Island. In this latter place they established a *Watchtower* study (using back issues of the magazines) as well as a Cebuano study in the booklet *Uncovered*. By the time that the Japanese occupation ended in 1945, many of the interested persons found in these places had been baptized.

Due to disrupted communications, the brothers in the western Visayas were not able to get in touch with the branch office right away after the war ended. All but a few missed the first postwar assembly in Lingayen during November of 1945. In fact, the first assembly the majority of them attended on Luzon was the one held in Manila in March 1947 during Brother N. H. Knorr's first visit to the Philippines. They kept right on declaring the good news, however, and in March 1946 the Hiligaynon-speaking brothers arranged an assembly on their own initiative in Santa Barbara, Iloilo.

NORTHERN MINDANAO AND EASTERN VISAYAS

Following the Manila Grand Opera House assembly in 1940, Brother Conrado Daclan was assigned to cover northern Mindanao and eastern Visayas as a zone servant. In April or May of that year he arrived in Ozamis City, his first stop. Interest was found there and the new ones contacted soon joined Brother Daclan and the other pioneers in witnessing throughout the

entire northern Mindanao area from Zamboanga to Surigao.

The brothers often ran into difficulties due to wartime pressures. In Malaybalay, Bukidnon, at army headquarters, Brother Juliano Hermosa was arrested on a spy charge, but was later released. Later the entire pioneer group was arrested on the same charge and imprisoned for a few days in Gingoog. Brother Solano of Manila was with them when they were arrested on that occasion. Again, they were released.

In making their way eastward, the Witnesses finally arrived at what was to become their wartime headquarters in Buenavista, Agusan. Here again they soon found themselves behind bars, although the guards were amazed to see the joy of the brothers as they sang songs of praise to Jehovah. The Witnesses spoke about the truth to some of the guards and a number of these showed considerable interest in the message. At this time Brother Daclan was interviewed by American officers and he made a signed statement in answer to 75 questions put to him. Evidently this information was forwarded to Australia, since not long afterwards word was reportedly received from General MacArthur's headquarters there that Jehovah's Witnesses were not guilty of fifth column activity. So, they were released. This was in the spring of 1942.

By this time there were about 100 publishers in the Buenavista "Company" and they divided into four smaller groups. The *Children* book was studied weekly, and service meetings also were arranged, although these consisted mainly of talks from the Society's publications and encouragement to keep on declaring the good news. When violence broke out between the opposing war forces, the Witnesses moved the meetings from place to place, sometimes meeting in the hills to avoid the fighting. Since they loved to sing, Bible poems were composed by the brothers and were set to Protestant hymns to serve as Kingdom songs. An orchestra was arranged by Antonio Yangzon, and Francisco Borja taught the brothers to sing in four-part harmony.

When the public schools closed down because of the war, the Buenavista "Company" arranged for its own schools, with four groups, each having its own instructor. Even children of non-Witnesses attended these makeshift schools and gave a contribution to the teachers for the instruction received. Some learned the truth in this way, as the Bible and the Society's publications were used as textbooks.

Since communications with the branch office had been completely severed, Brother Daclan took charge

of the work in that area until contact with the Society was restored. During that period, congregations were established in Alegria, Mainit, Placer and Bacuag in Surigao province, and in Cabadbaran, Esperanza, Las Nieves and Libertad (Butuan City) in Agusan province.

In addition to the work done by the pioneers, at times the publishers in Buenavista witnessed in distant territories. On one occasion, Benjamin Datig led a group of thirty brothers to visit the people on the island of Camiguin. This required a 100-kilometer (60-mile) walk to Talisayan, followed by a boat ride. Since in many families no one was left behind to care for the young children, they were taken along, being carried by their parents. During field service in the various towns of Camiguin Island, the Witnesses were arrested several times by the guerrillas. Moreover, when these Kingdom proclaimers returned to the mainland, the entire group, including the small children, were imprisoned in Talisayan for eight days.

Because it was learned that the names of prominent brothers, due to their neutral stand, were on the wanted lists of the Filipino guerrillas, the brothers stopped using their real names and took on Biblical names instead. Brother Daclan was called "Caleb," while others had names like "Job," "Shadrach" and "Meshach." These became so common that they rarely used their real names, and even to this day the brothers of that time often recall one another best by their Biblical names.

As in the rest of the country, the year 1944 saw an intensifying of the fighting between the Japanese forces and the guerrillas. This, in turn, brought much suffering to the brothers in northern Mindanao, since they were hated by both sides. Javier Pauya, called "Job" by the brothers, was cruelly tortured by the guerrillas and died not too long after this of illness caused by the mistreatment. In Nasipit, Agusan, Santiago Sacro and his wife Dominga were killed by the Japanese and their bodies were burned along with their home. For a whole night, Isidro Monta was tied to a tree crawling with stinging red ants, but he survived and did not compromise. Other brothers were stripped naked and severely beaten when they refused to carry bullets for the guerrilla forces.

In the midst of this cruel persecution, the zone servant arranged for an assembly in Bacuag, Surigao, toward the end of 1944. Brothers from Agusan and Surigao provinces attended, and talks were given to build up their faith. At the assembly encouragement was given to keep on telling out the good news and a call was made for volunteers to witness in isolated

territories. About fifty brothers and sisters from fourteen to thirty years of age volunteered, and they went to work first in the Siargao Islands off Surigao. These islands were relatively trouble-free, and so the Witnesses served there unhindered, locating good interest and establishing congregations in Dapa, Tuburan, Burgos and Numancia. Soon around 300 brothers altogether were witnessing there.

While on these islands, the brothers built a sturdy sailboat that could carry sixty persons and was used in witnessing in various places. They called the boat "Mizpah." Later, two other boats were added to the "fleet," namely, "Theocracy I" and "Theocracy II." In "Mizpah" a boatload of brothers set out one day heading farther afield, having the two large islands of Leyte and Bohol as their objective. By that time the ouster of the Japanese forces from the Philippines was well under way, General MacArthur's advance troops having landed in Leyte as early as October of 1944.

On landing in Liloan, Leyte, the Witnesses separated into two groups and visited the eastern and western sections of Leyte respectively. Good work was done on this trip and congregations were established in Santa Paz, Sogod and Nahawong. When the one group reached Maasin, they took off in "Mizpah" once again and headed for Bohol Island. On landing in Ipil, Talibon, Bohol, on the north of the island, this group led by Benjamin Datig was divided into three and, since the island is roughly circular in shape, one group worked their way eastward, another westward and the third southward, going inland. In this manner they covered the entire island of over forty towns and rendezvoused in Tagbilaran, the provincial capital.

On this trip, these Witnesses met another group of interested persons in Sevilla, Bohol. They were studying the Bible together, along with the Society's publications, although they never had associated with God's people. Before the war, Salvador Maleza had obtained some of our publications from a brother doing street witnessing in Manila. Salvador began to read them during the Japanese occupation. Although he was a guerrilla fighter, he began to change many of his habits, refusing to go to social functions because of what he had learned from the publications. A fellow guerrilla, Ignacio Digao, noticed the change in him and became interested too. So they, along with others, began to study together, going through the Bible chapter by chapter. How glad they were to meet the visiting brothers at that time and to get more knowledge! After the war these persons were baptized.

From Bohol the group joined the other brothers who

had been left in Leyte and together they sailed back in "Mizpah" to the Siargao Islands. They were buffeted by a strong typhoon en route and a young boy was thrown overboard, but Brother Daclan dived in and saved him and no lives were lost. More work was done after this in Bukidnon and Misamis Oriental, resulting in the establishing of the Balintad, Lumbia and Imbatug Congregations.

A great deal of energetic work was done by the brothers in this section during the war, resulting in the establishment of many congregations by 1946, when communication with the branch office was restored. Brother Daclan went to Manila to report personally to the branch office in that year and from then on the work was directed once again from the Society's branch.

SOUTHERN MINDANAO

Before the war broke out, a group of six pioneers, along with some interested persons, were witnessing in Davao City in southern Mindanao. They were meeting regularly for Bible studies at the home of Brother Cipriano Sepulveda. Salvador Liwag, who had been assigned as zone servant for the area, was one of them, and with him were Brothers Desiderio Pauya, Lino Ilaguison and Felino Comido, as well as Sisters Purificacion Bennett and Elvira Alinsod. When the Japanese landed in Davao in December 1941, Brother Ilaguison was on Samal Island off Davao City, while the rest of the Witnesses evacuated to Cotabato province, along with many others who were fleeing from the occupation armies.

The small group hiked through deep forests for many days, sleeping between tree roots and trying to pluck off the leeches sucking their blood. They drank the water of the rattan plant when no fresh water was available. This plant is a little like sugarcane and when cut crosswise it secretes sweet water to quench the thirst. The invading Japanese were not too far behind them and occasionally aircraft would drop leaflets encouraging the people to submit to the invaders. One leaflet had a picture of the pope blessing children, and it urged all to cooperate with the "Southeast Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere."

Once in Cotabato, the brothers and sisters discussed God's Word with both the local residents and the evacuees from Davao who had settled there. In the town of Pikit the Witnesses were befriended by a man who had obtained some literature before the war. Through him they met two of his relatives, Pedro and Aniano Brillas, who accepted the truth and are among

Jehovah's people to this day. When the Japanese forces finally occupied Cotabato, the brothers were forced to keep moving from place to place to avoid being conscripted for work in the Japanese garrisons. They camped in the hills when it became dangerous to stay in the town proper. This moving around proved to be a blessing in disguise, as a number of our present-day overseers and ministerial servants, especially those in Kabacan and Kidapawan, were first contacted at that time. In the latter town, a man named Guillermo Alegado rejoiced to see the brothers, since he had once studied the Bible in Hawaii with Brother Dos Santos, before the latter came to the Philippines. The entire Alegado family came into the truth. Besides the Alegado and Brillas families, others contacted at that time were Antero and Macario Baswel, Alfredo Nadong, Anastacio Gonzales, Arsenio Bermudez and Manuel Gamponia.

On one occasion, some of the brothers were arrested by guerrillas as suspected Japanese spies. When they learned that Pedro Brillas was a former soldier, they beat him mercilessly. Four of the brothers were kept overnight and then taken deep into the jungle to be imprisoned. They were put in small cages similar to those used for transporting live pigs, and these were so cramped that the brothers could neither lie down nor stand up, but only sit. They continued to bear witness, even under these conditions, and, as a result, one of their guards, Lorenzo Hersan, accepted the truth and was later baptized. The brothers remained in captivity for almost two months before being released due to the intervention of a relative of the Brillas brothers.

The time came when most of the brothers' literature was either lost or worn out and they had only a few Bibles between them. They then formed groups of six or eight, and half of them worked for material food for one week, while the other half went witnessing. The next week the process was reversed. When in service, since usually there was only one Bible in a group, they all went to a house together. One brother would give a testimony while others would share in answering any questions asked by the householder. In that way all could share in giving the witness.

By the fall of 1944, it was becoming more and more difficult to maintain neutrality. So the brothers kept together in a large group and avoided populated areas as much as possible. There were around 200 of them, including the children—a traveling "congregation," which eventually settled in the jungles near Lamitan, Makilala, Cotabato, at the foot of Mount Apo, the highest mountain in the Philippines.

Taking advantage of a temporary lull in the fighting, a few brothers and sisters had returned to Davao, their homeplace. On Samal Island they found Lino Ilaguison still faithfully serving. In spite of the fact that this brother was arrested and imprisoned five times by the Japanese or their cohorts, he was able to establish several groups on the island.

When the American forces arrived on the Davao mainland at the end of 1944, these brothers on Samal Island moved to the mainland, eager to make contact with other Witnesses. A group of about fifty went first to Bato, Santa Cruz, Davao, to the home of Galicano Picot, an interested man who had been contacted by Brother Felino Comido. Picot was president of the Japanese-controlled Neighborhood Association, but he accepted the truth and actively witnessed to all he met. Because he could not conscientiously do much of the work required of him by the Neighborhood Association, he was eventually relieved of his position, for which he was happy. When the fifty brothers from Samal Island stayed for a while in his home, he was accused by neighbors and relatives of harboring dissidents. But before the Witnesses could be apprehended, he sent them away by night, and they traveled through the forest and mountains until they joined Brother Liwag's "congregation" at the foot of Mount Apo.

The congregation as a whole was called "Jehovah-Shammah," and each Witness was given a Biblical name, such as "Joel," "Jonadab," "David" and so forth, some of which stick to the brothers to this very day. This was done to prevent ready identification, since Brother Liwag especially was on the "wanted" lists of the guerrillas and Japanese soldiers. If strangers came near the camp, the word *tiki* was used to spread the warning to the others. Incidentally, that word means "house lizard" in Cebuano.

During this period of around a year, the "congregation" was regularly built up spiritually. Brother Liwag would visit each of its seven cottages in turn and conduct studies in the evenings. Since most of the literature was worn out by this time, he would prepare daily texts and comments designed to strengthen and encourage the brothers. These were translated into Iloko by Macario Baswel and into Cebuano by Moises Supera, since the group was about evenly divided between these two language groups. Handwritten material on Bible accounts, such as those of Esther and Ruth, was also prepared and translated, and this served as a basis for discussion when the entire group met together for meetings once a week. Leovihildo Comido

prepared questions on this material. Information from the *Children* book was put in simplified form in three separate handwritten sections and was used by parents each morning to instruct their children in God's Word.

Since singing was very much a part of their worship, songs in both Iloko and Cebuano were composed by Moises Supera. These were used in opening and closing the Bible studies and meetings.

To provide material sustenance, each cottage had its own farm and the brothers planted rice and cassava. If one cottage ran short, the others would help out in the same spirit as that shown by the early Christians when together in Jerusalem following the day of Pentecost in 33 C.E. (Acts 2:42-45) While waiting for their first harvest, the group subsisted on wild fruit and roots, occasionally enjoying wild pig.

A number of times the Witnesses were discovered by both sides in the war. Once a Japanese patrol took Brother Liwag to their headquarters, where he was grilled for several hours by the officer in charge. Amazingly, he was allowed to go free after he had given a good witness regarding Jehovah's kingdom. On another occasion, a guerrilla band searched for him, but he hid up in the bark ceiling of a house and was not seen.

Due to their isolation in Cotabato, the brothers were not aware of the war's end. The branch overseer had written several letters to known prewar addresses to try to locate Brother Liwag, and eventually a message was delivered to him instructing him to return to Manila. So he left the "congregation" and headed for Davao to get transportation to Manila.

Toward the end of December 1945, the majority of the large "congregation" left their secluded home in the jungle and trekked to Panabo, Davao, a distance of almost 150 kilometers (94 miles). There most of them remained, awaiting definite instructions from the Society's branch office. When Brothers Liwag and Supera returned from Manila in October 1946, the brothers were prepared and "geared up" for greater witnessing activity than ever before. Thirteen began to pioneer immediately, while the others returned to their hometowns and shared the good news there. Soon many congregations mushroomed throughout Davao and Cotabato, so that today there are 238 congregations in this section of the country.

POSTWAR REORGANIZATION BEGINS

The war had left the Philippines on the brink of bankruptcy. All over the country more than a million

persons were unaccounted for. Conservative estimates had it that the Philippines had lost about two thirds of its material wealth. The largest city had been devastated to such a degree that one historian claims that only Stalingrad and Warsaw could compare with Manila in destruction. The city had been wrecked by bombs from both sides of the conflict, as well as by the fierce house-to-house fighting in the ancient walled city of Intramuros, which conflict ended the battle of Manila. Even two years later, when the then president of the Watch Tower Society, Brother Nathan H. Knorr, visited Manila for the first time, the city was still in ruins. A report gives his observations then: "Blocks and blocks of the city that had been homes of the people were now cleared-off open country; it was truly much worse than anything we had seen in Europe a year ago."

Thus it was a time for rehabilitation, for rebuilding, and this applied not only to the country as a whole, but also to the structure of the congregation of God's people in this land. Much work lay ahead.

When Brother Dos Santos was released from prison on March 13, 1945, one of the first things he did after being reunited with his family was to reopen the branch office in an apartment at 1219-B Oroquieta Street, Manila, next door to the clinic of Brother Yngson, a doctor. The brother's clinic was used for meetings.

Brother Dos Santos got in touch with the Brooklyn office once again, although letters could be sent only by surface mail for the most part, since airmail was limited to use by military personnel. He requested and received copies of all back issues of *The Watchtower* and other publications, as well as information that the brothers in the Philippines had missed during the war. In this way things began to move ahead again as the Philippine branch made up for the time lost and began to catch up with the worldwide advancement of Jehovah's people.

In the meantime, reports began filtering in from the brothers in the various parts of Luzon. From these and the incomplete reports provided by two of the zone servants it was estimated that there were around 2,000 Kingdom publishers on the island, organized into 64 congregations. This meant that in that area 31 new congregations had been organized during the occupation. This, however, did not include any reports from the Visayas and Mindanao, since the brothers there had not yet contacted the branch office. Even these incomplete figures revealed what a tremendous increase had taken place since 1941, when the last prewar report for the entire Philippines showed 373

publishers. What a blessing from Jehovah and what a fine answer this was to the determined efforts of Satan the Devil to destroy true worship here during World War II!

From July to September 1945 Brother Dos Santos visited and encouraged a number of congregations in Luzon. On one occasion in July, he met with twenty-four company servants (presiding overseers) in Pangasinan in a joint meeting held to help correct some private speculations and interpretations put forward by a few brothers during the war and that had caused some dissension. Some had felt that Armageddon had already begun and others said that the prophets of old had been resurrected. These and other less serious misunderstandings were straightened out at that time, and the brothers were helped to press on unitedly with the postwar Kingdom-preaching activity.

By September the *Watchtower* magazine had begun to be received through the mail again and the Filipino Witnesses were able to enjoy an up-to-date *Watchtower* study for the first time in forty-six months. Around this time also about two hundred members of the group that had broken away from the Watch Tower Society in the 1930's voiced their desire to associate with Jehovah's united people. These were gladly welcomed and joined with the brothers in the postwar work.

FIRST POSTWAR ASSEMBLY

Soon after his release, Brother Dos Santos had made arrangements for a national convention to be held in Lingayen, Pangasinan. The Sison Auditorium was rented from the American armed forces, who at that time were leasing the auditorium and its surrounding land from the provincial government of Pangasinan. This fine assembly was held from November 9 to 11, 1945, and over 2,000 brothers and sisters were present, almost all from Luzon Island. Sixty congregations were represented. The assembly site was close to a sandy beach surrounded by palms, and only the ravages of war marred the beauty of the place, the hall itself having suffered some bomb damage. There were no seats in the auditorium; so the brothers got to work and built bamboo benches. The conventioners were accommodated in a hundred former army barracks made of bamboo and nipa palms. Forty persons could be accommodated in the larger ones. The abandoned mess hall was used as a cafeteria, although the brothers cooked their own meals, having brought with them to the assembly their food and utensils.

Shortly after the assembly had begun and the brothers had started out in the field service with placards, a Catholic priest inspired an effort to break up the gathering. Convinced by the priest that the gathering was unlawful, the acting provincial governor ordered the brothers to vacate the premises. He argued that the permission obtained from the United States armed forces was not valid, since no permit had been granted by the provincial government of Pangasinan. Also, he claimed that public property such as the Sison Auditorium could not be used for religious purposes. When the brothers refused to stop their assembly, the governor sent a military policeman to evict them. However, when the policeman examined the permits the brothers had, he did not carry out the command right away, but checked first with his commanding officer. The commanding officer told the Witnesses: "Continue your convention," and ordered the military policeman to "protect these people."

So the assembly went on to a successful conclusion under the protection of the soldiers who had been sent to evict the brothers. The English public talk "Peace—Can It Last?" was attended by an audience of around 4,000 persons. Other talks were given in Iloko and Pangasinan. A mass baptism of 119 was held in Lingayen Gulf where MacArthur's forces had landed less than a year earlier. At this assembly the booklet *Organization Instructions* was released for the first time, and demonstrations were arranged showing how to conduct effective home Bible studies with interested persons. This set the stage for better congregational direction and improved teaching methods, which were very much needed among the brothers, most of whom had learned the truth during the war years.

Following the assembly, the provincial governor charged the three brothers comprising the convention committee with disobeying an order of a person in authority. In the Dagupan City Court of First Instance they were convicted and were sentenced to thirty days in prison. The decision was appealed and, after many delays, was heard in the Court of Appeals. Attorney Emmanuel Pelaez, who later became vice-president of the Philippines, argued the case on behalf of the Witnesses and the court reversed the decision of the lower court.

This decision was an important one, providing a precedent that was to be used frequently in later years to defend the right of Jehovah's Witnesses to hold Christian assemblies in public schools and other public buildings throughout the Republic of the Philippines.

Shortly after the Lingayen assembly, the work of

the servant to the brethren (today called a circuit overseer) was begun, replacing the zone servant work. Brother Salvador Liwag was the first servant to the brethren, visiting all the congregations on the island of Luzon at that time. On April 16, 1946, a total of 4,185 assembled to celebrate the Lord's Evening Meal throughout the islands.

By August 1946 the branch facilities had become far too small to handle the rapid growth of the Kingdom work. Just at the right time, Jehovah opened the way for a move to a larger place located at 2621 Int. 2 Herran, Santa Ana, Manila. This was the spacious home of a dedicated family, who generously offered their facilities as a branch office and Kingdom Hall. The basement floor was used as a stockroom for the literature. This house is still being used as a Kingdom Hall by two of the Manila congregations.

Around this time also, the Philippine branch received thirty-six cases of clothing weighing several tons. The items had been donated by Jehovah's people in the United States for those who had suffered so much during the war. The branch distributed the relief goods, and 5,046 individuals were able to receive a share. Truly, the Filipino brothers were warmed by this loving gesture, which was much needed and appreciated in those difficult times.

The year 1946 ended with the holding of the "Glad Nations" Theocratic Assembly from December 18 to 20. It was an echo of the international assembly held in Cleveland, Ohio, in August of the same year. Upward of 5,000 heard the public discourse "The Prince of Peace" at the Philippine Racing Club in Santa Ana, Manila.

SECOND VISIT OF A PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIETY

An important milestone in the history of God's people in the Philippines was reached during the "Praise-giving Nations" Theocratic Assembly, which was held from March 31 to April 2, 1947. On the opening day the assembly was held at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum on Vito Cruz Street, Manila. But because poor acoustics rendered the different language programs almost unintelligible, the gathering was transferred to the Philippine Racing Club in Santa Ana for the last two days.

For the first time since Brother Russell's visit in 1912, a president of the Watch Tower Society, N. H. Knorr, was scheduled to visit the Philippines, and the brothers were eager to meet him. This was the first truly national convention since the war, with brothers

present from the Visayas and Mindanao, as well as from Luzon. Due to delays, Brother Knorr and his secretary Milton G. Henschel did not arrive until April 1. But when they did arrive, they were given a rousing welcome by their Filipino brothers.

On the last day of the assembly, Wednesday, April 2, Brother Knorr met with the pioneers and for the first time invited Filipino brothers to fill out applications to attend the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead in the United States. Thirty-six applications were turned in that morning. While this was going on, a baptism of 151 new disciples was taking place in Manila Bay, with the remains of the many sunken ships, silent reminders of the Battle of Manila, in full view. In the afternoon the public lecture "The Joy of All the People" was delivered by Brother Knorr to an audience of 4,200. The entire talk was broadcast over radio station KZPI, which had sufficient power to cover the entire country. In concluding the assembly, among other things, Brother Knorr announced that four graduates of Gilead School would be arriving in the Philippines soon, and this filled the hearts of the Filipino brothers with great anticipation.

FIRST GILEAD GRADUATES ARRIVE

Less than three months after this assembly, or on June 14, 1947, the first three Gilead graduates assigned to the Philippines arrived, to be followed a month later by a fourth. These were Brothers Earl Stewart, Victor White, Lorenzo Alpiche and Nick Skelparick.

The brothers met them at the dock and took them to the branch office. Since there was not sufficient room at the branch office, the new arrivals were housed temporarily in a room above a laundry about a block away. A month later Brothers White and Alpiche were assigned to travel as servants to the brethren, while Brother Stewart was appointed to serve as the new branch overseer in place of Brother Dos Santos. Brother and Sister Dos Santos stayed on at the branch office until February of 1949, when they began preparing to leave for Hawaii. On July 17, 1949, they left the Philippines, having played a big part during the formative years of the branch here.

FIRST CIRCUIT ASSEMBLIES

By the end of 1947, twelve circuits had been organized as the circuit arrangement began to be implemented in this land. The first series of twelve circuit assemblies ran from September to December 1947, and Brother Stewart served all of them as district overseer. This

afforded him a fine opportunity to see the condition of the brothers throughout the country and to get acquainted with them.

The Filipino brothers overcame seemingly insurmountable difficulties to get to the assembly places. In Surigao one brother was the only survivor when a motorship sank during a typhoon. He lost most of his belongings, but still attended the assembly. Five typhoons swept through the country during the entire series of assemblies, but these did not deter the brothers from attending. In northern Luzon, two raftsloads of brothers floated down the Abra River from their mountain homes to attend the assembly in Vigan. When they reached the mouth of the river, they dismantled their rafts and sold the lumber in order to buy tickets to go home on the bus after the assembly.

In a report to the Society's Brooklyn office, the branch overseer wrote: "It was a strange sight to a man accustomed to Western civilization to watch these brethren arriving at the various assembly points. They brought with them big bags of rice, bundles of food, sleeping mats, many children and polite, welcoming smiles that grew bigger as the assemblies progressed. With rice, firewood, an old-fashioned burner and a sleeping mat, all their material needs were cared for."

At the circuit assembly held in the Kingdom Hall in Santa Ana, Manila, a delegation of interested persons attended from the suburban town of Biñan in Laguna province. It was interesting to hear from them how they had learned the truth. There were over twenty families associated with a splinter group of the Seventh-day Adventists in that town. Teodoro Reyes was their pastor and they had a small chapel in barrio De La Paz. At first they were awaiting the second coming of Jesus, but one day a pastor from a nearby province came and told them that Jesus had already come in Kingdom power in a spiritual sense. The man had learned this from one of the Society's publications, but he did not inform them of his source of information. After much discussion, they accepted this teaching. Later, a representative of the Watch Tower Bethel and Pulpit Society visited them, teaching them the Bible from mimeographed sheets, which were also taken from the publications of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. Still later, they discovered where these men were getting their Bible information. They heard of the assembly in Santa Ana, Manila, and sent a delegation to see if this was really God's true congregation. When the delegation returned from the assembly fully convinced that they had found the truth, the entire congregation of over twenty family heads,

including "Pastor" Reyes, accepted the truth and began associating with Jehovah's people! The chapel was converted into a Kingdom Hall and this was the start of the Biñan Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses. Six months later all these family heads were baptized, and almost all of them are still actively serving Jehovah.

At the circuit assembly in mile-high Baguio City, Brother Stewart and the circuit overseer, Brother Skelparick, met the lone pioneer in Mountain Province at that time, Sister Rosalia Sotero (now Rosalia Delis). She had heard the truth during the war and was instrumental in blazing the trail of Kingdom proclamation in Mountain Province. Being an Igorot tribeswoman herself, she was able to work among the Igorots and other tribes, many of whom were non-Christians. She gave them loving help and training in righteous ways. Now, in 1977, there are 74 congregations in what was then called Mountain Province, and it is a great testimony to the people to see what a tremendous change for the better Bible truth has brought about in the lives of these humble mountain people.

Thus the first circuit assembly series was a thrilling and successful one. A total of 7,516 heard the public lecture "Blessed Are the Peacemakers" and 366 were baptized in symbol of their dedication to Jehovah. As the experiences heard at these assemblies showed, there was much potential for greater increase in the Philippines. The assemblies built up the service activity and helped the brothers to get a clear view of the Kingdom-preaching work to be done. This, in turn, prepared them for the great influx that was to take place from that time onward.

NEED FOR MORE TRANSLATIONS SEEN

During this first trip around the country, Brother Stewart noticed that although many of the brothers could read English, they felt more at home with their local languages when commenting at meetings and giving talks from the platform. As a result, a number of congregations were making up their own translations of the Society's publications, doing so either orally as they went along during a meeting or by typing them out ahead of time. The Manila Congregation was mimeographing its own translation of *The Watchtower* into Tagalog, while in Angat, Bulacan, the book "*Let God Be True*" was being translated and mimeographed by the brothers. Since this did not always result in the most accurate translation of the Bible truths, it was found advisable for the Society to take

over this work and to produce more local-language literature. Work was begun on the book "*Let God Be True*" in Tagalog, Iloko and Cebuano; and *The Watchtower* began to be mimeographed semimonthly in Tagalog in September of 1947. By 1948 *The Watchtower* was being mimeographed also in Hiligaynon and Iloko, to be followed in 1949 by the Cebuano and Pangasinan editions. In 1951 the Tagalog, Iloko and Cebuano editions began to be printed on the Society's presses in New York. These were followed by others, until the Society was producing eight local-language editions of *The Watchtower* and four editions of *Awake!* for the Philippine branch. Today these are being printed on the Society's presses in the Philippines.

The first bound book to be published in a local language after the Tagalog *Riches* book was "*Let God Be True*" in Tagalog, released at the international assembly in Yankee Stadium in New York city in 1950. Since that time the Society has published seventy-six more bound books, as well as numerous booklets, in nine languages of the Philippines.

MOVING TO A NEW BRANCH LOCATION

The rapid expansion that was being seen in 1947 made it imperative to look for a bigger place for the branch office. As early as July 1947, some of our literature was being stored in a section of a brother's film studio in Quezon City, since the branch on Herran Street could not handle the large shipments arriving. A bad typhoon in August brought heavy rains that flooded the basement at the branch office and damaged much literature; so it was evident that a safer place was needed for literature storage.

After looking over a number of possible locations, an ideal place was located in Quezon City in September of 1947. It was on high ground and consisted of almost 10,000 square meters (107,000 square feet) of land, on which a large, two-story building was situated. This property was purchased by the Society in December 1947, and soon brothers from the Manila area volunteered their services to help clean, repair and repaint the building. The structure had been used by the Japanese occupation forces as a headquarters during the war and the cleaners found many old fatigue uniforms and helmets in the attic. On the large *santol* fruit tree behind the building there still hung chains and ropes that had been used for restraining prisoners when they were being executed. Because of the number of executions that had taken place there, some fearful neighbors thought the place was "haunted." The volunteer workers labored happily, however, and by

February 1, 1948, the Bethel family was able to move into their new home.

How glad the brothers in the Philippines were to have such a spacious branch office! It seemed providential that there was much space around the building, for that not only made the place quiet and restful, but also allowed for expanding the branch facilities in later years. This property, located at what was then 104 Roosevelt Road in the Quezon City suburb of San Francisco del Monte, and which today is 186 Roosevelt Avenue, still houses the branch office.

EXPANSION CONTINUES

Enthused over the fine new branch facilities, the brothers in the Philippines worked even harder than before. At the second series of circuit assemblies, which began shortly after the branch office was moved, a total of 9,701 attended the public lecture and 429 were baptized, a substantial increase over the first series. Not long thereafter, the first district assembly to be held in the Philippines was arranged in the University Club in Bacolod City from August 20 to 22, 1948. The hall used was the finest auditorium in Bacolod City at that time, and upward of 2,000 attended the public talk. At that gathering, the program included talks dealing with congregation organization, and this information aided the brothers greatly.

During 1949 four more Gilead graduates arrived in the Philippines and this stepped up the pace of Kingdom expansion. The month of December that year showed a new peak of 7,952 publishers, a fine ending to the decade of the 1940's, which had begun with only around 300 publishers attending the assembly at the Manila Grand Opera House in 1940. What a fine harvest Jehovah was giving! The 1949 service year saw a 61-percent increase in publishers over the previous year, and by the end of that year there were 14 circuits and 315 congregations throughout the country.

Another step forward was taken in December 1949, when three Filipino brothers, the first of thirty Filipinos to be granted this privilege, left for the United States to study in Gilead School at South Lansing, New York. These three brothers graduated from the school at the Theocracy's Increase Assembly in Yankee Stadium, New York city, in the summer of 1950. Five more Filipinos attended that assembly prior to enrolling in the sixteenth class of Gilead, which began following the assembly. These eight Gilead graduates returned to their native country to build up the congregations, and the training they had received con-

tributed greatly to the advancement of the work. They were assigned to Bethel and to the district and circuit work.

Also in 1950, the first missionary home was opened in Cebu City. Later, after more missionaries arrived in 1954 and 1955, missionary homes operated for a while in Davao City, Cagayan de Oro City, Zamboanga City, Ormoc City and Tacloban City, all in the Visayas and Mindanao. The missionaries were a fine influence in the places to which they were assigned, strengthening the congregation organization and improving efficiency in the field service. This phase of the work ended in October 1962 when the last home closed down, there being sufficient local publishers and special pioneers to take care of the work by that time. From then on, the few foreign brothers and sisters who remained or who were later assigned to the Philippines were used in the Bethel home or in the circuit and district or special pioneer service. Today only twelve foreign graduates of Gilead School remain in the country.

THE 1951 NATIONAL CONVENTION

On April 16, 1951, Brother Knorr arrived for his second visit to this country, during which he checked the branch office and spoke at the national convention held in Quezon City from April 20 to 22. The assembly was held about four city blocks from the branch office on two lots owned by a brother. The brothers made the entire assembly pavilion, as well as the seats and platform, out of bamboo, with woven coconut leaves providing shade from the tropical sun.

A former studio of Oriental Pictures, Inc., was used as a cafeteria for the conventioners. For the first time at a big convention in the Philippines, this was organized along the lines of the cafeteria operated at the large international gatherings, rather than having the brothers bring their own food and do their own cooking.

Although travel at that time was quite dangerous due to the activity of the *Huks* against the government, the brothers flocked in from all parts of the country and 5,459 were present on the opening day. After the first few talks, the program was translated from English into Iloko, since the majority of the brothers in the truth at that time spoke that language.

A large swimming pool owned by a sister was used for immersion. It was a delight to see 522 baptized in this pool, which was on a lot near the cafeteria building.

On Sunday, April 22, at 5 p.m., the public lecture entitled "Proclaim Liberty Throughout the Land" was delivered by Brother Knorr, not at the assembly site

in Quezon City, but at the New Luneta, a large park by Manila Bay. A crowd of more than 10,000 gathered there to listen.

At this convention Brother Knorr announced, to the joy of his listeners, that, before the end of 1951, the *Watchtower* magazine would be printed in Brooklyn, New York, in Cebuano, Iloko and Tagalog. These would replace the mimeographed editions that had been in use since 1947. The brothers in those days were very zealous in the magazine street work, literally lining Manila's main thoroughfares and giving a good witness with the English magazines. The addition of the local-language editions in printed form greatly enhanced this work, as well as making it easier to obtain subscriptions.

By the time of the 1951 national assembly the number of publishers in the Philippines had reached 14,007, and prospects were good for continued progress. The convention and visit of the Society's president did much to stimulate that progress.

FIGHTING FOR FREEDOM TO PROCLAIM THE GOOD NEWS

As Filipino Christian witnesses swelled in number and reached out to all parts of the land with the message of truth, opposition began to arise, especially in strongly Catholic communities. It became necessary, in some cases, to fight to defend the brothers' right to declare the good news.—Phil. 1:7.

One of such occasions took place in Sibalom, Antique, in the Visayan Islands. On Tuesday morning, October 31, 1950, during the visit of circuit overseer Pedro Fegid, some brothers and sisters were arrested while doing street work near the public market of Sibalom. Brother Gimeno Gillera and Sister Josefa Sobremisana were charged with selling in the market without paying the necessary market fees. They were convicted before the justice of the peace. However, the case was appealed and the ruling of the justice of the peace was reversed on March 5, 1952, in the Court of First Instance in Antique. In his decision, Judge F. Imperial Reyes noted: "The court has to accept as correct the contention of the accused [Brother Gillera] that he distributed the pamphlets not for commercial purposes or for profit, much less for sale, but merely giving the same to those persons who might show an interest in his religion." This upheld the fact that Jehovah's Witnesses are not peddlers. (Compare 2 Corinthians 2:17.) Following the rendering of the decision, the judge invited Sister Sobremisana to visit him, which

she did, resulting in the giving of a good witness. He accepted a Bible and the book *"The Kingdom Is at Hand"* from her. Also, from the court stenographer this sister obtained subscriptions for *The Watchtower* and *Awake!*

On April 20, 1952, shortly after the aforementioned decision was rendered, a peaceful circuit assembly of Jehovah's Witnesses was disrupted in Solana, Cagayan, in northeastern Luzon. Even some town officials eventually joined in an armed attack, which resulted in the death of one Witness and the wounding of thirty-two other persons. The arrival of the Philippine Constabulary prevented further bloodshed. When the matter was taken to court, the offending parties were punished in harmony with the law. Cases such as this served to protect the right of Jehovah's people to assemble peacefully in subsequent years. Thus today Jehovah's Witnesses hold close to two hundred circuit assemblies annually throughout the Philippine Republic, doing so under relatively peaceful conditions.

On June 6-8, 1952, a circuit assembly was held in the town of Santa Barbara, Iloilo. Although the assembly was held in a theater in the town, the public lecture was scheduled to be given in the public plaza. However, since the plaza was very close to the town's Catholic church, a large crowd of local Roman Catholics held an indignation rally to protest the issuance of the permit to hold the lecture there. Some newspapers claimed that as many as 5,000 people participated in this rally. Yielding to this pressure, the mayor revoked the permit that he had issued and the brothers were compelled to hold the public meeting in the assembly hall instead. Subsequent efforts to obtain a permit to give a Bible lecture in the public plaza failed until the governor of the province, Mariano B. Peñaflorida, intervened on behalf of freedom of worship and speech. A permit was then issued for July 13, but during the talk eleven loudspeakers that opposers had set up all around the plaza began to play at full volume, thus drowning out the speaker.

This incident in Santa Barbara shocked many people in democratic Philippines, and it generated a great deal of newspaper comment for over a month, most of it favorable to Jehovah's people. Similar difficulties cropped up in other towns too, notably in Tigbauan, Iloilo; Santa Cruz, Zambales; Mangaldan, Pangasinan; and Gerona, Tarlac. In the town plaza at Gerona, the speaker went on with his talk even in the face of mounted machine guns aimed at him. Afterward, the mayor, who had tried to prevent the talk, apologized for the disturbance.

While it is true that the brothers during this time took some risks in demanding their right to declare the good news publicly and were quite aggressive in doing so, their zealous fight for constitutional rights served to break down much prejudice and to establish God's people as law-abiding Christians. This, in turn, laid the basis for greater freedom of worship and speech, not only for Jehovah's Witnesses, but for other religious minorities as well.

In the years following the war, a number of people had felt that Jehovah's Witnesses were perhaps using religion as a front for Communism or other anti-democratic activity, no doubt because of our neutral stand on political matters. Now, however, our being a purely religious organization was becoming recognized by all. During 1952 the branch overseer was granted authorization to solemnize marriages and also to designate others to do this, a fine indication of the government's recognition of Jehovah's people as a bona fide religious organization in the Philippines.

BETHEL FACILITIES EXPANDED

By the end of the 1953 service year, the publishers in the Philippines had grown to a peak of 20,120, organized into two districts, 30 circuits and 487 congregations. In order to cope with the added work prompted by this growth, in 1952 work was begun on a second branch building, approximately the same size as the original one, on the Society's property on Roosevelt Avenue. It was a two-story building, which was constructed by volunteer workers among the brothers. The work was supervised by Brother Alfredo Estepa, a member of the Bethel family. Only the electrical and plumbing installations were carried out by non-Witnesses. In 1953 the office, laundry, and shipping and magazine departments were moved into this new building, thus doubling the space and greatly expanding the branch facilities.

In the same year, 27 brothers from the Philippines were able to attend the New World Society Assembly of Jehovah's Witnesses in Yankee Stadium, New York city. How delighted they were to assemble there with their brothers from many lands!

SPECIAL PIONEER WORK BEGINS

Late in the year 1954, we received approval to appoint fifty special pioneers from among the Filipino brothers and sisters. In January 1955, these were assigned to various isolated cities having large populations. This original group of fifty special pioneers did

fine work and many of them are still serving faithfully as full-time praisers of Jehovah.

The opening up of special pioneer activity gave a real boost to the pioneer work in the country. In 1955, in addition to the fifty special pioneers, there were 846 regular and vacation pioneers serving, on the average, each month. By 1960 the number of special pioneers had reached 270, and 1,592 then served as regular and vacation pioneers. Today we have 700 special pioneers and close to 4,000 regular pioneers, with many others engaging in auxiliary pioneer work. This fine response of the Filipino brothers to the pioneer service is one reason for the good increases that have been enjoyed over the years.

"TRIUMPHANT KINGDOM" ASSEMBLY

Another noteworthy event occurred from April 13 to 15, 1956, when the "Triumphant Kingdom" national assembly was held during the third visit of Brother Knorr to this country. He was accompanied by his secretary Don Adams and Lloyd Barry, then the branch overseer in Japan. It was a thrill to see 17,259 assemble at the Rizal Memorial Football Stadium on Sunday afternoon to hear the public talk "Making All Mankind One Under Their Creator." At this assembly the program was delivered in English, with simultaneous translations into Iloko and Tagalog, the translators using earphones to hear the English speaker. After the baptismal discourse, the 434 candidates heard the two questions propounded in eight languages in addition to English.

Two hundred brothers came on one boat from Davao, while thousands came from distant Cagayan Valley aboard forty-five chartered buses. As they arrived, the delegates were given a neatly printed map of Manila, which showed the assembly site and the addresses of the twenty-six Kingdom Halls in the Manila area at that time.

A fine witness was given over radio station DZBB when Brother Knorr was interviewed on the program "News Scoop." The interview was scheduled to last just 30 minutes, but because of the interest of the interviewers it went on for 45 minutes. Also, the interview was heard over the loudspeaker system at the assembly grounds.

UPBUILDING VISIT BY F. W. FRANZ

Just nine months after the visit of the Society's president, the brothers in the Philippines were privileged to enjoy the company of the vice-president,

Frederick W. Franz. Although short notice was given of the visit, a national assembly was arranged for three days, January 15-17, 1957, and 9,463 attended his public talk "New World Peace in Our Time—Why?" at the Rizal Memorial Football Stadium. The conventioners warmly applauded Brother Franz as he walked to the platform to deliver his talk. Why? Because he was wearing the formal Philippine attire for men, the *barong Tagalog*, a beautifully embroidered shirt of *jusi* cloth kindly given him by appreciative Filipino brothers.

During that assembly a strongly worded resolution against Communist persecution of Jehovah's people in Russia was presented and enthusiastically adopted by the assembled throng. Since the Philippine Republic did not then maintain diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, Brother Franz, along with the branch overseer and another brother, paid a visit to the Secretary of Foreign Affairs, who was none other than the vice-president of the Philippines, Mr. Carlos P. Garcia. After the kindly granted, forty-minute interview he agreed to forward the resolution to the proper Russian official through the American government. Two months following this interview, Carlos P. Garcia became president of the Philippines when Ramon Magsaysay was killed in an air disaster.

1958 INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY

It was the privilege and joy of eighty-one brothers from the Philippines to be present at the grand Divine Will International Assembly at Yankee Stadium and the Polo Grounds in New York city during the summer of 1958. These brothers rejoiced to see three Filipinos graduate from Gilead School on that occasion. Such international gatherings did much to unify the brothers and bring them closer to Jehovah's worldwide family.

FLAG SALUTE ISSUE

For almost twenty years there had been a seesaw controversy over the flag salute issue, which had been touched off by the unfavorable *Gobitis* decision of the United States Supreme Court in 1940. At that time the then Secretary of Justice, Jose Abad Santos, put forth the opinion that children in all public and private schools could be required to salute the flag on pain of expulsion. When the *Barnette* case in the United States Supreme Court reversed the *Gobitis* decision, this eventually caused a similar change of position in the Philippines in an opinion promulgated by the then Secretary of Justice, Roman Ozaeta, in 1948. On June 11,

1955, however, a bill was signed into law by the then president Ramon Magsaysay that required all children in public and private schools to salute the Philippine flag. Failure to do so would result in expulsion.

Jehovah's Witnesses sought relief through the courts in view of their conscientious objection based on Exodus 20:4-6. In Masbate the children of Brother Gerona were expelled. The Court of First Instance in that province upheld the law and denied relief to the Witnesses. The matter then was taken to the Supreme Court of the Philippines, where it was heard in the case of *Gerona v. Secretary of Education* on May 15, 1959. Unique in the history of Philippine jurisprudence was the fact that an American lawyer was granted permission to explain the stand of Jehovah's Witnesses, before the Supreme Court. A good witness was given, and it was clearly brought to the attention of the eminent justices that the refusal of Jehovah's people to salute the flag in no way implies disrespect for the flag, but is based purely on religious and conscientious grounds.

However, on August 15, 1959, the Supreme Court of the Philippines ruled that children of Jehovah's Witnesses may be required to salute the Philippine flag despite their religious objections to saluting any man-made emblem. In spite of this adverse decision, Jehovah's Witnesses continued to follow their Bible-trained conscience in the matter. Where possible, the brothers have availed themselves of the education provided in the schools, but never at the expense of violating their Christian conscience. Where the schools have been denied them because of their religious scruples, parents have done their best to educate their children at home.

CHANGES IN OVERSIGHT

The 1960's saw several changes in the oversight of the work in the Philippines. Since Brother Stewart left the Philippines due to Sister Stewart's health, Louis Leone was appointed as the branch overseer on April 1, 1960. Then on March 1, 1963, when the Leones left due to family responsibilities, William D. Johnson was appointed in his place. When Brother and Sister Johnson returned to Canada to take care of their expected family, Denton Hopkinson was appointed branch overseer on May 1, 1966. Today a five-man branch committee supervises the Kingdom-preaching work here.

VISIT OF M. G. HENSCHEL

In 1960, Milton G. Henschel visited the Philippine branch as zone overseer, and a national convention was

held in the Magsaysay Memorial Stadium in Lingayen, Pangasinan, from March 24 to 27. During that visit, much loving assistance was given to the expanding branch organization. At the assembly, translations of the program were made into five languages simultaneously as the speakers delivered their parts in English. The Sison Auditorium, which had been used for the first postwar convention in 1945, was adjacent to the stadium and was used as a cafeteria. It was a thrill to see 658 baptized at Lingayen Beach, the highest number immersed at one time till then. Also, our largest audience to that time, 19,640 persons, attended Brother Henschel's public talk, "When God Speaks Peace to All Nations."

PREPARING FOR GREATER EXPANSION

Almost a year later, or on February 5, 1961, the Kingdom Ministry School opened in the Philippines to give training to those overseeing the many congregations in the islands. The one-month course was held initially in English, then later in the various local languages. Though the Bethel home was crowded during these early classes, all enjoyed the association with their brothers from many places. Classes were later held in Cebu City, Davao City and Iloilo City for the benefit of the brothers in the Visayas and Mindanao who found it difficult to make the long trip to Manila by boat.

In 1965 the one-month course was suspended, but in October of 1966 a two-week course of the Kingdom Ministry School began in Bethel. Later it was extended, and classes were held in sixteen different locations throughout the country. To date 7,460 overseers in the Philippines have attended the Kingdom Ministry School. What a wonderful spiritual provision this has been!

It was the privilege of nine brothers from the Philippine branch to attend the ten-month specialized Gilead School course in Brooklyn, New York, during the period from 1961 to 1965. This served to strengthen the branch organization, as these brothers returned and were assigned to work in the branch office or in the field in responsible positions. Seven of these are still actively serving full time, five of them as members of the Bethel family.

In 1961, steps were taken to have the Philippine branch begin caring for some of its own printing needs. To this end, in July of that year a Miehle vertical printing press was sent from the New York factory, along with a linotype machine, paper cutter and proof press. So, in December 1961 the first issues of

Kingdom Ministry (now *Our Kingdom Service*) were produced in the Philippines in the Bicol, Cebuano, Hiligaynon, Iloko and Tagalog languages. Handbills, forms and other material also began to be printed locally. By July 1962, four more issues of *Kingdom Ministry* were added, in Pampango, Pangasinan, Samar-Leyte and Ibanag, thus making nine monthly editions, which are still being printed here and sent out to the brothers.

By 1961 the number of publishers had risen to 35,713, organized into 929 congregations. With the addition of the printing facilities and the Kingdom Ministry School, space once again was becoming limited. Therefore, a third branch building was begun on June 19, 1961. It was located right next to the existing two buildings and was approximately the same size and shape. By the end of the year the office was moved into the ground floor of this building and on May 12 and 13, 1962, the new building was dedicated to Jehovah. Some 1,550 heard the dedication talk by Brother Salvador Liwag on Saturday evening, May 12, and 2,099 attended the public lecture on Sunday. How thrilled the Filipino brothers were to have a beautiful, modern addition to their Bethel home to help keep pace with the continued expansion!

MISSIONARIES THREATENED WITH DEPORTATION

On September 29, 1962, perhaps as a result of the adverse court decision on the flag salute case in 1959, the branch overseer received a letter from the Deportation Board of the Department of Justice, inviting him to appear before the board on October 1, 1962. There he found that the board was investigating the position of Jehovah's Witnesses on the flag salute issue. They felt that alien missionaries were teaching more and more Filipinos not to salute the Philippine flag and that the missionaries should therefore be deported from the country as undesirable. One official commented that "your organization is growing rapidly and the more it grows, the more Filipinos there will be who will not salute our flag." The branch overseer was given twenty days in which to prepare a memorandum giving reasons why the missionaries should not be deported on these grounds.

The memorandum was supplied and, after much careful study and discussion of the matter, the Deportation Board saw that the missionaries of Jehovah's Witnesses were simply teaching the Bible and did not tell anyone not to salute the Philippine flag. They also saw that, far from being a disturbance or a threat to

the security of the nation, the Witnesses show much respect for the flag by being model citizens and by following upright conduct at all times. Because of this, in a letter from the Deportation Board dated December 10, 1962, the branch was informed: "Please be advised that the case against you and other members of your 'JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES' for alleged refusal to salute our Flag has been dropped." The foreign missionaries rejoiced that they could continue serving along with their Filipino brothers and sisters.

Much publicity was given this case. Hence, it provided a good opportunity for people to hear the side of Jehovah's people on the matter.

1963 AROUND-THE-WORLD ASSEMBLY

On August 14, 1963, the traveling five-day "Everlasting Good News" International Assembly reached the Philippines, after having enjoyed much success in many other lands. The Rizal Memorial Football Stadium was obtained for this occasion, but, since the seating under cover was insufficient for the expected crowd, a temporary roofing of corrugated iron was built over the 305-meter-long (1,000-foot-long) bleacher section. This protected the brothers from the seasonal August rains. The day before the convention opened a typhoon struck Manila and caused extensive flooding in the city and damage to the convention facilities, but the program went ahead on August 14 as scheduled.

At this assembly the talks were delivered in English and were translated into Cebuano, Iloko and Tagalog. It was a real joy to see a total of 37,806 attend Brother Knorr's public talk "When God Is King over All the Earth." Especially exciting was the largest mass baptism ever held in the Philippines, when 2,342 symbolized their dedication to Jehovah God.

This was the first international assembly to be held in this land, and representatives were on hand from 22 different countries. The foreign delegates were warmly welcomed by their Filipino brothers and were given tours through the city of Manila, as well as to the Society's branch office in Quezon City. A number of the visitors were interviewed over radio and television stations, and the convention received a tremendous amount of newspaper publicity.

GIVING HELP TO NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES

In view of the large number of Kingdom publishers in the Philippines by that time, it became possible in 1964 to consider assigning some of the more experienced Filipino pioneers to other lands in Asia where the need

for Kingdom proclaimers was greater. In that year, two sisters were assigned to work under the Society's Thailand branch as special pioneers. But after a year they were brought under the missionary home arrangement, even though they had not studied in Gilead School. Since these sisters worked well in their new assignment, learning the Thai language and mixing well with these Asiatic neighbors, more Filipino missionaries were sent out in subsequent years.

As of June 1977, a total of 78 Filipinos have been sent to such lands as Hong Kong, Indonesia, Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam over a thirteen-year period. This is quite a few more than the 51 foreign Gilead graduates who have worked in the Philippines since the end of World War II, and it brings much pleasure to the brothers in this land to be able to contribute in some small way to the proclamation of the good news in other Asiatic lands.

VISITS BY BROTHER KNORR

Apart from his visits to attend the international assemblies, N. H. Knorr visited the Philippines on two other occasions during the 1960's to check the branch. On the first occasion, in December of 1964, he addressed a crowd of 7,463 at the Manila Jockey Club. In May 1968 he spoke at the same place, and this time 9,669 were on hand from all parts of the country to hear his two-hour talk "You Must Not Forget." Both of these visits were most beneficial and encouraging and did much to stimulate the work.

THE "PEACE ON EARTH" ASSEMBLY

During this last-mentioned visit of the Society's president in May 1968, arrangements were already being finalized for the use of the Rizal Memorial Athletic Complex for the anticipated "Peace on Earth" International Assembly to be held from October 22 to 26, 1969. Since the expected attendance was so great that no one stadium in Manila could accommodate everyone, the branch office arranged for two adjacent stadiums to be rented, the Rizal Memorial Football Stadium and the Rizal Memorial Baseball Stadium. But even these stadiums, seating around 50,000 persons, were inadequate. The crowd that came to hear Brother Knorr's talk "The Approaching Peace of a Thousand Years" reached 64,715, overflowing onto the lawn of the baseball stadium and onto the street outside, even filling the cafeteria site across the street.

The program was held mainly in the three major tongues, Cebuano, Iloko and Tagalog, each language

group having its own platform. The main talks were delivered in English and were translated into these other languages. Delegates from twenty-five lands were present at the convention, among them Brother and Sister Knorr, Brother F. W. Franz, Brother and Sister Grant Suiter and others from the Brooklyn, Toronto, Strathfield and London Bethel families. It was a privilege to associate with these mature brothers and to hear some of them address the convention.

Many were the new releases, not only in English, but also in the local languages, to thrill the conventioners. The brothers were especially happy to receive the book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life* in three languages and the book *Is the Bible Really the Word of God?* in two.

The book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life* has certainly played an important part in the increase seen from the time it was first released in English in the Philippines in December 1968. At that time the number of publishers in the Philippines had just passed the 40,000 mark, whereas less than eighteen months later, in April 1970, a new peak of 54,789 publishers was reached! Using this book to conduct Bible studies with people for six months stimulated the work greatly and helped righteously inclined persons to advance in the truth very quickly.

The *Truth* book soon became the most widely distributed book in the history of Jehovah's people in the Philippines. By June of 1977, the combined total in English and eight local languages had been 1,267,782 copies. This figure had greatly surpassed the distribution of 402,610 copies of the book "*Let God Be True*," the previous highest figure, which had taken twenty years to accumulate.

INCREASED PRINTING ACTIVITY

The 1970's have seen a continuation of the fine progress of Jehovah's servants in the Philippines. In July of 1971, Brother Knorr thrilled a crowd of 17,071 who had gathered to hear him at the Rodriguez Sports Center, in Marikina, Rizal. He announced that there was to be an enlargement of the printing activities of the Philippine branch. A new factory and dormitory were to be built. A rotary press and other printing equipment would be installed, and the Philippines would undertake responsibility for printing the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines in English and the local languages.

This was exciting news. Previously these magazines had been produced in Brooklyn, and over the years

the brothers there had given fine service to the Philippines. But there were inevitable problems in shipping each issue of the magazine halfway around the world. Hence it would be a big step forward to have the magazines actually printed here.

Permission to build was finally granted by the authorities on February 2, 1972, and the very same day construction started. Most of the work was done by Witnesses, and it progressed rapidly. By August 25, despite one of the heaviest rainy seasons in Philippine history, the 2,082-square-meter (22,400-square-foot) factory was taking shape, and delivery was made of the first of the large crates of heavy machinery from Japan.

In September 1972, due to increasing civil unrest, the president of the country declared martial law, just as the branch was preparing to start printing! It was wondered just how the printing would be affected, and there was a quick test. Almost immediately, permission to print had to be applied for. This was granted on September 28, just six days after the declaration of martial law!

Between 1971 and 1973, fourteen missionaries were assigned to the Philippine Bethel, persons with special training in printing and building. These were able to help first with the construction and then with the training of local pioneers to work in the new factory. By October 1972, this training had started, and in February 1973, the first two magazines came off the press.

From then on, the printing work has grown. Gradually production increased to include all eight editions of *The Watchtower* and all four of *Awake!* in the local languages. Then, English magazines were added. New machines, including a second rotary press, which arrived May 29, 1975, were installed to help cope with the increasing load. Thanks to the fine training by these missionaries, six of whom are still here, all the actual printing work is now done by Filipino brothers, and magazines are sent from this printery to seventy-two foreign countries.

OTHER PROGRESS IN THE 1970'S

The year 1973 saw another step forward. An agreement giving special privileges to Americans with regard to owning property in the Philippines was due to expire in July 1974. Hence, it seemed wise to transfer all the Society's property to a local corporation. On October 19, 1973, the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of the Philippines, Inc., came into being. This

has given added stability to the situation of Jehovah's Witnesses here.

Zone visits during this period have also been a stimulus to the brothers. Members of the Governing Body, such as Milton Henschel, Nathan Knorr and Lloyd Barry, have addressed large crowds, giving great encouragement with their wise counsel and guidance. Also, in August of 1973, the Philippines greatly benefited from a visit by five members of the Governing Body during an international gathering here in Manila.

Additionally, the Philippines has benefited by the change to the elder arrangement in the congregations, which became effective in October 1972, as well as by the initiation of the branch committee arrangement on February 1, 1976. All around the field now, brothers are paying closer attention to the qualifications Christian elders must meet, and congregations are being helped by the more personal care that a body of overseers can give.

Our work has progressed substantially during the 1970's. In 1969, the average number of publishers reporting was 45,479. By June 1977, we were seeing an average of over 66,000. And prospects for the future are good. More than 165,000 attended the Memorial celebration in 1977, showing their interest in Christ's ransom and the benefits it will bring.

To keep pace with this, we have seen a corresponding increase in the Bethel family. In 1948, when the branch office first moved into the new property on Roosevelt Avenue, there were just nine persons living in the one building. Now there are five large buildings in the compound, totaling 4,670 square meters (50,250 square feet) of floor space, and there are 89 Bethel workers here serving their fellow believers in different capacities.

So things have come a long way since those early days in the 1930's, when just a handful of faithful Witnesses were working so hard in what was virtually virgin territory. Many of these "old timers" are still around. Several are not mentioned in this history because of lack of space, but they are all happy to see the fine fruitage of their hard work, and younger ones who have started serving more recently continue to be encouraged by their example of zeal and devotion.

All of Jehovah's Witnesses in the Philippines rejoice in their privilege of service. They recognize the working of Jehovah's spirit in their midst as they enjoy many blessings from his hand. And they are determined to keep on declaring his name and kingdom, and making yet more disciples in this land for as long as Jehovah will permit.

SPAIN

Spain! What does that name mean to you? Bull-fights? Flamenco dancing? The paintings of El Greco and Goya?

It would be natural for such things to come to mind when Spain is mentioned. This is a land of great variety. The appearance of its people betrays the ethnic evidences of the Celtic and Moorish invasions of past centuries. Four languages as well as several dialects are spoken. The languages are Spanish (Castilian), Basque, Catalan and Galician, which latter one is closely related to Portuguese. Often, without realizing it, a lot of Arabic is thrown in, for much of the Spanish vocabulary includes Arabic words left behind after the eight centuries of Arab occupation of the Iberian peninsula.

Spain is almost an island, with the Atlantic Ocean on the west and the Mediterranean Sea on the east. This land is separated from France and the rest of Europe by the high-ranging Pyrenees that rise to over 3,000 meters (10,000 feet). The central part of Spain consists of a high plateau, or *meseta*, that is bordered on the north by the mountain range that includes the impressive Picos de Europa, and on the south by the famous snowcapped Sierra Nevada. A curious fact is that, after Switzerland, Spain has the highest average altitude in Europe. Incidentally, the rains in Spain fall mainly in the north, although this land has the least rainfall of any European country. With good reason it is called "the land of sunshine," and northern European tourists flock to it every year.

One thing that impresses a Bible student living in Spain is how closely it resembles Palestine in its climate, geography and food. Spain has its own 'mounts of olives,' and still continues to use the ox and the ass. As a person travels through the country, often he comes across a shepherd with his dog, as they lead a flock of sheep and goats in search of pasture. At harvesttime, one can still find farmers working on threshing floors exposed to the wind, and winnowing the wheat to separate it from the chaff. In some of the southern cities date-palm trees grow, and orange and lemon trees are found in the gardens and public plazas.

RELIGION IN SPAIN

The Spanish people basically are religious. Most of them believe in God, even if the majority have lost

confidence in the priests. The Civil War that lasted from July 1936 to April 1939 cost more than a million Spanish lives. This huge death toll exposed all the bad fruitage of religion and politics, as both sides participated in acts of murder and vengeance. The Republican (Communist-Socialist-Liberal) side went about killing priests, nuns and officials loyal to the Church, whereas the National side (Army-backed Catholic Fascism) swept through the country killing those who were not loyal to the Roman Catholic Church.

That Civil War left a scar that still is evident in the way the older generation reacts to the preaching work of Jehovah's Witnesses. The traditional Catholic who participated in the Civil War, or the "Crusade," believes that "error" should not have freedom to propagate itself, and much less so in a country that has a concordat with the Vatican. The main supporters of the Church in all its divided facets (conservatives, progressives, Opus Dei, and so forth) are from the middle and upper classes, whose material interests and prosperity have been bound up in the maintenance of the status quo. However, the people in general, especially in the cities, are indifferent to the Church, making use of it mainly for their baptisms, weddings and funerals, and an occasional visit to Mass.

Without a doubt, the religious atmosphere has changed in this Catholic land since the Second Vatican Council of 1962 to 1965. As the Spanish Archbishop of Madrid-Alcalá wrote on December 8, 1965: "The Vatican Council II has terminated today, leaving to the Church and to the Christian world a new spirit, a new humanism, a new hope and a new vision, historic and transcendent at the same time, of the world in which we live." That "new spirit" and "new vision" have obligated the religious and political leaders to accept changes that many of them really have not desired, including the Religious Liberty Law of 1967. That law completely changed the situation for the preaching activity of Jehovah's Witnesses and introduced a more tolerant attitude on the part of the majority.

FIRST SEEDS SOWN

With this brief review of Spain and its people, geography, modern history and religion, let us see what true Christianity has done in this land. Of course, the first Christian witness of Jehovah to preach in Spain may well have been the apostle Paul, who so desired untouched territory that he planned to carry the good news of the Kingdom to Spain.—Rom. 15:22-29.



But what about the twentieth century? Well, in the July 1, 1919, issue of *La Torre del Vigia* (*The Watch Tower* in Spanish) there appeared a letter from the youngest daughter of a Christian woman living in Spain. In her letter, young Maria expressed her joy at the prospects of going to Paris with her mother to "fulfill the mission that God has given to me and to my mama." We do not know the name of the sister, nor that of the person mentioned in a letter published one month later in the Spanish *Watch Tower*. That correspondence was from a sister in Madrid who had received an anonymous letter from one of her Catholic neighbors. In part, the letter said: "Take care señora, you are trapped. Someone is watching your operations, and do not doubt it. You deny obedience to God's representative, the Pope, and his ministers, trampling with your conversations and bad example the sacred ministry that they represent. . . . Quit your crazy endeavor, because you will not accomplish anything. I suggest to you peacefully that you retire or that you go somewhere else, for if you do not, something worse could happen to you." Obviously, someone was not very happy about the Kingdom message.

Nonetheless, seeds of truth were being sown in Spain. Brother J. F. Rutherford, the Watch Tower Society's second president, was very conscious of the need to get the Kingdom work started on a proper footing in this country. In Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, U.S.A., at that time, there was a zealous Spanish brother named Juan Muñiz. Brother Rutherford asked him to go to Spain and, about the end of 1920 or the beginning of 1921, Brother Muñiz paid his own fare and set out for this land. He was an Asturian from the north of Spain and returned there to live with his sister. His witnessing territory? The mining communities in Asturias.

In a letter appearing in the Spanish *Watch Tower* of April-May 1923, Brother Muñiz explained that he had spent four days in a town witnessing to the men-folk who were mainly of socialist tendency. They advocated world change by means of socialism, and he by means of God's kingdom. One of his listeners concluded: "The difference between him and us is that he has God and we do not."

In another letter, nearly a year later, Brother Muñiz wrote: "Now, with the new government [the military dictatorship of General Primo de Rivera], which is completely addicted to the clergy and 'with sword in hand,' it inspires fear, unless we remember the words of the Lord: 'Look! I am with you.' . . . Anyone who

speaks or writes anything that is not to the liking of the government or the clergy, . . . such a one goes to prison without justifiable cause."—Matt. 28:19, 20.

Brother Muñiz already had endured three years of solitude, without contact with any mature Christians, and was obviously somewhat depressed. Since he needed a boost, Brother Rutherford wrote, asking him to see if he could obtain permission for the Society's president to give a talk in Madrid. Brother Muñiz was unsuccessful, however, and so Brother Rutherford's proposed visit was postponed. Nevertheless, in May 1924 the two brothers met in a Paris hotel, and after considering the circumstances in Spain, Brother Rutherford decided that it would be better to give Brother Muñiz another assignment. Not long afterward, he received a letter asking him to move to Argentina.

Did that mean that Brother Rutherford had 'written off' the work in Spain? By no means! Only a few months later, Brother George Young, who had been having good success in South America, was assigned to Spain. Before long, steps were taken to start giving a witness on a national scale.

A NOTABLE VISIT

Shortly after his arrival in Spain in 1925, Brother Young again sought permission for a visit by Brother Rutherford—this time with success. Arrangements were made for public talks to be given in Barcelona and Madrid, and afterward in Lisbon, Portugal. The success of this venture was due to the fact that Brother Young sought the help of the British ambassador, who introduced him to government officials. After a delay of a few days, the government issued the order permitting the meetings.

Since Brother Young knew that it would not be permissible to advertise the talks by distributing leaflets, he placed advertisements in the newspapers. Eleven o'clock Sunday morning was the hour fixed for the Barcelona meeting. When Brother Rutherford's party approached the theater where he was to speak, they noted that several mounted police, as well as a special government guard, were present. Upon entering the private room near the stage, Brother Rutherford was met by the deputy governor of Barcelona, who greeted him cordially. This official remained on the platform throughout the talk. An expert interpreter had been hired and, to ensure accuracy, the talk was translated in advance and both parties read, Brother Rutherford in English and the translator in Spanish. There was no disturbance, and at the con-

clusion of the meeting the audience was asked to sign address cards. The number of addresses handed in totaled 702 and the attendance was over 2,000. Those who had turned in their names and addresses could be visited to stimulate their interest in the Scriptures.

By means of advertisements in the press, notice had also been given of Brother Rutherford's talk in Madrid. The arrangements there followed the same pattern as those in Barcelona—a military guard outside the theater and the deputy governor of Madrid inside. He also remained on the platform throughout the talk. In one of the boxes was the British ambassador. Other men of importance, including Spanish officials, also attended the meeting. The attendance in Madrid was about 1,200, of whom some 400 handed in their addresses.

Brother Rutherford wanted to have his discourse printed in the newspapers, but at that time nothing of that nature could be published in Spain without a permit from the government. However, thanks to Jehovah, a way was opened up for such publication of the truth. Following the talk in Madrid, the deputy governor and Brother Rutherford were in conversation in a private room when the proprietor of a large newspaper entered and was introduced to the speaker. Brother Rutherford seized the opportunity to say to the interpreter: "Ask the governor if he does not think it would be good for the people of Spain to have this lecture published in the press." The governor immediately responded: "I see no objection to it and see no reason why it should not be published. I think it's a good idea." The newspaper proprietor took advantage of the opportunity for this scoop, and without difficulty it was arranged for the discourse to be published in *Informaciones* of May 12, 1925. In fact, this same article later was printed in tract form and distributed by mail throughout Spain, thus enabling the witness to be given in isolated places.

In May 1925, when Brother Rutherford gave his talk in Lisbon, an Argentinean named Juan Andrés Berecochea had his first contact with the truth. From that time onward he took up the cause of the truth with enthusiasm and communicated his interest to his two young sons, Juan Carlos and Alvaro. Although this family eventually had to leave Spain because of the Civil War, it renewed its contact and influence through Alvaro, who became a missionary graduate of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead and, with his wife, was assigned in 1953 to serve in Spain.

BRANCH OFFICE OPENED

The success of Brother Rutherford's visit persuaded him to establish a branch office of the Watch Tower Society in Spain, under the guidance of George Young. Its official address was the home of Brother Eduardo Alvarez Montero, in Madrid. Starting in August 1925, the new branch began to distribute a four-page reduced version of the Spanish *Watch Tower*, printed by an outside firm.

The year 1925 was one of intensive activity for the Society's Madrid office, as they published 5,000 Spanish copies of *The Harp of God* and 10,000 copies of *Millions Now Living Will Never Die*. Additionally, 247,000 tracts were distributed, including Brother Rutherford's talk and the tract *Where Are the Dead?* The year-end report stated that the Kingdom message "has been distributed throughout every city and town in Spain, also throughout the Canary Islands, the Balearic Islands and the principal towns in the Spanish Zone in Morocco."

About this time (1925-1926), Brother Young was showing the "Photo-Drama of Creation," the Society's slide, sound and motion picture production outlining God's purpose for earth and man. Also, in June 1926 theocratic expansion came to include the use of radio. Two of the largest radio stations in Madrid and Barcelona broadcast two of Brother Rutherford's lectures. This witness reached all corners of Spain, as well as nearby countries.

In May 1926, during a notable assembly in London, England, God's people adopted a resolution entitled "A Testimony to the Rulers of the World." Brother Young sought to get it published in the Spanish press and his efforts finally were crowned with success when the full text was printed in the paper *La Libertad* on October 3, 1926. As well as the normal printing of 75,000, the branch had an extra thousand copies run off and mailed them to all the government officials, mayors, bishops and cardinals.

CLERICAL OPPOSITION UNAVAILING

Of course, all this activity was not going unnoticed by the clergy, and they began to make their influence felt. Several brothers were arrested and their literature was confiscated. Some were thrown out of work, and others had to leave their villages because of persecution. Through the press and from the pulpit the people were warned not to read *The Watch Tower*. In fact, in an edict of the Bishop of Pamplona the publications of God's people were classed as "heretical, scandalous

and strictly prohibited." At Alcoy, in the province of Alicante, Brothers Francisco Corzo and Máximo, two colporteurs or full-time preachers, were arrested and taken before the authorities. After several days of being under surveillance, they were ordered to leave the town at once. However, the police chief who interrogated them obtained a Bible and a copy of *The Harp of God* and subscribed for *The Watch Tower*. In confidence, he said to Brother Corzo, "You people are the only ones in Spain who are telling the people the truth."

During October 1926 a small but active band of Kingdom proclaimers distributed 22,000 copies of *The Watch Tower* in Valencia, the third largest city of Spain. There the clergy reacted by falsely accusing the brothers of being Freemasons and of belonging to the *Mano Negra* (Mafia). In November, when 6,000 copies were distributed in Tarragona, an ancient city of Iberian and Roman origin, eighty-eight kilometers (55 miles) southwest of Barcelona, persecution reached a climax. By underhanded means, young boys sent from the Catholic schools collected our literature and it was burned in a convent yard in the presence of the chief priests, while the city made a holiday of the occasion. Nevertheless, many of the citizens were very indignant and the civil authorities were liberal, so that a great number of persons subscribed for *The Watch Tower*.

What would be the reaction in Barcelona, the cosmopolitan capital of Catalonia? Brother Saturnino Fernández, a colporteur, was working with the group there. They were able to distribute 80,000 copies of *The Watch Tower* before it was banned in December 1926 and January 1927. Two brothers had worked hard to prepare a little meeting place for the Barcelona group, but permission to open it was refused. Who was behind this opposition? Why, none other than the virtual ruler of the city, the bishop of Barcelona! In spite of this, Brother Fernández continued to hold Bible meetings every night in a friend's home, with an average of ten persons in attendance.

The opposition was unavailing, however, and our work went on with Jehovah's blessing. In 1927 the Society's branch office was moved to the home of Brother Francisco Corzo in Madrid. At that time the cost of producing literature in Spain was very low, and the previous four-page *Watch Tower* in Spanish had become an eight-page edition. Also then available in Spain was the sixteen-page edition of *The Watch Tower* in Spanish that was being printed in Los Angeles, California, U.S.A.

SEED SOWN IN GOOD SOIL

During the 1920's, Kingdom-preaching work was concentrated in Madrid and Barcelona, the two largest cities of Spain. Sometimes witnessing methods were somewhat unusual. In Barcelona the colporteur, Saturnino Fernández, would set up a display of the Society's books in a public place, lay out a big chart of the Divine Plan of the Ages on the sidewalk, and then join in conversation with anyone interested. It was precisely in that way that Juan Periago got to learn of the truth back in 1927. He was attracted by a heated discussion Brother Fernández was having with another person regarding the hellfire doctrine. Juan obtained literature, the seed of truth was planted, and thus began his interest in God's truth and his years of service to Jehovah.

Consider, too, the case of Carmen Tierraseca Martín, a seamstress. She received some of our literature from her brother-in-law in Madrid, but forgot about it. In October 1927, however, she was employed at the home of a foreign lady named Mary O'Neill, the wife of Francisco Corzo. Incidentally, the name "Tierraseca" means "dry earth." But Carmen did not prove to be "dry earth" as far as the seed of truth was concerned.

Regarding her employment at that time, Carmen Tierraseca commented: "I passed the morning sewing in a small room, and after lunch I continued with my work. Sometime after four o'clock I noticed that several people were arriving. I assumed that it was a visiting day for the Señor and Señora and they were probably having a party, to judge by the noise of the conversations. Then, suddenly, there was silence, followed by the smooth and harmonious sound of a piano that was soon joined by voices singing, like the singing of a beautiful hymn. I had never heard anything like it before."

Well, as you can guess, the Bible Students (as Jehovah's Witnesses then were known) were having a Christian meeting. Quite by "accident," Carmen Tierraseca had accepted work in the very house where *The Watch Tower* was prepared in Spanish. By then George Young had left Spain and our work was in the hands of Eduardo Alvarez and Francisco Corzo, and the Society's office operated in the Corzo home until December 1930.

During the decade of the 1920's some baptisms were held in different parts of the country. For example, in 1927 Manuel Oliver Rosado, in Málaga, wrote to the Madrid office and asked for someone to come and baptize him. In actual fact, he was not visited and

baptized until 1929, when Francisco Corzo immersed him at a local public bathhouse on April 14.

Another baptism of which we have record took place in June 1928 when a group of brothers in Madrid went out for the day to the Manzanares River. There, in an atmosphere of great joy and simplicity, Carmen Tierraseca, along with a brother, was baptized. Incidentally, this was no emotional decision, for two days before the baptism took place the candidates met with Eduardo Alvarez and Francisco Corzo and discussed the importance of the step they were about to take.

OUR WORK GATHERS MOMENTUM

With small groups in Madrid, Barcelona, Málaga, Huesca and in scattered towns, plus some ten workers in the field, the Kingdom-preaching work was beginning to gather momentum in 1929. So, the Society appropriately began its own printing operations in Madrid with a Miehle vertical press sent from its headquarters in Brooklyn, New York. This served to produce magazines and booklets until 1936.

One facet of our activities in those days was presenting the good news from the public platform. In some cases, Protestant ministers loaned their halls for that purpose. After a talk given by a brother to members of four different denominations in Málaga, an Episcopal minister said: "I have never heard the Bible so wonderfully explained as tonight, and what this man says is true. We are all asleep and what we need is more men like this amongst us." Of course, not all the Protestants reacted so favorably. The Baptists had a special meeting to agree on the extermination of the Bible Students, who were "robbing sheep from our folds and filling the land with dangerous literature."

Since 1927 the Society's branch office in Madrid had been managed by Eduardo Alvarez Montero. However, in the spring of 1930 Herbert F. Gabler was transferred from an assignment in Lithuania and was appointed as branch overseer in Spain. Shortly thereafter our meetings were organized more in accordance with the general practice in other lands. Also, whereas our witnessing had previously been informal, house-to-house preaching activity soon got off to a good start.

Recalling the first time she engaged in door-to-door preaching activity, Carmen Tierraseca remarks, "I prayed to Jehovah, putting myself in his hands to do his work." Since there had been no special training for this activity, you may wonder how it went. Well,

at the first door a woman accepted the booklet offered by Sister Terraseca, who adds: "So did the next, and then another and another until I had placed all eight booklets that I had brought with me . . . Gone was my insecurity, timidity and nervousness. Now I had a feeling of boundless joy, and from the bottom of my heart I gave thanks to Jehovah for his kindness and help."

Needless to say, our Kingdom-preaching work from door to door was now under way. In the years ahead, it was to result in many blessings.

POLITICAL BACKGROUND PRIOR TO THE CIVIL WAR

Prior to 1931 Spain was a monarchy, ruled by King Alfonso XIII. In 1930 the country's military dictator, General Primo de Rivera, had to resign and he was replaced by General Berenguer, whose tenure in office terminated in February 1931, when the king called upon Admiral Aznar to form a new government in an attempt to save his throne. This government arranged for municipal elections, which were won in the major cities by the left-wing parties that favored a republic. Realizing that all was lost and in order to avoid a bloodbath, Alfonso XIII fled the country. Thus in April 1931 Spain became a republic. This was a dire blow for the Catholic Church, which soon began to feel the effects of the new regime. In the same year, 1931, Cardinal Segura y Saenz, Archbishop Primate of Toledo, was expelled from the country. During 1932 the Jesuits were banned and expelled from Spain, although, in fact, the expulsion really did not take place, as they remained in hiding or in disguise.

The divided state of the country became manifest in 1933 when a center-right-wing government came into power. This coalition government suspended the anti-clerical laws and held the reins of power until January 1936, when the Spanish Parliament was dissolved. Elections were held and once again the left-wing Republicans, the Popular Front of Socialists and Communists, won as the pendulum swung in their direction.

How did these political developments affect our work? Well, in towns where the Republican factions were strongest, the brothers would be run out of town as Fascist agents of the Church, because they were distributing religious literature. And, of course, in the Fascist-Catholic Action strongholds the brothers were viewed as Protestants or Freemasons, distributing the forbidden book, the Bible.

As a result of the political developments, the power of the clergy was broken and the people sensed greater religious freedom. Although this favored our work to

an extent, a large portion of the people, with their eyes now opened to the former religious deceptions, turned completely against every form of religion and even against God. Nevertheless, our Christian activity went on apace.

PERIOD OF TRANSITION

Brother Gabler's presence in Madrid did not seem to please Francisco Corzo. By 1931 he had separated himself from the truth and eventually abandoned his wife. Hence, it became necessary to move the branch office and printery out of the Corzo house. They were established in new premises in January 1931.

That year was notable as the one in which God's people adopted the name "Jehovah's Witnesses." In contrast with the 15,000 that adopted it by resolution in Columbus, Ohio, U.S.A., only fifteen persons met together for that purpose in Madrid.

Other changes also took place during that period. For instance, with its issue of September 1931, the "Madrid" edition of *The Watch Tower* ceased to be published. Nevertheless the one from Brooklyn continued to arrive, with its front cover illustration of a tower punctuated by three cross-shaped windows. Above the title, *La Torre del Vigia*, there was the cross and crown symbol, long used by the Bible Students. But the January 1932 issue arrived with a completely new cover design from which the cross and crown had disappeared.

This wind of change blew strongly in Madrid. For the Lord's Evening Meal in 1932, an embroidered tablecloth with the cross and crown design also vanished from the scene. As Brother Gabler said: "Brothers, this has got to go. Out with it! Out with it!" Similarly, out went the cross and crown lapel badges we used to wear. And what about those pictures of presidents of the Watch Tower Society, C. T. Russell and J. F. Rutherford? They, too, disappeared from the wall of the Witnesses' meeting place in Madrid.

ENGLISH PIONEERS GIVE US A HAND

During 1931 the Society had held a series of assemblies in different cities, including London and Paris. Brother Gabler spoke at these two assemblies and explained the great need for volunteers to help in the almost virgin Spanish field. As a result, three pioneers came forward to accept the challenge—Ernest Eden, Frank Taylor and John Cooke.

By July of 1932 these three English pioneers had begun their preaching work in the industrial city of

Bilbao, the provincial capital of Vizcaya. This province is part of the region known as the Basque provinces, where the Basque language is spoken. Incidentally, no one really knows the exact origin of this intriguing tongue that has absolutely no relationship to the Spanish language.

Using a Spanish testimony card that explained their mission, the pioneers gave a witness in Bilbao and placed much literature. If a door happened to be open, they might just step inside. With that positive approach, one day Ernest Eden placed thirty books at just one door. How did he do that? Well, he saw a door ajar, pushed it open, went down a passage and found himself on a theater stage interrupting a rehearsal! He took advantage of that opportunity to give a good witness—more in English than in Spanish—and left all the books he had, later returning with more literature.

Brother Eden also had a rather shocking experience. One smartly dressed lady invited him into a well-furnished and dimly lit apartment. "She invited me into a lovely room," he says, "where there were about twelve girls, all nude. It was a high-class brothel. Ignoring the situation, I told them why I had come and I offered the literature. The matron took a book and several girls took booklets." Brother Eden wonders how many Christians have witnessed to people under such unusual circumstances.

During the three months of preaching in Bilbao, the pioneers placed a total of 459 books, 1,032 booklets and 509 copies of *Luz y Verdad* (*Light and Truth*), the equivalent of the magazine *The Golden Age* (now *Awake!*). This was accomplished despite the fact that the people were very religious. Much of the territory was made up of apartments, and most of the doors were adorned with a picture of the so-called "sacred heart." Often Jesus and Mary were shown holding their own bleeding hearts in their hands and offering a certain number of days of remission from purgatory to those exhibiting this ghastly spectacle.

EN ROUTE TO MADRID

After completing their work in Bilbao, the pioneers started to witness along the northern coast of Spain. How did they obtain more literature as they traveled from place to place? They arranged with the Madrid office of the Society to have boxes sent ahead to various railway stations. As they traveled, they would call at the depots and pick up the literature awaiting them.

Our intrepid pioneers left the rainy mountainous area of the north and began working their way south

through the cities of León, Palencia, Burgos, Valladolid, Salamanca, Segovia and Madrid. When they came onto the *meseta*, the high inland plateau of Castile, they were delighted with the picturesque scenery and intrigued with the life-style, so reminiscent of Bible lands. Skins were used for storing and carrying wine, and women could be seen with earthenware pots of water atop their heads. Little olive oil lamps still served as lights, and in many places cars and buses rarely were seen, the means of transport being donkey and mule. Grapes still were pressed for wine by bare-foot men, and oxen dragged a flail around the threshing floor to separate the grain from the chaff. Many people were living in caves. In fact, that is still true in some regions, but these caves are clean and nicely arranged. During the summer they are cool and in winter they are cozy.

When the English pioneers were in Madrid, they had an unusual addition to their ranks, a young shepherd named Domingo. He had come from a remote village in Navarra. What had drawn him to Madrid? Well, one day, while tending sheep, he found a copy of *Luz y Verdad* in a ditch by the roadside. He enjoyed it so much that he sent away for the books it mentioned, and all during the winter he read them avidly. However, his discovery of this new "Way" brought opposition and lying attacks against the truth. (Acts 9:2) So, he headed for Madrid to learn something about the people responsible for these publications. The distance from his town of Pamplona to Madrid is more than four hundred kilometers (250 miles), but Domingo walked it! For the first time in his life he had left his native village. Once in Madrid, he found the Society's office and started studying the Bible with the English pioneers. Satisfied that this was the truth, he unconditionally offered himself for the preaching work and became a pioneer.

TRUTH SPREADS IN THREE DIRECTIONS

The summer of 1933 marked the parting of the ways for pioneers John, Ernest and Frank. Ernest Eden took Domingo and struck out for the northwest. In time, Frank was assigned the whole of southern Spain, an area almost as big as Portugal. This fascinating territory included all of Andalusia and covered the southern coast from Huelva to Alicante. Meanwhile, John Cooke went some sixty-four kilometers (40 miles) south of Madrid to the ancient city of Toledo. With its Roman and Visigothic walls, Moorish mosques and

gateways, and Jewish synagogues, it was like a museum that told the history of Spain in stone.

Suppose we take a glance at pioneer activity in the early 1930's. In those days, public transport meant using buses, trains, horse-drawn cabs, and mules, as well as putting up with whatever everyone else had brought along—hens, ducks, goats, and, on one occasion, a large swordfish. Once an earthquake caused the train to leave the tracks. With all of that in mind, Frank Taylor turned to the bicycle. Fitted with strong carriers fore and aft, also a case that fitted between the frame, plus a rear bag to carry the phonograph records that were used in the preaching work in those days, it was quite a contraption. Later, slings over the handlebars were loaded with selected stones to ward off the marauding packs of starving dogs that would attack this strange moving object as it passed through the ghost towns and old mining areas in the province of Almería. On one occasion, Frank was attacked from the rear and his trousers were torn, the only pair he had. Fortunately, some sympathetic women loaned him a needle and thread. Without further ado, he sat down in the middle of the road and took care of the damage. Upon returning the needle, Frank preached to the local inhabitants and was able to place various publications with them, perhaps more because of their sympathy than their genuine interest.

In his preaching activity, Frank Taylor followed the tactic of never retracing his steps in a town or down a street if he could avoid it. This was one way of shunning irate left-wing Republicans who often took him for a Fascist agent circulating Catholic propaganda. In the town of Villamanrique, Ciudad Real, the word spread that Frank Taylor was a Fascist because the books he carried had the name of God in them, and, as he says, "God meant Catholic, which meant Fascist" to those people. At any rate, an angry crowd of some fifty communists surrounded him in the market square and shouted: "Down with him! Down with him!" Escape seemed impossible. But, following a suggestion he had received from a Catholic landlady, Frank began reading a strongly worded paragraph in the Society's booklet *Crisis*. He read at the top of his voice, and then thrust the booklet into the hands of the ringleader, saying, "Read it for yourself." The effect? Really amazing, as the crowd just about came to blows among themselves, some shouting in his favor and others against him. Amid the confusion our pioneer brother was able to slip away unharmed.

Frank Taylor thanked Jehovah for this deliverance. But that was not the end of the story. While cycling

away at 6:30 in the morning he was surprised to see the plaza almost packed with about 200 people waiting to see him leave by bus. How grateful he was for that bike! Then up went the cry, "There he is!" "Believe me," recalls Frank, "I never before put so much pressure on those pedals, and I did not stop until I was clear of that town and on my way to the next village."

AMID SCENES LIKE THESE

Fortunately, the situation was not always so perilous. There were many opportunities to preach the good news, and quite a few ears willing to listen. When the work of preaching with the phonograph began in the mid-1930's, Frank Taylor made good use of this instrument. In fact, he had a small pocket-size gramophone that he used to play in some of the cafés. He would hold it in his hand and walk up and down between the tables. At the close of the recorded talk, with a few words of introduction, he offered Christian publications. Quite a novel way of witnessing! But it required caution and discretion, as often a notice would be posted saying, "It is prohibited to talk about religion or politics."

Getting to some of the mountain villages was really a job, especially when the road had deteriorated to the point that it was just a mud track for pack mules. Imagine having to carry the bicycle on one's shoulder instead of riding it! Giving us a better picture, Brother Taylor writes: "Entering a village was quite an experience at first. Wares, vegetables and meat usually were spread around on the dusty roads and in the dry riverbed. Someone would be getting a haircut, just sitting on a stool at the roadside. Sometimes a dentist was extracting teeth in exactly the same setup. Conspicuous among all others were corpulent priests who were lounging around. In bars and casinos it was not uncommon to find five or six of them sitting around a table smoking cigars, and wearing their typical clerical garb, all dusty and dirty. When Bible literature was placed, it did not take long for these priests to begin pawing through the pages. You could see them looking for the Roman Catholic censor's mark, and, failing to find it, they quickly informed the police, usually raising the charge of 'Communism.' This resulted in immediate arrest, if they could find me. Since this happened so many times, I grew wise, and it was not so difficult to dodge in and out of the narrow streets. I used to call it 'fox and hounds.'"

The problem was that if they did not catch Brother

Taylor in the town, they were sure to get him as he was leaving, since many towns had a kind of Customs control on the outskirts, and that is where the police waited to pounce on him. Then there would be wasted hours with interrogations and frustrating delays in releasing him. Usually Brother Taylor would ask to get in touch with the British Consul, since he was a British citizen. Finally, he would be released, since no genuine charge could be brought against him.

Upon entering the province of Almería, Brother Taylor came face-to-face with a parched, inhospitable desert, without a blade of grass. Not a bird could be seen, and, except for a dreary line of donkeys that stirred the dust twice a day, there was little movement anywhere. However, Almería had its compensations, for there he discovered a small group of Bible Students. Despite his limited Spanish, he was able to rejoice in fellowship with these humble brothers for some two or three months. During that time the political situation was getting worse and there was shooting in the streets of Almería. After attending his last meeting there, Brother Taylor had to pass through lines of fire and wave a white handkerchief over his head to cycle back to his lodgings.

After witnessing in coastal towns, during the summer of 1935 Brother Taylor reached Murcia, then a city of about 160,000 inhabitants. There he acquired accommodations in a cellar below ground level, a place with a narrow slit in the ceiling for light. At least it was cool during the searing heat of the sirocco winds that blew up from the Sahara and across the Mediterranean. Preaching in that heat was a real trial for Frank Taylor, and it sometimes even caused delirium.

HELP FROM AND FOR GERMANY

During the early 1930's, the situation in politically disturbed Germany was getting progressively worse for Jehovah's people. As a result, eventually twelve German pioneers came to serve in Spain. One group got a really hot reception, as their train arrived at the Barcelona station right in the middle of a revolt against the government. While going to meet them, Ernest Eden found that the whole area had been converted into a battlefield. For cover he dived into the Post Office building and had to wait there for two hours until the shooting died down. Eventually he got to the station, where the German brothers were waiting stoically. Then the real trouble started. They did not speak English or Spanish and he did not speak German! Despite this, however, with three months of training

these German pioneers were prepared for preaching in Spanish.

The small groups of Jehovah's Witnesses in Madrid and Barcelona were conscious of the plight of their brothers in Germany. Hence, like fellow believers elsewhere, they protested the Nazi treatment of the Witnesses by sending telegrams to Adolf Hitler, warning him of what would happen to him and his Nazi party if he did not leave the Witnesses alone.

Our increased activity during this period brought pronounced reactions by Jesuit-inspired elements. In one town the pioneers were accused of "distributing literature of a 'Jewish-Freemason tendency.'" Two sisters in another town were imprisoned and charged with distributing "booklets of Hitleristic character." In yet other places, the brothers were branded as Protestants, which was like saying that they were the worst kind of infidels or heretics, as far as the uninformed Catholic majority was concerned.

PIONEERS CONTINUE THEIR MISSION

Toward the end of 1934 or the beginning of 1935, pioneers John and Eric Cooke left Barcelona to work south along the coast. On the other hand, Ernest Eden continued to preach in the towns of Barcelona province.

John and Eric Cooke first went down the Mediterranean coast to the famous Roman city of Tarragona and its adjoining town, Reus. Working their way northward to the province of Lérida and the village of Pradell, the Cookes located Salvador Sirera, a subscriber who had learned the truth and allowed Christian meetings to be held in his pension in Barcelona.

After some days of preaching along with Salvador in nearby towns and villages, John and Eric accompanied by Salvador cycled the 145 kilometers (90 miles) to Huesca. Was the journey worth while? Indeed it was! There, subscriber Nemesio Orús gave them a warm welcome and just "drank in" the truth. However, in his zeal and desire to associate with these brothers, he acted rather indiscreetly and caused his wife to become jealous, so that she secretly laid false charges with the police against the brothers. The *Guardia Civil* or rural police came to the apartment and arrested John and Eric, but at the Civil Guard headquarters the matter was resolved.

The Cookes visited Nemesio on various occasions and thought it would be good to observe the Memorial in Huesca on April 17, 1935, inviting Salvador Sirera to attend as well. So, John wrote to Nemesio with

this suggestion. Imagine his surprise upon receiving Nemesio's answer to the effect that he was thrilled with the idea and that he had already bought the lamb in readiness for the occasion! Obviously, his understanding of the Memorial was still a little deficient, even though his zeal was commendable. Can you imagine what it must have been like to keep a live young lamb for days in a small fourth-floor flat? Nevertheless, the Memorial was celebrated and it was a great occasion for the small group of Jesus Christ's followers. In fact, it was about the nearest they ever came to an assembly in Spain in those days.

When John Cooke thought that the province of Huesca had been covered adequately, he and Eric headed for Zaragoza, the capital of the region of Aragón, and the focal point of Spanish Mariolatry, the veneration or worship of Mary. At that time, in 1936, the city had about 170,000 inhabitants. The river Ebro cuts through the northern part of Zaragoza, and on the southern bank is the Temple of the Pillar, a massive, multisteepled church that contains a notable marble column. There, according to Catholic legend, the Virgin Mary appeared to the apostle James in the year 40 C.E., while it was said that she was still alive in Palestine! Though this legend has no historical or Biblical basis, over the centuries a blind faith has developed in *La Pílarica* (Our Lady of the Pillar).

Baptisms were few and far between in those days. Even so, John Cooke was not prepared to baptize anyone without good reason. In fact, on three occasions Nemesio Orús cycled the seventy-two kilometers (45 miles) from Huesca to Zaragoza, but John kept telling him to wait a little longer and be sure he was making a stable decision about baptism. Finally, in May of 1936, arrangements were made to baptize Nemesio, Antonio Gargallo and José Romanos in the river Ebro, close to Zaragoza.

The pioneers needed to be flexible in those days. If a person wanted our literature but did not have money, they would barter the publications for food, such as eggs, figs and homemade bread. John Cooke comments: "I got used to making a snack of a raw egg, a chunk of bread and a glass of wine. . . . So it was a rough, simple life, but a very happy one. How thrilled we were to do real pioneer work in a Catholic stronghold like Spain and to be finding a few real sheep!"

MISTAKEN FOR FASCISTS

While Eric Cooke and Antonio Gargallo were witnessing in the village of Mediana, a woman falsely

accused them of being Fascist agents and against the existing Spanish Republic. All the evidence she had was that a booklet placed with her spoke of God and of Christ! The village was practically 100 percent Communist, according to Brother Cooke, and to the villagers anything that spoke of God or Jesus Christ was Roman Catholic and therefore was Fascist. It was impossible to persuade them otherwise.

First, quite a crowd of women gathered. Then the town crier told Brother Cooke to clear out of the village or else he would notify the Civil Guard. The brothers did not leave and the police later arrived. At the headquarters the sergeant carefully examined the booklets and questioned Brothers Cooke and Gargallo. Finally, he said he could see nothing wrong at all, but would have to look into matters further since a complaint had been filed by the villagers. He then told Brother Cooke to take a letter to the lieutenant at the nearest town, feeling that he could better decide on the legality of our work.

As Eric and Antonio made their way down the rutted cart track, several coatless youths were running alongside them in the fields. Soon, a man and some boys came up behind the brothers. Over twenty of them converged at one point, reported Brother Cooke, who added: "Two seized our arms, accusing us of being Fascist propagandists. One bold youth stuck a pitchfork in my stomach in case I should try to escape. Another picked up the book *Vindication* in English, which I was carrying to read. 'Look!' he said, 'Italian! These must be Fascist agents.' Antonio attempted an explanation, but they were past being reasonable."

Antonio's book bag was pulled off the bike and the literature was thrown to the ground. Another assailant tried to tear the book bag off Eric's back. Meanwhile, others were gathering sticks for a fire and some were trying to tear the volumes, preparing for a book-burning.

"Just at that point, when things looked hopeless," reports Eric, "we saw their attitude change. The girls present started to run away. The grip on our wrists slackened. I looked behind, and coming round the bend were four members of the *Guardia Civil*. What a welcome sight! As Antonio said, Jehovah permitted matters to reach a certain point and then he intervened."

Later, the brothers appeared before the civil governor, who was surprised that any doubt should have arisen about our work. He called attention to the unsettled political situation then existing. And that it was! This experience clearly illustrates the slippery political path

that was being trodden by the Spanish people, one that was soon to plunge them into a terrible bloodbath.

CIVIL WAR!

In February of 1936 a general election had taken place and the left-wing Popular Front had been returned to power after two years of center-right-wing rule. Under this final Popular Front government, the tendency was toward disintegration, and events moved rapidly. On July 13, José Calvo Sotelo, a prominent right-wing monarchist, was assassinated, and this action served to precipitate the National Uprising, or Insurrection (depending on the political viewpoint of the Spaniard). This had its start in Africa on July 17 and was explained by General Francisco Franco by radio on July 18. The Spanish Civil War had started. Of the fifty provinces, twenty-one supported the Republic and twenty-nine the National Uprising, while the major cities, such as Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia and Bilbao, remained faithful to the Republic.

The Civil War took more than a million Spanish lives. It was a war of religious and political vengeance. During the three years of its duration the people lived in fear of cold-blooded murder, either at the hands of *los rojos* (the reds, or communists), or at the hands of Catholic executioners, convinced that they were serving God in a Holy Crusade. Old debts were settled by the pernicious system of the anonymous denunciation, with the victim ending up before a firing squad in a lonely field.

CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY AFFECTED

How did these developments affect our work in Spain? Perhaps we can best discern the feelings of our brothers at that time by seeing those events through the eyes of one who lived through the experience, Sister Carmen Tierraseca. She wrote:

"In Madrid a wave of terror, confusion and anguish unleashed itself. The people, for so many years oppressed by the clergy, went overboard in their fury against the churches, burning some, smashing the images and dragging them through the streets. However, in spite of the chaos that had broken out, we were respected and left alone.

"The Montaña barracks were near our little meeting hall. These became the scene of bloody battles, and all that zone was occupied by the military. Immediately, the foreign brothers had to leave the country, and we were left alone. Shortly afterward, all the Society's belongings were taken from Calle de Cadarso [the

location to which the branch office had earlier been moved] and we never knew to where. The thousands of books and booklets that were stocked there were either taken away or burned. The paper intended for the printed truth, the machines that had been employed in printing praise, the chairs on which we used to sit to study the Bible, the office from which the work was organized—all were lost, sorrowfully lost! . . . The work in Spain had sunk into a sea of silence. All of this caused me infinite sadness, and we found ourselves alone, terribly alone, each one fending for himself, 'skinned and thrown about like sheep without a shepherd.'"—Matt. 9:36.

Just before the Civil War erupted, John and Eric Cooke had departed for a vacation in England. By 1936, Frank Taylor had completed his witnessing activity in the provinces of Sevilla (Seville) and Cádiz and was determined that his next objective would be the Balearic Islands, which he hoped to reach by ship via Gibraltar. He found himself in the frontier town of La Línea as the once sleepy place was pillaged and burned and then fell to the Fascists and their white-turbaned Moorish troops. As Brother Taylor was crossing an open space to the Customs house he was caught in a veritable hail of lead belching from the barrels of machine guns, rifles and pistols. But he made it, and after darkness fell he bolted across 'no man's land' to the Gibraltar frontier. "A few shots streaked past me," he recalls, "but I was free and sang for joy."

Ernest Eden, on the other hand, was expelled from Spain, but not before he had spent some time in a subterranean prison that was quite like a tunnel blocked at both ends. There he and a German brother subsisted on a bread roll, a bowl of coffee and about a pint of cooked beans each day. "We were there two months," recalls Brother Eden, "and I can recommend that food as a slimming diet." Expulsion from the country was completed with a rigorous climb into the mountains and a walking, stumbling, falling, bruising descent down the French side. Once in France, the two brothers parted company and Ernest Eden eventually reached England.

At the outbreak of the Civil War, Brother O. E. Rosselli, an American citizen, was preaching in the Canary Islands, Spanish territory off the west coast of Africa. While he was witnessing among scattered houses on a rough road, two soldiers rushed out of ambush and took him into custody. He spent twelve days as a prisoner and was then deported from Spain. What was his "crime"? He had been distributing the leaflet "What Is Fascism?" which states that Christians

are neither Fascists nor Communists, but are witnessing about the Lord's incoming kingdom.

So it was that our activities in Spain were affected disastrously by the Civil War. July 1936 started a period of eleven years of complete isolation and solitude. Each one of the Spanish Witnesses became like a flickering candle, trying to keep alight his flame of integrity amid suffocating spiritual gloom. A few succumbed, but the story of the majority is evidence of the insuperable power of Jehovah's spirit that sustained them through those bleak years.

FACING TESTS DURING ISOLATION

All those seeking to please Jehovah were put through various tests, both during and after the Civil War, but the men especially were tested. If the start of the war found them living in territory controlled by the Republicans, they were expected to fight with them. However, if they were in "rebel" territory, they were expected to fight for the right-wing Catholic forces. Let us not forget that this issue arose in 1936, and although the brothers had a basic understanding of Christian neutrality, they did not have the benefit of *The Watchtower* dealing with that subject, which did not appear in English until November 1939. So, each brother knew that he had to maintain integrity one way or another, but lacked the clear vision that came later, as well as contact with the visible organization so as to resolve any doubts he had.

To illustrate the problems of those days, let us consider the case of Nemesio Orús, a married man with three small children living in Huesca. A few days after the war started, he was visited as a suspected Communist or Freemason, and his visitors tried to obligate him to applaud the soldiers as they were going off to war. Pressure also was applied to get him to join the local Fascist group. When he refused to do these things, he ended up on the "blacklist" for future reprisals.

One night in August 1936, Nemesio was arrested, interrogated by the police inspector, and jailed. Eventually he found himself in the Zaragoza jail, where he spent twelve days in a cell without a mattress, sleeping on just a blanket doubled on the floor. For witnessing to the other prisoners, Nemesio was put in solitary confinement for thirteen days. Finally, on December 16, 1936, he was released from prison.

This, however, did not end matters. The Orús family moved to Ansó where, in the winter of 1937, Nemesio received a notice from the Town Hall that he should

present himself for military service. Desiring to maintain Christian neutrality, he did not comply, was jailed once again and finally freed as being medically unfit for military service. Thereafter, the Orús family moved to Barbastro, another town in the province of Huesca, where Nemesio again established his watch-repair business. He then lost all contact with God's people for some ten years.

The postwar period was a time of great suffering for the Spanish people, including our few brothers and interested persons. In many places there were dire shortages of food and fuel. Under these circumstances, some of the brothers were able to manifest their Christian love. (John 13:34, 35) For instance, Salvador Sirera, who lived in the village of Pradell in Lérida, was able to cultivate a plot of ground and have his food supply guaranteed. Such was not the case for the brothers in Barcelona, where five carob beans were being sold for one peseta when an average daily wage was twelve to fourteen pesetas, and the basic commodities, such as bread and olive oil, were scarce. Hence, one can imagine Brother Juan Periago's gratitude when Salvador came to Barcelona carrying foodstuffs for the needy brothers in that city.

The new rulers were determined to eliminate all vestiges of the previous republican rule, and so there was strict censorship of the mail and the press. Accordingly, when Sisters Natividad Bargueño and Clara Buendía decided to write to the Watch Tower Society in Brooklyn to obtain literature, their correspondence was mailed in vain. Their letters never left Spain, but were intercepted by the censor. A few days later the police called at the homes of these sisters and, after questioning them, and in one case searching the house, they warned them to drop their interest in these "lies."

At that time it was required that all letters sent should have patriotic phrases written on the envelope. Otherwise, the mail would not be delivered. Therefore, in order to preserve their neutrality, God's people did not write to the Society.

Another requirement was that on every occasion that the national anthem was heard, even by radio, everyone should stand and give the Fascist salute, no matter where he might be. The same patriotic procedure was required if a person was passing a military barracks at the raising or lowering of the flag, or if troops were passing by with the flag. So it was that one day Antonio Brunet Fradera and Luis Medina were walking along a Barcelona street when a battalion of soldiers came marching by with the flag. Everybody

stood at attention and saluted the flag, except Antonio and Luis. At that, the officer in charge brought the battalion to a halt and threateningly ordered these young men to salute. When they refused, the officer grabbed their right hands and raised them in salute. But one of the brothers remarked: "We are not saluting. You are by raising our arms." Furious, the officer let their arms fall and then pulled out his pistol and pointed it at them, saying: "Now you will salute, won't you?" Again the brothers refused. "But can't you see that I am going to shoot you if you don't?" The reply? "You will only kill us if God allows it." With that, the frustrated officer stuck the pistol back in its holster and led these young men away under arrest. But they had kept their integrity. Interestingly, Antonio Brunet had not even been baptized, for he was not immersed until some years later, in June 1951.

With the Catholic Church back in power, complications also arose for the children of Jehovah's Witnesses, especially with regard to schooling. To receive an education at a State school it was necessary to produce a baptism certificate proving that the child was a baptized Catholic. Natividad Bargueño had not baptized her daughters in the Church, and when they became of school age she really had to search before finding a school that did not insist on the baptism certificate.

Even then there was a problem because the local parish priest insisted that all the pupils should attend his church on Sunday morning. To make sure that they did so, each one was given a blue card that was marked as they entered the church. Then every Monday morning these cards were checked at school to see if anyone had failed to attend. Recalling this, one of Nati's daughters remarks: "Of course, my card never was marked, and every Monday I had to face up to this situation with the teacher. Finally, on one of these Mondays the teacher said: 'This situation cannot go on like this. Either you will go to Mass or I will present the case to my superiors.'" Nati's daughter went home and explained the problem to her mother, who took the simple step of teaching her daughter Acts 17:24 where it says that God does not dwell in handmade temples. The young girl repeated that scripture to the teacher in explaining why she did not attend the Mass. This succeeded, for the teacher no longer bothered her with the Monday interrogation. In fact, when the priest came on Mondays to check the blue cards the teacher deliberately held back the card of Nati's daughter in order to avoid complications.

SEEDS GERMINATING IN TORRALBA

Although the Civil War and its aftermath certainly put God's people to the test and brought them face-to-face with many problems, the seed of truth that had been planted continued to produce. For instance, in Torralba de Calatrava there was some fruitage with the passing of the years. Actually, the first seed had been sown there back in 1931 when José Vicente Arenas first heard the truth. As time passed, informal witnessing was done and little by little different individuals were affected. Along with those reading the publications of the Watch Tower Society were some Protestants who were mixing the two sets of ideas. In fact, one of them was acting as a colporteur for the British and Foreign Bible Society in Madrid, although he was selling our literature at the same time. During the time of unrest, meetings were held in a clandestine manner, and they were being directed by men who were more Protestants than Jehovah's Witnesses.

By 1946 the group of Bible students in the small rural town of Torralba was the largest in Spain that was still studying the Bible with the Society's publications in hand. From their study, they realized that they should get baptized, and so arranged to hold a baptism on September 2, 1946, in the nearby river Guadiana. On that day nine persons were baptized with great simplicity and sincerity. Without a baptism talk, nine men entered the river and were baptized. Then, each one offered up a prayer to God as they all knelt on the riverbank. Two weeks later they performed another baptism and three more brothers were immersed. Strangely, no women were baptized, although some were associating with the group. Another interesting detail is that the "Protestant" elements did not participate in any way in this baptism, even though they were trying to maintain control of the group.

On September 26, 1946, Brother Gregorio Fuentes married Brother Pedro García's sister. Among the guests was a Protestant almost considered a patriarch because of his Bible knowledge. He entertained the hope of becoming the pastor of this flourishing group of Bible students in Torralba. When the wedding was over, he suggested that they all celebrate the Lord's Supper. He gave a talk in which he emphasized the need to partake of the Supper regularly. All of those present partook of the emblems under the guidance of this Protestant "shepherd," and he indicated that he would return in November to celebrate the Supper again.

However, some of the brothers were not convinced by what had taken place. So, before he returned they made a thorough search of the Bible and the Society's publications, finding the proofs needed to rebut this would-be "pastor." Upon his return, he was disappointed to find that no one in the group was prepared to celebrate his "Supper" and that these individuals no longer were under his control. Needless to say, he never returned.

NEWS REPORT LEADS TO RENEWED CONTACT

A notable event of 1946 was the Glad Nations Theocratic Assembly held in Cleveland, Ohio, with a peak attendance of 80,000. Of course, Spain was one of the nations that was not represented. There still was no contact between Spanish Christians and God's organization in the rest of the world—and this was ten years after the outbreak of the Civil War! However, that noteworthy assembly made international news, and reports were printed even in Spanish newspapers. Those reports, although twisted and full of lies, served to reestablish contact between the Governing Body of Jehovah's Christian witnesses and the small groups of God's devoted people functioning in Spain.

The press reported that Jehovah's Witnesses were expecting the end of the world by an atomic explosion between 1946 and 1948. This "news" was noticed in the Spanish newspapers by three brothers independently of one another. Brother Manuel Alexiades read it in a Madrid paper and immediately wrote to the Society's headquarters in Brooklyn to ask about this "prophecy." Meanwhile, Ramón Serrano read the same news in another paper and informed Ramón Forné, who also wrote to the Society. At the same time, the brothers in Torralba had seen this report and likewise communicated with the Society's Brooklyn office. Who would have thought that the 1946 convention would have been the means of bringing the Spanish brothers back in contact with Jehovah's visible organization earth wide? Actually, the lies that must have pleased the Devil boomeranged on him.

What joy for the brothers in Spain! Christian literature started to trickle through again—such books as *Children*, *The New World*, *"The Truth Shall Make You Free"* and *"The Kingdom Is at Hand."* These books were sent as gifts to the brothers here, and what gifts! After some ten years of wandering through a desert of spiritual drought, they had again found the oasis of truth.

GOVERNING BODY REESTABLISHES CONTACT

As a result of these contacts, the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses made arrangements for the Spanish groups to be visited in May 1947. Arriving in Madrid on May 7, F. W. Franz and H. C. Covington from the Watch Tower Society's headquarters in Brooklyn, New York, had their first meeting with a group of eleven Spanish friends assembled that night in the dining room of the home of Brother Manuel Alexiades. Everyone present wanted to be a regular subscriber for *The Watchtower* and to obtain all the latest Christian publications. However, it was noticed that practically all the men smoked, though no immediate comment was made about their use of tobacco. The next day a second meeting was held with a group of sixteen.

These two meetings built up the confidence of Pedro García and Gregorio Fuentes who had come there from Torralba de Calatrava. The group back in Torralba was divided on whether or not to invite the brothers from Brooklyn to come and see them, and so they sent Pedro and Gregorio to Madrid to size up the situation. Well, somewhat like the faithful spies of Moses' time, they were favorably impressed and sent a telegram advising the group that they would be coming to Torralba with the two American visitors.

First, this meant a train trip to Ciudad Real. Next, the two visitors rode to Torralba in a somewhat rickety, decrepit, ancient taxi. A number of brothers were on hand to greet them upon arrival at 1:35 a.m.

That morning the visitors went to the Civil Guard headquarters to register their presence. That evening twenty-four persons gathered for a meeting and were greatly refreshed in a spiritual way. But the visit also had an impact on the general populace of that small agricultural town. For instance, Bienvenido González recalls: "Their stay was spectacular, especially for the local citizens. Brother Franz, although of normal stature by local standards, wore a sombrero, or hat, that was by no means normal. Besides being high, it also was wide, something never seen in these parts, so that his presence was obvious."

On Sunday the final meeting was held with the Torralba group, and thirty-eight persons jammed into one room to enjoy the gathering. Congregation organization was explained, and two brothers were assigned to care for the work of the group. They were José Vicente Arenas and Juan Félix Sánchez. The matter of smoking arose at this meeting, since nearly all in the group were smokers and they had noticed that

their visitors were not. After their inquiry Brother Covington related his own experience of how he once smoked about fifty cigarettes a day, but the knowledge of Kingdom truth had shown him that the habit was incompatible with Christian living. Even after this talk the issue of smoking continued to be a problem in that group, as some were not willing to make the change.

After the meeting the Civil Guard headquarters was notified of the visitors' imminent departure. But how were they to cover the sixteen kilometers (10 miles) to Ciudad Real to get the train to Madrid, since the only taxi in town had a flat tire? Well, Brother Franz later reported:

"At midnight we hit out for the home of a carter and roused him. He hitched a *tartana*, a two-wheeled covered wagon, to a tired horse with jingle bells below his neck. Bidding some of the friends there good-bye, four of us got up into the cart with the driver. Then through the dark hours we bumped and jingled along, westward. . . . At 3 a.m. we reached the railroad station in Ciudad Real."

The visitors got the train and made it back to Madrid in safety. Later that day they had a farewell meeting with the Madrid group, and a temporary presiding overseer and *Watchtower* study conductor was appointed from among the twelve persons present.

The next day the visitors flew on to Barcelona. During the visit there, a service committee was assigned temporarily to get the Barcelona Congregation going organizationally. Those appointed were Ramón Forné, and Ramón and Francisco Serrano.

On May 15 the visitors were on their way by train to Barbastro. The journey took ten hours, during which the train passed the famous mountain of Montserrat, with its peculiar formation of pinnacles that look like monolithic fingers pointing to the heavens. High on this mountain is a monastery with the image of "Our Lady of Montserrat," otherwise known as the "Black Virgin," so called because it is said that the image has turned black from the candles that have been burned beneath it for centuries.

At Barbastro the visitors were greeted by Nemesio Orús and his family, as well as interested persons. Two meetings were held there on succeeding evenings, and Nemesio was assigned to serve as temporary presiding overseer.

Later, back in Barcelona the visitors spoke to some twenty persons on May 18, 1947. Before leaving that city, Ramón Forné was assigned as temporary servant over all the activities of Jehovah's Witnesses and their congregations in Spain.

A NEW CHAPTER OF KINGDOM SERVICE

In December 1947 other members of the Governing Body visited Christians in Spain. At that time, Brothers N. H. Knorr and M. G. Henschel were able to assist Spanish fellow believers spiritually. Along with the visitors came John Cooke, by then a graduate of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead. Yes, this was the same brother who had left Spain in 1936 just before the Civil War started. Now he was assigned to the Iberian peninsula to get our work organized in Spain and Portugal.

One place needing assistance was Barcelona, where two distinct groups functioned as a result of division based on personal differences. When Brother Cooke arrived at the airport there, two small groups of brothers greeted him, but were unwilling to greet each other. For the first week or so the situation was very difficult. The brothers were disorganized, doing no real field service. However, within a short while Brother Cooke was able to organize a combined *Watchtower* study, and from then on the atmosphere slowly improved, although the wounded feelings were a long time in being healed.

The first vital step in the reactivation of our work in Spain was to get the house-to-house activity going again. That suggestion met with protest: "But, Brother Cooke, this is not London or New York. This is Franco's Spain. You can't do house-to-house work here!" John thought otherwise. So, he started on his own, doing an odd house here and there so that he could never be located by the police or be effectively denounced. With his example before them, the other brothers began to follow suit. They soon realized that with tact and prudence, and by using the Catholic Bible, they really could preach from house to house. So it was that Spain had thirty-four Kingdom publishers reporting in 1948, their first year of postwar organized door-to-door preaching activity.

The group in Madrid was weaker than the one in Barcelona. There was no capable brother to take the lead there, although sisters like Carmen Terrasaca and Natividad Bargueño quietly were following the lead of the organization, in spite of some Protestant "poison" in their midst. The meetings were being held on the outskirts of Madrid, in the district of Vallecas, in the home of the Protestant who had tried to 'rule the roost' much earlier in Torralba de Calatrava. Before John Cooke arrived, this Protestant used to direct the *Watchtower* study, which sometimes lasted for almost three hours, the comments of this individual at

times being thirty minutes long. John really was unable to improve the situation at that time, as there were no capable brothers then available in Madrid.

From Madrid, John took the train to Ciudad Real, where he was met by the brothers from Torralba de Calatrava. For the first few days, all went well and he was able to hold some fine meetings with the brothers, in spite of the close vigilance of the Civil Guard. About the fourth day, however, John fell ill and had to stay in bed. He had a fever and a strange feeling in the lungs. Though he required plenty of liquid, the water in that town definitely was bad. To worsen the situation, there was no suitable doctor in the town. As each day passed, the situation got worse, not only for John, but also for the brothers who had on their hands this "embarrassing" foreigner who was arousing the suspicions of the Civil Guard. Finally, John made a big effort and journeyed back to Barcelona, where Ramón and Francisco Serrano met him and saw to it that he received necessary care in their home. For a while the doctor was visiting him three times a day, and even the brothers thought that he was dying. However, Brother Cooke pulled through the ordeal, thanks to the care of the Serrano family.

The doctor recommended that John Cooke spend a few weeks in the mountains to recuperate. So, Nemesio Orús invited him to pass the time with his family in Barbastro, but problems were to develop there also.

ARRESTED AS MEMBERS OF THE MAQUIS

While in Barbastro, John and Nemesio had an unusual, though typical, experience. Nemesio had written ahead to an interested person named Vicente to tell him of the visit. Well, when the dilapidated bus pulled up to let off the visitors there was a sinister-looking reception committee awaiting them—a priest and four of the Civil Guard heavily armed. Nearby was Vicente in his simple peasant garb, with a donkey to carry the bags, and a worried look on his face. After greetings, they loaded the donkey and started the climb up the path that led to the village. But, two of the guards moved ahead of them and the other two followed behind, along with the priest. The brothers had landed in a trap! As they approached the village, one of the guards from behind shouted: "Halt! Hands up!" "We did not argue about this," remarked John. "They searched us for weapons and then ordered us to proceed to the brother's home. Meanwhile, the priest slipped away, his little plan having worked very nicely."

What had occurred? Well, Nemesio's letter had been

read by Vicente to his family, but the servant girl had heard it and, being a Catholic, had told the priest. He, in turn, tipped off the Civil Guard that dangerous characters would be coming to visit Vicente. In that area at the time, the Maquis, Spanish political refugees with their headquarters in France, often were making nuisance raids across the border, and the local Civil Guard was in a state of alert. Thus, they trumped up the charge that John and Nemesio were Maquis agents.

At Vicente's house our true position was explained, and the guards left. While the three were relaxing over a cup of coffee the guards returned and arrested them. Why? Because they were supposedly holding an illegal meeting. Franco's decrees had prohibited unauthorized meetings of three or more persons. This led to their being interrogated from about midnight until 5 a.m. at the nearest Civil Guard headquarters. Thereafter, the three were put in a cell in an unused convent building, with a guard of four soldiers and a corporal. They spent a few days in that place sleeping on dirty mattresses on the floor and paying someone to bring the meals from the inn at the town of Graus. And this was supposed to be a period of convalescence for John!

The three were interrogated once again by officers who were quite polite and respectful. The third day a telegram came from the governor of the province instructing that all three should be released. Eventually, they got back to Vicente's house and there continued the visit as planned.

After about three weeks with Nemesio, John Cooke returned to Barcelona, where the work was progressing nicely, with some forty Kingdom publishers taking part. During the Memorial celebration held in Spain at that time ninety-six were present and eighteen partook of the emblems. The number of partakers was inflated by the influence of the Protestant "brother" in Madrid. But that situation was only to continue until 1950, when judicial action finally was taken against him. With better understanding, the number of partakers dwindled to three by 1956.

With things progressing slowly but surely in Spain, it was decided that John Cooke should go to Portugal. This he did in August 1948, not returning to Spain until July 1951. However, the eight months of association before his departure had served to get matters on an even keel in Spain. Theocratic order was being established and the fruits were bound to come, in spite of all Satan's efforts to the contrary.

PROBLEMS ARISE IN TORRALBA

On March 18, 1948, José Vicente Arenas and Pedro García were called before the town mayor and the local Civil Guard chief in Torralba de Calatrava. The purpose of the interview was to stop the brothers from having their meetings and to prevent them from preaching to others. Pedro replied that they would respect the authorities, but it would be impossible to stop the meetings and the preaching work. (Acts 5:29) However, that did not end the matter.

On April 10 the Civil Guard intercepted and confiscated the packets of literature that had been sent by the Society from Brooklyn, New York, and the brothers receiving them were fined by the civil governor of the province. Some paid the fine, but others refused to do so because they had not committed an offense. Later the Society sent the literature to Barcelona and the brothers there took steps to have it sent to Torralba. Yet, it was evident that the group there needed to place greater confidence in Jehovah. So, new appointments were made to positions of responsibility and this improved the spirit of the Torralba group.

A major problem in Torralba was the smoking habit. Nearly all the men that associated there were heavy smokers, but they avoided smoking when John Cooke was around. One day, however, Bienvenido González deliberately brought the matter to a head by smoking in John's presence. As a result, the matter was clarified once more and, as Bienvenido puts it, John's "counsel was a new incentive for some to drop the dirty vice."

FIRST POSTWAR SEEDS SOWN IN THE BALEARIC ISLANDS

Was the Kingdom-preaching work making any progress elsewhere in Spain? Yes, about 160 kilometers (100 miles) to the east of the Spanish Mediterranean coast lie the Balearic Islands, consisting mainly of Mallorca (Majorca), Menorca (Minorca), Ibiza (Iviza) and Formentera. Up until the 1940's the Catholic monopoly in these islands had been undisturbed, but this was to change, thanks to Brother Manuel Alexiades, the Greek businessman who lived in Madrid but who also had property in Mallorca.

One day at the telegraph office, Manuel started to witness to one of the employees. This man listened to the message, not because he was particularly interested, but because his wife was a fanatical Catholic and he hoped that this was his chance to break her away from her fanaticism. In this way Manuel

Alexiades was able to witness to Prudencia Font de Bordo, president of the Catholic Action group in Puerto de Pollensa, a small town on the northeast coast of Mallorca. She accepted some of our literature.

Prudencia later visited a friend and gave her a tract. So impressed was this friend that she passed it on to her daughter, Margarita. Well, both Margarita and her mother showed interest in the truth, acquired more literature and began studying the Bible with Prudencia. And what studies they were—lasting from 3 p.m. to 8 p.m.! In fact, Margarita once hid in her room when faced with the prospect of another five-hour-long study. But then, she had five hours in which to reflect on her stratagem, and during that time she became ashamed of what she had done. She prayed to Jehovah, expressing her desire to study the Bible, but not for five hours with that woman!

In 1949, Margarita and her mother established their own study schedule and, during two years, they followed this while witnessing informally to their neighbors and friends. Matters began to take a turn for the better in 1953, when John Cooke visited them for three days and was surprised to have an audience of twenty-six present for a meeting in Palma de Mallorca.

Since Margarita now was twenty-six years old and capable of teaching others, John Cooke took the initiative at the close of the talk and made arrangements for ten Bible studies to be started with the interested persons present at that meeting. Three days of training instilled in Margarita a great appreciation for Jehovah's organization and also aroused her curiosity about pioneering or serving as a full-time preacher of the good news. In 1953 when John Cooke was attending the Christian assembly in New York, he sent Margarita a pioneer application, which she gladly filled out. As matters developed Margarita Comas became a special pioneer in August of that year.

By that time Paul Baker, a missionary graduate of Gilead School's fifteenth class had already been in Mallorca for over a year. Not long after his arrival on March 25, 1952, Paul started Bible studies with two families and soon combined them to form the first *Watchtower* study. Two weeks after his arrival it was Memorial time, and twenty-one persons were present for the celebration, with no partakers of the emblems. By the end of that month, five publishers were reporting field service activity for the first time and they were conducting four Bible studies. Brother Baker continued as the mainstay of the Palma de Mallorca Congregation until 1957, when he was expelled from the country.

NOTABLE DEVELOPMENTS IN BARCELONA AND MADRID

During the years now under review supervision of the Kingdom-preaching work in Spain underwent some changes. Shortly after Brother John Cooke's arrival, Ramón Forné was replaced by Luis Buj, who shortly thereafter had to return to Argentina. Then, in 1950, Brother Pedro Pérez was assigned this responsibility. However, he had once been an anarchist and during the unrest that existed at that time he came under increased police surveillance. Naturally, he had abandoned all political activities and explained this to the police. However, in view of these problems, Pedro wrote to the Society and suggested that another brother be appointed to care for the work. Consequently, Jorge Miralles, who had come from Argentina, was given this privilege.

At this point, it seems appropriate to take another brief look at the situation in Madrid. In that area the previously mentioned man with a Protestant viewpoint was conducting the *Watchtower* study and mixing in his own Protestant ideas with what the magazine said. As a matter of fact, it was reported that after the meeting the men present took out their tobacco and smoked, while chatting about things in general. Think of that!

After learning about the situation in the Vallecas district of Madrid, Pedro García, the brother from Torralba de Calatrava, went to Madrid and, on December 16, 1949, met with the brothers there, excluding the Protestant. As a result of this discussion and correspondence with the Society, Luis Feito and Eulogio González were appointed to positions of responsibility in the congregation.

Dramatic indeed were the developments in Madrid at the celebration of the Memorial on April 1, 1950. On March 31, Pedro García arrived in Madrid and first went to discuss the matter of the Memorial with the Protestant. It was impossible to reach an agreement with regard to the date or just who should partake of the emblems, and yet this Protestant was going to give the talk! The next day, Pedro went to the meeting place with his elderly "brother" and found about twenty persons there, many of them completely unknown to him. Asking who they were, he was informed that they were Protestants and Adventists that this "brother" had invited to the meeting. He had craftily padded the attendance by inviting persons of his own ilk.

Pedro García acted quickly and advised Eulogio González to address the group before the Memorial

talk started. He was to clarify matters regarding the date and the participants, in agreement with a letter received from the Watch Tower Society. Well, this was a bombshell that the Protestant "brother" had not expected. The meeting broke up in confusion. The Protestant and his followers walked out, and Pedro García ended up giving the Memorial discourse.

With these events, the influence of the Protestant was broken. He refused to accept the direction of the "faithful and discreet slave" and did not respect the appointments of responsible brothers in the congregation. (Matt. 24:45-47) As a consequence, the meetings were discontinued in his home and were held in that of Eulogio González in the Ventas neighborhood of Madrid.

FIRST PIONEERS APPOINTED IN SPAIN

With the advent of Gilead-trained missionaries, such as John Cooke, Ken Williams, Bernard Backhouse and Paul Baker, the spirit of pioneering began to develop among some in the small group of Spanish Kingdom proclaimers. In 1949 there were only fifty-three publishers in the country associating with six groups. From these came the first Spanish pioneer, María Gómez of Barcelona.

In 1950 a new peak of 93 publishers was achieved. The following year this grew to 121, and then to 145 in 1952. This latter year marked a turning point for the Spanish field, with the appointment of four special pioneers, three of whom were Spanish—Máximo Murcia from Torralba de Calatrava, Luis Feito and Maruja Puñal from Madrid, and Raimundo Avoletta, who was a Brazilian. In 1977 the figure stood at 591 special pioneers working under the Spanish branch.

STRENGTHENING THE ORGANIZATION

Upbuilding visits by members of the Governing Body continued during the 1950's. For instance, Brother F. W. Franz again came to Spain in July 1951. A memorable event during that visit was an open-air gathering outside Madrid. On that occasion, several brothers from Torralba who had been baptized in 1946, but not by a baptized person, decided to get rebaptized. Brother Franz gave the baptism talk in Spanish and John Cooke did the baptizing in the Jarama River. This direct personal contact in Spanish with a member of the Governing Body was a great encouragement to the twenty-eight brothers present.

In Granada precautions had to be taken, so the brothers held their meetings in a hotel room. Granada,

in the heart of the Andalusia region, is rich in Arabic associations and reminders. Brothers F. W. Franz and John Cooke visited the Alhambra palace, constructed chiefly in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries by the Arabs, or Moors, as they are more commonly known here. Interestingly, all the mosaic, tile and stucco work at the Alhambra reflect the Moslem abhorrence of anything that smacks of idolatry. How is that so? Well, all the artistic designs are based on geometrical, arabesque and calligraphic patterns.

Incidentally, in 1950 a brother from Argentina visited his native Granada and introduced the truth to several men there. Soon four subscribed for *The Watchtower* and were holding private "meetings," actually debates, at the Alhambra palace, which is open to the public. Later, these meetings were moved to a cave dwelling in Sacromonte, on the outskirts of Granada. Interestingly, this small group took note of the Memorial yearly by going to an isolated spot on Sacromonte hill and there reading a *Watchtower* article as the sun was setting. In time, a Christian congregation was established in Granada.

Brothers N. H. Knorr and M. G. Henschel again visited Spain in February 1952. At that time five *Watchtower* studies were organized in Barcelona and guidelines were established for future meetings and preaching in Spain. Since great caution was necessary in order to avoid unnecessary problems with the authorities, it then was suggested that meeting attendances be kept down to eight or twelve persons. At that time, Brother Bernard Backhouse was assigned to do circuit work among the congregations.

Due to the shortage of our literature, a novel arrangement then was introduced for Spain. If a genuinely interested person was met in house-to-house work, the brothers would lend the person a book and start a Bible study. They then sent the person's address to the Society's headquarters in Brooklyn, from where a copy of the book was mailed to the individual. The publisher then received the contribution for the book sent and recovered his loaned copy. This arrangement later was discontinued, but it did serve a useful purpose for some time.

Brothers Knorr and Henschel returned to Spain in January 1953, and this turned out to be the last visit in which John Cooke would be able to participate. Meetings were held in Barcelona and Madrid, with good attendances. In Madrid the visiting brothers had a conference with Brothers Cooke and Backhouse, and it was decided that Spain and Portugal should then

become one branch of the Society, with John Cooke as the branch overseer.

During that visit, Brother Knorr suggested caution, especially in the organizing of assemblies. He felt it would be better to keep them down to picnic size, of thirty to forty persons, rather than trying to have attendances of a hundred or more. These "picnic" assemblies were held in the mountains and woods throughout Spain until our work was legalized in 1970. Only on a few occasions did the police intervene.

In July 1953, John Cooke was invited to attend the international assembly of Jehovah's people in New York city. After that convention he went back to Portugal and held a "picnic" assembly near Lisbon in order to repeat the highlights of the New York gathering. Then, he boarded the train for Madrid, but when he got to the Spanish frontier he was stopped and not allowed to enter the country. In May 1954, he again tried to cross the Spanish frontier, but without success. His name was on the "blacklist." John Cooke never did get back to Spain to carry on missionary work, but the Kingdom preaching was on solid footing and moved ahead under the influence of Jehovah's holy spirit. Nevertheless, John Cooke continued his missionary service in Africa and still serves in the South Africa Bethel.

ORGANIZED PERSECUTION

With the start of organized preaching work in Spain, there also came to be organized persecution. By remaining virtually in hiding, the Protestant sects had not provoked any reaction from the Catholic clergy, even though there were supposed to be over 30,000 Protestants in Spain. But the activity of a mere handful of Jehovah's Witnesses soon raised the ire of the Catholic clergy. Their monopoly was at last being challenged. So, what did they do? The same as in the time of the Inquisition, they did the denouncing, but left it to the arm of the State to do the dirty work.

We can illustrate this persecution by citing the experience of Natividad Puñal, the daughter of Nati Bargueño. One day in 1953 this seventeen-year-old was engaging in field service with a special pioneer. At one of the return visits a man appeared and started asking questions aggressively. This individual raised his voice, and more members of the family appeared on the scene. Finally, the man identified himself as a policeman. He took the two Witnesses to a place where there was a Catholic chapel, and led them before an individual who, although not dressed as a priest, talked

like one. From there they were taken to a police station where their briefcases were searched and their booklets and Bibles were taken. The two were interrogated for quite some time and, after a second interrogation, were taken to the Chief of the Social Brigade of the secret police. Upon arrival, they were immediately taken to a dungeonlike jail. Soon, Nati found herself in a cell among thieves, prostitutes and lesbians. But even in these circumstances, she took advantage of opportunities to give a witness.

That night, when others were in bed, Nati was taken to a room and interrogated once again. The initial "friendly" questions soon developed into more specific ones as the interrogating chief wanted to know who was directing the work, how many were doing it, where they lived, and so forth. He even produced a photo of a group of Witnesses, including Nati, as well as letters from the Society and other items taken from the room of the special pioneer.

Nati succeeded in replying in a way that protected her fellow believers. In fact, she was very happy that she did not know the addresses of foreign brothers. At last the interrogation ended and Nati was taken back to the communal cell. The next day she was placed in a small individual cell, the type used for solitary confinement. There she spent two days until she had completed the maximum of seventy-two hours that she could be held without official accusation.

However, this did not end matters. Some weeks later, Nati had to present herself before the police court, and was denounced for the scandal she had caused. Her accuser was the very policeman who had started the trouble. Surprisingly, though, there was a sudden about-face! The policeman said, "There hasn't been any scandal." Pressed by the judge, he merely answered, "I was scandalized to find that they did not believe in the Virgin Mary." Ultimately the case was dismissed. But as they left the court, the policeman-accuser came over to Nati and her associate and said: "I thought you were a different kind of people, and I ask you to forgive me."

This was not Nati's only prison experience. Two years later she ended up in the same prison for the same reason—preaching the Word of God. Her sister, Maruja, likewise suffered imprisonment because of declaring the good news. She had to contend with imprisoned lesbians and was compelled to fight off rats during her incarceration. Despite their prison experiences, however, these girls continued in Jehovah's service and he blessed their earnest efforts.

THE BIBLE IN SPAIN

It must be remembered that Spain had for centuries been kept in ignorance of the Bible, so much so that even in the 1950's it was considered to be a dangerous Protestant book, not to be read by Catholics unless they were well educated. This ignorance is epitomized by an experience that Vicente Páramo had while preaching to a cobbler in Madrid. His presentation was interrupted by the cobbler's exclamation: "But you have come here to speak to me about the Bible as if I did not already know the Bible! I'll tell you that I have read *Don Quixote* seven times!" *Don Quixote* is, of course, the famous novel by the Spanish writer Miguel de Cervantes.

On another occasion, a sister was giving a witness to a lady and kept mentioning the Holy Bible, which in Spanish is the *Santa Biblia*. Finally, the lady exclaimed: "I know practically all the saints in the church calendar, but I have never heard of this *Santa Biblia*!" She was confusing *Santa Biblia*, the Holy Bible, with her saints, such as *Santa María* and *Santa Lucía*.

Now please consider the experience of Sinforiano Barquín from the Begonia district of Bilbao. After his cousin from Venezuela introduced him to God's truth, he approached a priest, asking for permission to take a copy of the Bible from a library and consider it with the Catholic Action group with which Sinfo was associated. The response? "There are plenty more books to consider without it having to be the Bible!" Not satisfied, Sinfo took his Valera (Protestant) Bible to another priest who spent nearly half an hour just finding Isaiah 7:14. Undeterred, Sinfo thereafter asked a famous radio priest why the Church did not teach that the meek would inherit the earth, as Psalm 37 says. (Vs. 11; compare Matthew 5:5.) "Well," said the cleric, "it just means that the meek will live longer on the earth. . . . and that Bible—will you leave it with me, or will you burn it yourself?" Some time later, in a public confrontation Sinfo Barquín handled his Bible with such dexterity that this radio priest blurted out: "How well they have trained you in so short a space of time!"

Use of the Bible in the Kingdom-preaching work was not without its problems. For instance, one day a boy came to the home of Sister Engracia Puñal in Toledo bearing a letter that invited her to return to a certain house to explain more about the Bible. She had visited there twice and had spoken to a woman, but now the husband wanted to speak to her. As things turned out, Engracia's son, Manolo, went there, along with Vicente

Páramo. A lady appeared at the door and said that she would call her husband. He came out and asked Manolo to show him the book he had. It was the Nacar-Colunga Bible. The man took it and said, "Since you are making wrong use of this book, if you want it back, you will have to go to the parish priest to get it tomorrow!" The man then resorted to crude language and struck Manolo, ordering the two Witnesses to leave.

The next day, Manolo went to the parish church to reclaim his Bible. There the priest attacked him in front of other persons, striking him several times. Then the cleric called the police and had him taken away. They also detained Manolo's mother, Engracia, and both of them were kept in prison for five days. While they were there, the police went to Engracia's house to search it, and Paz, her teen-age daughter, told them that her mother was in prison. Even they were taken aback to learn that she still was in prison, and they immediately telephoned to have her released. She had been held for five days, whereas the law permitted only a maximum of three without charges.

INTENSIFIED CLERGY AND POLICE ACTIVITY

Our increased house-to-house preaching work brought a reaction from the clergy, and especially from the Archbishop of Barcelona. He published a pastoral letter in the Official Bulletin of his diocese, but it was printed verbatim in three issues of the city's newspaper *La Vanguardia Española*, on March 19 to 21, 1954. The terms of the letter painted two classes as enemies of the Catholic Church—Protestants, who were seeking converts among the poor by offering them economic help, and others who were going from house to house offering books, booklets, magazines and tracts. Obviously, the latter reference was to Jehovah's Witnesses, although we were mentioned by name only once in this long pastoral letter.

The letter called upon the authorities to carry out the law and not permit public propaganda and proselytism by the Protestant sects. It went on to say: "We prudently tolerate the tares . . . but we cannot tolerate the sowing of the tares." In conclusion, five recommendations were made to the Catholic faithful, the last of which was: "Make use of the law. It is the last resort to be used, but which we must not and cannot renounce if the case arises, in order to impede the sowing of errors and heresies among the Catholics . . . At times the simple threat of this step will be sufficient to stop their efforts." The letter was ac-

companied by a circular describing the fight as a real crusade, with the archbishop himself "at the head of that Crusade for Catholic unity."

The radio, the schools, the churches and Catholic Action all took up the call against the Witnesses and advised the people to invite them into their homes—and then call the police. How the religious monopolists were trembling, and this at the activity of only some 130 publishers in all Barcelona! Missionaries Alvaro and Marina Berecochea both had 'close shaves' with priests and the police. On one occasion, Alvaro was visiting the Paralelo Congregation as circuit overseer and was witnessing with two publishers, Joaquín Vivancos and Eduardo Palau. At one point, these two publishers were making a return visit, but the lady became antagonistic and slammed the door in their faces. Then it appears that she phoned the police.

Meanwhile, Alvaro was keeping watch at the doorway of the building and saw two men running toward him. They shoved him inside, pushed him against the wall and searched him roughly, taking away his briefcase. Of course, they were secret police. One stayed with Alvaro while the other went upstairs and brought down Brothers Vivancos and Palau at gunpoint. All three were taken to the police station, but on the way Brother Palau surreptitiously tore up some notes and threw them away, just in case they contained names that could incriminate others. This time the brothers got away with a warning and the matter was not referred to the central police headquarters in the Via Layetana. Yes, it was a 'close shave'!

In Madrid the police also were stirred to more intensive activity against the Witnesses. During the period from 1953 to 1958 special pioneer Máximo Murcia was imprisoned on eleven different occasions for periods ranging from one night to one month. In that way he got to know several of the cold and dirty cells in the different police stations of the city.

MISSIONARY EXPELLED

Police vigilance also led to the expulsion of one of the Gilead missionaries in 1954. Because of exposure to the elements during the very bad winter weather that year while serving in Bilbao, Bernard Backhouse journeyed to Barcelona and stayed with the Miralles family. Then it was found that he had typhoid fever, which meant that he would have to remain with them for a fairly long time.

As in many apartments in Spain, water at the Miralles' home was heated by means of a small gas

heater that had a pilot light. One night while everyone was in bed the pilot light blew out, and slowly the apartment filled with gas. Somehow the daughter realized that something had happened and staggered to the door to call for help. An ambulance came and oxygen was administered to Sister Miralles and Brother Backhouse. Of course, this event caused a minor sensation in the neighborhood and also was reported in the newspapers, along with the names of those involved, which included Bernard Backhouse.

The following day an inspector of the secret police visited and made it clear to Brother Backhouse that he was persona non grata because of his known religious activities. Because of his state of health, he was not expelled at once, but upon recovery he had to leave Spain. His departure for Portugal left just four missionaries in Spain—Paul Baker in Palma de Mallorca, and Ken Williams and the Berecocheas in Barcelona.

It might be mentioned that even the rented post office box that the Society's branch office used did not remain inviolate at that time. It was broken into and the correspondence opened. As a consequence, when the police interrogated one of the special pioneers they were able to prove that she had communicated with the branch office by showing her photocopies of her own letters. So much for the law that said that all correspondence was inviolate!

FALANGE PRESS ATTACK

The 200 Kingdom publishers preaching in Spain in 1954 caused a panic reaction on the part of the Barcelona branch of the Falange political movement. Their monthly magazine for October of that year carried the front-page headline, "Red Light to Heresy! Jehovah's witnesses ring our doorbells in a diabolical attempt at subversion." The article on pages 8 and 9 included copies of pages from *Awake!* in Spanish, along with pages from two of our booklets. These certainly gave a more objective view of the Witnesses than the scurrilous article that accompanied them. The article even mentioned the names of Bernard Backhouse and John Cooke as the first important Witnesses sent to Spain to "sow the seeds of the sect in our Fatherland."

The two hundred witnesses of Jehovah were painted as pseudo-Spaniards because of having abandoned the Catholic Church. They were also depicted as Communist half-wits and sexual perverts! Other critical articles appeared in the magazine *Diez Minutos* and the paper *Heraldo de Aragón*. However, such attacks in no way served to diminish the zeal of the brothers.

A CONVENIENT BREAKDOWN

It was in August and September 1955 that Brother F. W. Franz came to Spain once again. One of the places he, along with Alvaro and Marina Berecochea, visited was Torralba de Calatrava. Since the visitors did not want to arouse suspicion, when they drew near Brother Pedro Garcia's workshop in that small town, Alvaro switched off the motor and stopped the car as if there had been a breakdown. He got out, lifted the hood, and acted as though something was wrong, then went over to a local resident and asked if there was any garage or workshop nearby. Of course, this led to Brother Garcia's house and workshop. Pedro came out to look at the engine and said it would be necessary to take the car into his garage, since the problem seemed to be a complicated one. Accordingly, the auto was taken into the workshop, the doors were closed . . . and then, what joy! There were embraces as the brothers who had been waiting in Pedro's house gathered around to greet their visitors.

When night had fallen, the visitors had to cross part of the town to get to where the meeting was to be held. In order not to draw attention to themselves, Alvaro and Brother Franz put on the berets typical of that area and also sheepskin coats. In the dark, they followed one of the sisters who led them to a granary where the congregation was waiting. In fact, they had been waiting for three hours, and yet they stayed for two or three hours more in order to listen to the talks and have fellowship with these visiting brothers. Finally, after supper, the three visitors drove their "repaired" car out of the garage and headed away under cover of darkness.

During this visit, Brother F. W. Franz also went to Palma de Mallorca. This visit took place on August 30, and seventy-five persons attended the meetings held there. That was an excellent total, since there were then only thirty-two publishers in Palma de Mallorca.

TAKEN PRISONER!

The following weekend was set aside for the assembly at Barcelona, actually a gathering to be held in a secret spot in the woods on Tibidabo mountain. Since the number attending was growing into the hundreds, Alvaro Berecochea began to get worried about the success and secrecy of the arrangement. His worries increased when a brother from Manresa told him that the police had searched his house that week and had taken away the *Informant* (now *Our Kingdom Service*) supplement that had announced this assembly

arrangement. Alvaro was more alarmed when one of the sisters told him that she had recognized a police inspector among those going to the assembly site. Furthermore, the man was dressed as if for a picnic. Brother Berecochea decided to consult with Brother Franz about what should be done. The reply? "Let's go ahead and trust to what Jehovah allows."

Among others, Brother Franz was on the program that morning. After he spoke there was an experience session directed by Antonio Brunet, Jr. He was interviewing elderly Brother Mariano Montori from Zaragoza when serious problems started. Paul Baker recalls: "He was just concluding his experience when I noticed a jeep pull up behind another vehicle in a clearing way down at the bottom of the slope behind the platform . . . Four men in picnic attire got out of the jeep and began to walk smartly up the slope toward the assembly point. Very soon, they broke into a run, with a little man in blue jeans and an open-necked shirt taking the lead. A number of the brothers had noticed this group by now and were wondering what this next *demonstration* was going to be all about. As the group got within earshot, the little man in front shouted at the top of his voice, 'Let nobody move or I'll fire!' He was waving a pistol . . . This was indeed a new *demonstration*. . . . The little man placed his companions at strategic points and gave instructions that all cameras were to be surrendered. Another confederate appeared who had been sitting among us and, by this time, everyone realized that this was a roundup by the secret police."

The men among us were taken in trucks to the police headquarters in Barcelona. While some brothers patiently waited for the trucks to return, since all could not go at once, they witnessed and, from the conversations, gathered that the police had thought they were raiding a political group! As it was, most of the men, including the foreigners, Brothers Franz, Berecochea, Williams and Baker, ended up at the police headquarters. The police obtained details regarding everybody, as well as their fingerprints. At the assembly site, the first thing they had done was to confiscate all the cameras, which were returned that night without any film in them. Thus they obtained a photographic record of many of the brothers, and they also made sure that no incriminating photographs would appear later on in the foreign press.

During the interrogations, the brothers began to notice that something abnormal was occurring among the police. What had happened? Well, Alvaro Berecochea's mother and sister-in-law had escaped from

the assembly site and had gone to the American Consulate to report the arrest of F. W. Franz, an American citizen. The consul had got in touch with the police, and, of course, this kind of publicity was the last thing they wanted. Hence, all the foreigners were set free except Alvaro.

Brother Berecochea was taken to his lodgings where a search was undertaken. However, nothing was found because of a set of circumstances. Brother Francisco Serrano had managed to evade the police and was back at his house early that afternoon. At the same time, Sister Teresa Royo, on her way to the assembly for the afternoon session, called at Francisco's home and learned of the police raid. Since she lived in the apartment in front of the lodging place of Alvaro and Marina, Francisco told her to rush back and get the files out of there and hide them. This she did with the help of Teresa Carbonell. So it was that the police went away virtually empty-handed. They were dealing with "doves" that proved to be as cautious as serpents. —Matt. 10:16.

What effect did this police attack have on the brothers and interested persons? Well, no further action was taken against the brothers, although a tiny minority became victims of fear of man. Perhaps also fearing some economic repercussions, they broke off association with Jehovah's people. The remainder, however, were strengthened, invigorated and united more firmly by the experience.

Thus the work did not slow down. During 1955 we enjoyed a peak of 366 publishers, whereas 1956 saw a new peak of 514, an increase of 35 percent over the previous year. Special pioneers rose in number from 12 to 21, and the number of Gilead School missionaries from four to nine. The spirit was one of increased activity in every respect.

During the period from 1955 to 1957 the work at the branch office was being attended to by Alvaro Berecochea, helped by Ken Williams and Domenick Piccone. After the Tibidabo assembly raid, Alvaro continued to do the office work from his lodgings, and then, about September 1956, the office was moved to the home of Francisco and Antonia Rodríguez. On the other hand, the work of sending out packets of literature was handled from a small room that Brother Brunet had made available in his radio shop.

ON THE ROAD AS A TRAVELING OVERSEER

During the mid-1950's, Alvaro Berecochea served as a circuit overseer for a time. He sought to upbuild the

brothers spiritually, but he also encountered some problems.

For instance, the Barbastro "congregation" had disappeared! How was that possible? Well, it existed only on paper. Lack of organization and experience had resulted in counting as publishers people who were not even associating with Jehovah's organization, much less preaching the good news. Nevertheless, Nemesio Orús and his boys certainly were making an effort to give a witness, especially in an informal way while engaging in business as traveling watch repairers.

A rather memorable circuit visit was the first one Alvaro Berecochea ever made to Torralba de Calatrava. He traveled to Daimiel by train from Madrid, arriving about 10 p.m. Three brothers were on hand at the station, but he could see no means of transport to cover the fifteen kilometers (9 miles) to Torralba. But then he saw three bicycles. Yes, three bikes for four persons! They had it all figured out. Each of them would take turns giving the circuit overseer a ride on the crossbar that connects the handlebars to the seat. It was a cold, moonless winter night, and as they traveled, the silence was punctuated by grunts and groans and occasional breathless stops to change over the "load" as the shadowy figures made their way across the countryside.

Despite the hardships of the journey, the visit turned out to be a spiritual blessing to the small congregation in Torralba. And it seems fitting to add that over the years the influence of the small group of Christians in that little town of 5,000 inhabitants has spread into many parts of Spain as once-illiterate shepherds learned to read and write and moved to areas where they could expand their service to Jehovah.

THE 1950'S—A DECADE OF PIONEER EXPANSION

Many Kingdom proclaimers were reaching out for greater service privileges during the 1950's. So it was that the number of full-time publishers rose from one in 1950 to 102 in 1960. During the same period the number of special pioneers rose from none to 40. Both Barcelona and Madrid were notable in producing full-time proclaimers of the good news during this period.

What was being accomplished by the pioneers? Well, consider what took place in the province of Málaga. Late in 1957, Carmen Novaes and Anita Berdún began serving there, as the first pioneers in that vicinity since 1936, when Frank Taylor had visited Manuel Oliver Rosado. Of course, Brother Oliver had lost contact

with the organization and the sisters knew nothing about him. He was not "rediscovered" until some years later, about 1964. However, Carmen and Anita worked hard, and within eight months fifteen persons were attending the Watchtower study, and six Kingdom publishers were participating with them in field service.

Was there a great need for pioneer activity in those days? Indeed there was! To illustrate: In 1956 there were 514 publishers active in declaring the good news, but they were found chiefly in Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia and Palma de Mallorca. Thus, only four of the fifty provincial capitals were receiving an organized witness. Therefore, one can appreciate that Jehovah's hand has not been short in the Spanish field, because twenty-one years later, in 1977, there were over 482 Kingdom Halls spread throughout Spain's fifty provinces. This speaks well for the industrious activity of congregation publishers, pioneers and special pioneers in Spain!

UPBUILT BY FURTHER VISITS

Certainly Jehovah's hand was not short with reference to the interest shown regarding Spain by members of the Governing Body. Their visits were a regular uplift to the brothers who were now experiencing constant harassment at their meetings and in the field service. The favorite weapon of the Church was to have the "faithful" call the police and denounce the brothers. This amounted to an admission that their average churchgoer was not equipped to defend his beliefs from the Bible.

In November 1956, Brother F. W. Franz visited Spain once again. He divided his stay of five days between Madrid and Barcelona, speaking to several groups in both cities. In contrast with the events of 1955, everything went smoothly and the meetings were not interrupted. This visit was held in strict secrecy, so that even the brothers did not know of it until he was there. In this way, problems with the authorities were avoided.

During January 1957, Brother N. H. Knorr spent five days in Spain as part of his tour of Europe and the Middle East. His report on that visit said, in part:

"Persons who represent the Society in Barcelona are very energetic and have organized the brothers into small groups or congregations, appointing servants over all of these groups. It was my good pleasure to speak to all the groups in Barcelona. Some evenings I talked from five o'clock until eleven, giving five one-hour discourses in different homes, meeting with

small groups. It was a joy to see the happiness of the faces of these brothers and their delight in hearing the truth and to associate with one another. . . .

"After a very pleasant time with our brothers in Barcelona I went on to Madrid, spending one day with our brothers there. I spoke to various small congregations, four of them in one evening . . . a work is now started in Spain that will never die out, for the brothers there are zealous. They want to preach, and God is blessing them."

MORE POLICE HARASSMENT

For one to be found just carrying Bible literature was enough to bring arrest during the years of harassment. For instance, in Madrid four pioneers coming out of a sister's house were picked up by the *Guardia Civil* and were taken to the local police station. The pioneers had not preached in that neighborhood that day, but someone had seen them enter that house and had denounced them for distributing anti-Catholic propaganda. The police sergeant said that the fact that they were carrying this literature in his district meant that he had to report the case to the General Security Bureau.

In another instance, a pioneer who went to the railway station to inquire about train schedules was asked by a policeman to present his identity card. When he could not produce it, his briefcase was searched and Bible literature was found. For this "offense" he was fined 500 pesetas or a month in prison. He chose the month in prison.

On other occasions the persecution clearly was from religious enemies, as was the case with Carlos Rubiño, an eighteen-year-old pioneer who was seriously ill with a heart ailment. In the hospital the nuns were constantly pestering him to confess and take Communion. The priest brought along an image and said: "You are dying. Your only hope is to kiss it, confess to me and receive the last rites." Although he could speak only in a whisper, Carlos refused and asked the priest to show him where this procedure was commanded in the Bible. Angrily, the priest turned to Carlos' mother and asked: "What kind of religion is this?" She, although not a Witness, quickly answered: "The Bible religion." At that, the priest stalked out, instructing the nuns to burn the Bible that Carlos had, which happened to be a Catholic *Nacar-Colunga Version*! Instead, the mother hid it and took it home. She had seen enough of false religion's fruitage!

Yes, Carlos died, but he had been faithful to his

convictions. The next problem arose when his parents arranged for a civil burial. As a result the father was obliged to give up his job as a government employee and was also put out of his house. In later years, both the mother and the father accepted the truth, and their other two sons have continued serving Jehovah faithfully. The younger one, Ricardo Rubiño, spent six years in prison for maintaining his Christian integrity.

Harassment of the brothers and sisters included such things as their not being granted passports, needed so that they could attend Christian assemblies in France or Morocco. Literally scores of Witnesses were not able to travel to such assemblies because they were listed in the police records as Jehovah's Witnesses. To this day, young unmarried sisters over sixteen years of age cannot get a passport unless they attend social service courses for three months. These courses require nightly attendance and have included political and religious instruction, as well as social service activities in hospitals and similar institutions.

MISSIONARIES ORDERED TO LEAVE

Ever since the events of September 1955 and the abortive Tibidabo assembly of hundreds, Alvaro Berecochea had feared that the police would take action to expel him and his wife, Marina, from the country. A test of the situation occurred in the summer of 1956 when Marina was invited to London for a two-week vacation. Because she had residence in Spain, she had to request an exit visa from the police headquarters in Barcelona.

After a two-hour wait, a plainclothes policeman came up to her and asked why she wanted to go to London. She explained. Then came a barrage of questions, as he said: "Do you believe in that religion of your husband? You know what happened in Tibidabo . . . Are you of that religion? Do you believe in those Bible fables? Do you believe that Elijah made fire come down from heaven?" She answered, "Yes." "Look," he replied, "what really happened was that Elijah was a wise guy, and all he did was slyly fill the trench with petrol and then set it alight. Only idiots believe that it was a miracle." And so the conversation continued. At the end, the policeman pointed to a file and said: "In there we have information about your husband that goes against you as well." In spite of all of this, however, Marina was granted permission to go to London.

In January 1957 the Berecocheas had to present

themselves at police headquarters to request the renewal of their two-year residence permit. After a long wait, they were called into an office and told that they had forty-eight hours to arrange their affairs and get out of the country. Alvaro protested vigorously, but all to no avail. They obtained one concession—they would have ten days instead of two.

Faced with this emergency, Alvaro left the branch office matters in the hands of Ken Williams. Then, the Berecocheas set off for Madrid by train. Hundreds of brothers were at the station to see them off, and for all it was a sad occasion. Once in Madrid, Alvaro went to the Argentine Embassy (for he was an Argentinean) and explained his situation. Due to the Embassy's intervention, the Spanish authorities granted him a month's extension and the deadline then was February 18. Having obtained a visa to go to Portugal, he made arrangements to take one of the Society's motion pictures around the north of Spain.

Upon arriving back in Madrid, Brother Berecochea found a letter assigning him to go to Morocco instead of Portugal. This meant that he would have to go back to the police and request a different exit visa. Instead of going to the person in charge of exit visas, with whom he had spoken at length on a previous occasion, Brother Berecochea went to the normal dispatch counter, explained his need and was told to return the next day. Upon returning, he found that his visa had been extended by another month. The police office organization certainly was not infallible! Now the deadline for leaving the country was March 18. Not one to waste time, Brother Berecochea made arrangements to show the Society's film in the south and then work his way back to Barcelona.

TRAPPED AND EXPELLED

Upon arrival in Barcelona, Alvaro and Marina booked into a pension and then decided to visit their old lodgings at the home of Teresa Carbonell. They had the key to the door, but before entering they asked Christian sisters who were neighbors if the police had been around lately. "No," they said. "Things have been quiet." With that, the Berecocheas went across the hallway to their old apartment, opened the door, and, to their disagreeable surprise, found the police there!

The police wanted to clap handcuffs on the Berecocheas, but they promised not to escape. They were taken to the police headquarters in the Via Layetana and were confronted by a furious police chief.

"We gave you forty-eight hours to get out of here," he thundered, "and two months later you are still here!" Alvaro's explanations were to no avail.

A call was put through to Madrid and instructions came back that the Berecocheas were to be expelled immediately. Alvaro insisted that it had to be via the Algeciras frontier in order to get to Morocco. So, they were escorted by a secret policeman all the way from Barcelona to Algeciras, a distance of 1,450 kilometers (900 miles). When they were aboard the ship, he gave them back their passports. That was on March 11, 1957.

BACK TO SPAIN!

In Morocco, Alvaro Berecochea served as branch overseer. Some months later he was asked to make a trip to Portugal and Spain. In order to obtain an entry visa, he went to the Spanish Consulate in Vienna, Austria, where it was granted. Now in order to pass through the border, he went by car with his parents through France and entered by Irún. The border police raised no questions, and once again he was in Spain.

Stops were made in Madrid and Barcelona. By December 5, 1957, Alvaro was in Valencia and showed the Society's film "The Happiness of the New World Society" to a group of twenty-three persons. The following evening, he attended another Christian meeting, and halfway through it there was a violent knocking at the door. When the door was opened, in stepped three members of the secret police with their pistols drawn. After a quick check of their identity cards, the seven brothers were arrested. However, Margarita Comas was allowed to leave with the other sisters, and she immediately went off to hide the film equipment.

The seven brothers were taken to the police station where they were interrogated. When it came to Alvaro's turn, he was asked if he knew Cooke and Backhouse and others. Since his answers did not satisfy the interrogators, they got angry and threatened to punch him. It was evident, however, that they did not know that he had been expelled previously, and they were taking him for a tourist. At about 3 a.m. the Argentine consul turned up at the police station, and this infuriated the police, although they were careful not to manifest their feelings in front of him. Alvaro was released, with orders to come back the next day to pick up his passport.

When Brother Berecochea returned the following day the situation was grave. They had discovered that he had been expelled in March and they were furious. He was arrested and put in solitary confinement where

the bed was of stone and there was only a small barred opening in the door. After a few hours, the guard came, opened the door and took him to a place where there were some packets and blankets on the table. "Your brothers have sent you this," he was told. Food, blankets and other items had been provided by the Valencia Congregation as a display of its Christian love and concern.

Some time later, Brother Berecochea was subjected to another interrogation. It had been determined that he would be sent out of the country through France, but he asked to go to Portugal. There was agreement on this, but he was told that he would have to wait in prison until they had a pair of civil guards available to accompany him. That idea did not appeal to Alvaro at all. The consul had warned him about persons that went to prison and never were heard of again. So, Brother Berecochea asked to speak to the Argentine consul and was allowed to contact him by phone. Alarmed by the new turn of events, the consul said that he would intervene immediately.

Alvaro was taken back to his cell. But late that night he was advised that he would be getting a plane from Valencia airport the next day. He was released, but was told that he would have to return the next day to pick up his passport.

Immediately, Brother Berecochea went to the brothers and found that they had been fined 1,500 pesetas or thirty days in jail. They had all agreed not to pay the fine, for they had committed no crime.

On the following day, December 9, 1957, Alvaro Berecochea flew to Madrid, and from there to Lisbon, Portugal. Thus ended his Spanish missionary service that had spanned four joyful and blessed years. Now others would have to carry on in directing the work.

PERSECUTION IN PALMA DE MALLORCA

Our activities were being carried on under adverse circumstances, with opposition and religious persecution besetting us on all sides. For instance, in 1954 Brother Paul Baker, who was serving as a missionary in Palma de Mallorca, had his first warning about his religious activities at the school where he was teaching English. One day he was called into the office of the principal, who told him confidentially that the police had been around inquiring about him. They wanted to know if he had been teaching religion in school. The principal had been able to give a good report, since Paul had been tactful and deliberately had not used school

hours to bring up the subject of religion. However, Paul was grateful for the warning.

One day in April 1957 Francisco Córdoba, a special pioneer assigned to Palma de Mallorca, failed to appear at the meeting for field service. The brothers thought little of this until he did not show up at the meeting that night. The following day the brothers checked at his lodgings and found that he had not returned the night before. When all other possibilities had been eliminated, it was decided that a sister should go to the police and inquire about him. Sure enough, he had been arrested along with the brother who was preaching with him. Food could be left for them, but they could not be visited.

The time was approaching for the celebration of the Memorial, and the arrangements made for the various groups took into account the possibility that Paul Baker also might not be available, since police action seemed imminent. Well, a day or so later a plainclothes policeman appeared at the pension where Brother Baker was living and escorted him to the police station. There, on more than one occasion, Paul was interrogated and then presented with a typed version of his answers. He was asked to verify the contents and then sign the document of several pages. Having done this, Brother Baker was taken down to the cells and at last found himself with Brother Córdoba and his field service companion. The brothers had to spend the night in the "calaboose," and the next day they were sent before a judge. Interestingly, however, they were assigned a police guard who took keen interest in the case and asked them many questions.

The hearing did not take place in a courtroom, but rather in the judge's office, and the brothers were alone with him and the guard. Tactfully, they explained how they carried on their preaching work. The judge found their teachings harmless, but said they had transgressed by participating in proselytism. However, the time already spent in prison had served as an adequate warning to them, he thought, and he would not pass any further sentence, advising them to be more discreet in the future.

The police guard was delighted with the result, but he had to take the brothers back to the prison so that they could pick up their belongings. The guard took them to the officer in charge of the cells and announced their release. However, the other officer muttered that there was something else pending, and they again were put under lock and key.

Some hours later, Paul was taken from the cell to the interrogation room. There he found out what the "something else" was. A parcel had arrived for Paul from Barcelona and it was marked "radio," but actually contained fifty copies of the latest *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines in Spanish. So, in addition to the other false charges, Brother Baker now was accused of smuggling!

Paul appealed to reason, asking how this could be contraband if it came from the Spanish mainland and not from another country. Furthermore, he said that there was no law forbidding subscribers to receive their copies, and these were not for public distribution, but for subscribers. Nonetheless, all was in vain. The outcome was another night in prison. As matters turned out, the three Kingdom proclaimers were sent to the Provincial Prison of Palma de Mallorca for fifteen days.

In this prison a new territory was opened up to them. They could mix freely with the other prisoners and thus give a witness. When the Memorial date arrived, their thoughts were with the brothers on the outside. And, when they came out of prison on April 26 there was a little group of brothers and sisters to greet them. These Witnesses had held the Memorial in three groups in spite of the absence of the two qualified brothers, Paul Baker and Francisco Córdoba.

MORE "INVITATIONS TO LEAVE"

Upon returning to the pension, Brother Baker found that all his Spanish, French and English magazines had been taken by the police. The next morning, when he went to breakfast, he noticed a conspicuous stranger drinking coffee nearby. He was a secret policeman sent to watch him.

What happened to the special pioneer, Francisco Córdoba? He was banished from the island and had to return to the Spanish mainland.

On Friday, May 3, 1957, Paul Baker married Jean Smith in the British Consulate in Palma. For their honeymoon, they traveled across the island to Alcudia and then got a boat to Menorca. Wherever they went they always had somebody "shadowing" them. Not the ideal circumstances for a honeymoon!

Toward the end of May, Paul applied for a renewal of his residence permit. After several visits to the police headquarters, he was told that his permit was not going to be renewed and that he should inform them of the date he intended to leave. He booked pas-

sage on a boat leaving Barcelona for Gibraltar on June 12.

Even after arriving in Barcelona, Brother and Sister Baker still were being "shadowed" by secret policemen in obvious disguises. For example, they had booked into a hotel on a back street, and the next morning a "sailor" sporting a shirt bearing the name of their ship happened to be lounging across the road. It was obvious that Paul was considered a highly dangerous character. Of course, these events took place shortly after the Berecocheas' first expulsion, and the police thought they were getting rid of the "leaders."

When the Bakers got to the dock on their last day in Spain, some brothers from the Barcelona congregations were waiting to say good-bye. On hand, too, were four missionaries who remained in Barcelona—Brother and Sister Ken Williams and Domenick and Elsa Piccone. Even then, their own days in Spain were numbered and they, too, soon were to be expelled from the country.

By the end of the 1957 service year the number of Gilead School graduates still in Spain had dropped from nine to four. It was considered wise to transfer the "office" from Barcelona to Madrid.

PIONEERS IMPRISONED

The clergy continued to goad their flocks into denouncing to the police any witnesses of Jehovah presenting themselves at their doors. As a result, during the 1957 service year thirteen pioneers and six publishers were arrested and spent from two to thirty-six days in prison for preaching and for associating in their Bible study meetings.

Pioneers were imprisoned in Sevilla, for example. In March 1957, Margarita Comas and Maruja Puñal were assigned to Sevilla, where special pioneers José Rubiño and Manolo Sierra already were working. The informal Andalusian character was hard to get accustomed to, since one would make arrangements for a Bible study or a return visit only to find that the person had made other plans later and was not home. Then, too, it was necessary to deal with the fanatical element. Sevilla is a city given to the worship of "Our Lady," in the form of two famous "Virgins" or images, *la Macarena* and the *Virgen de la Esperanza*. These two images have their followers and believers, like a pair of rival football teams. The zealots of each "Virgin" sing her praises in competition with each other, especially during the procession times when these jewel-laden images are paraded through the

streets. In this city, the largest church is the cathedral, which is built on the site of a former Moslem mosque. The tower of the cathedral is called *La Giralda* (The Weathercock or Vane), and one can clearly see that the first two thirds of the tower was a Moslem minaret, while the top third is of Renaissance style and obviously of Catholic inspiration.

The four pioneers in Sevilla followed the routine of meeting each morning in the plaza in front of the famous *Torre del Oro* (Golden Tower). One day the girls turned up, but the brothers did not make an appearance. The sisters thought this was rather strange, but decided to wait until the afternoon meeting time and then, from a distance, watch to see if the brothers would arrive. But there still was no sign of them. The next day, Margarita and Maruja went to the brothers' lodgings and discreetly inquired about them. The lady of the house explained how the police had been there two days earlier and had taken the brothers away.

Their suspicions now confirmed, the sisters knew that the police would show up at their lodgings at any moment. So, that day they took the precautionary step of destroying any confidential notes or papers. That night the sisters went back to their lodgings with heavy hearts, and when the landlady opened the door they could tell by her face that they had visitors. Two policemen were waiting for them.

Even though it was night, the sisters were taken to the police station to be interrogated. The brothers already were there and had undergone interrogation for two days. These interrogations were made more difficult by the fact that the Sevilla police had received information from the police in Granada, where José Rubiño formerly had served. The police had photographs taken from the Witnesses in Granada, as well as papers found at the lodgings of the pioneer brothers. During the interrogations, which alternated between the two brothers, the police tried to learn the identity of the responsible brothers and where they were located. José and Manolo were kept in separate cold cells, with a stone bench for a bed, but at first they were not even allowed to sleep, as the interrogations dragged on hour after hour.

Likewise, the sisters had a difficult time during the interrogations. They had to be careful with their responses, since the police tried to put answers into their mouths. For example, when the sisters declared that they were preaching the kingdom or government of God, the interrogator said: "Then you are against all established human government. That is what you

mean." The sisters denied this interpretation of their beliefs, for it was an attempt to put a political slant on the activities of Jehovah's Witnesses.

After being interrogated, the sisters were put in a very small cell with a drunken woman who was vomiting all the time. The stench was terrible, and it appeared they would have to spend the rest of the night there. But when the hour was quite late, a policeman came along and took them out, saying that he was not going to allow them to spend the night that way. He took them to his office and told them to sleep in the armchairs there until the next morning. The sisters silently gave thanks to Jehovah for this kind jailer and for their release from that awful cell.

The sisters were held for thirty-six hours without food, with one questioning after another, as if they were criminals of the lowest sort. However, another policeman had pity on them and brought them coffee. Finally, both the brothers and the sisters were taken to the provincial prison, there to face new trials.

Upon arriving at the prison, the two pioneer brothers had their heads shaved before being taken to their cell. Then, each day there was the test of integrity during the raising and lowering of the flag.

NUNS AS JAILERS!

The sisters received quite a surprise when they arrived in prison, for the jailers were nuns! At the reception desk, a nun asked them what they had stolen. That was the last straw for Margarita! She exclaimed: "We are not here as prostitutes or thieves! We are here for being witnesses of the true God!" At that, the nun let out a scream of astonishment and quickly withdrew as if the plague had struck.

At this prison, the nuns led the inmates in daily recitals of the 'Our Father,' 'Hail Mary,' and so forth. During the exercise period, the nuns would tell stories to the prisoners, dance with them and recite the rosary. Margarita and Maruja set about giving a witness, but this soon was cut short by the nuns, who prohibited their speaking to other prisoners.

After their case had been considered, it was decided that the sisters could be freed by paying a bail of 1,000 pesetas each. Since they did not have the money, and there was no one in Sevilla to help them, they spent the month in prison. It was not a pleasant experience, for they were assigned to a large hall with all the other prisoners—mainly thieves, prostitutes and lesbians. When Maruja and Margarita refused to undress and take a shower in front of the others, they

were compelled to pass their time in a punishment cell that was just two meters (6.5 feet) square. It had a hole in the corner that served as a toilet, and a small window in the ceiling. There was no furniture, no bed or chair, and no mattress. Out of sympathy, one of the guards brought them a quart of water with which the two of them could wash.

What about food? It was unpalatable, to say the least. Twice a day the sisters were given garbanzo beans with so much bicarbonate of soda that it made them ill. And each of them was given only one piece of bread a day.

By the end of a month in prison, the four pioneers were able to pay the 1,000 pesetas bail each. Thus they were released, but with the accusations still pending. In actual fact, their case never came to court, and they were able to recover the money they had deposited.

It might be mentioned that the special pioneers got used to being hounded by the police and having to move from one city to another as a consequence. If a special pioneer could not explain his source of income or prove that he had a secular job, the vagrancy law was invoked and he was sent back to his city of origin.

SEEDS OF TRUTH ARE SOWN IN GALICIA

Despite the persecution being experienced by God's people in Spain, the Kingdom-preaching work was making advancement. One area where this was true was the province of Galicia in northwestern Spain. How were the seeds of truth planted there?

True Christianity got a foothold in Galicia because of the efforts of Jesús Pose Varela and his wife. They had learned the truth through a relative while living in Montevideo, Uruguay. As time went by and their knowledge increased, Jesús began to feel a responsibility toward his sister and her husband, and his own son, José, living back in Spain. So in 1957 Jesús and his wife returned to their native Galicia determined to share God's truth with their relatives. At first they were received joyfully, but the situation changed drastically when it was realized that they had come back with a new religion. Jesús' mother even said that it would have been better if the boat that brought them back had sunk. His mother and sister avoided all contact with him, although they were all living in the same house.

Jesús persisted, however, and slowly broke down the barrier of blind prejudice, eventually being able to start a Bible study. All of this was not easy because

they were living in a small isolated village dominated by the local priest. Because of priestly influence, many of the people did not even want to touch a Bible for fear of being contaminated. Nevertheless, Jesús' patience paid off with his own family, and with long-term effects that even he could not have foreseen.

As these individuals made progress in the truth, they came to realize that living in that isolated rural area was not the best way to give a witness. When they accepted the truth they converted a dance hall they had maintained into a chicken barn. Thus their economic support came from their small farm and animals, as well as from a general store that was in the same building. Jesús and his brother-in-law, Ramón Barca, looked after the farm and kept the store going.

In order to get to any sizable territory, however, they had to travel to the city of La Coruña, thirty-one kilometers (19 miles) away. This did not facilitate matters when Ramón's wife became a regular pioneer and Jesús' son, José, became a special pioneer. Finally, both families sold the farm and the store and moved to the provincial capital, where they could be of greater use to the growing congregation.

Looking back now, it seems remarkable that the present three congregations in La Coruña, with some 300 publishers and pioneers, got their start some twenty years ago due to the earnest efforts of a Spanish couple who had come back from Uruguay with the intention of spreading the good news.

SOME COME TO SERVE WHERE THE NEED IS GREAT

In July 1957, at a district assembly in Kiel, Germany, one of the talks was on the theme of serving where the need is great. That talk greatly affected two young German regular pioneers—Horst Mieling and Heinrich Nissen. They decided to come to Spain. And that they did, arriving in Barcelona by train on October 19, 1957.

It was quite a contrast, coming from a country with nearly 57,000 Witnesses to one with only 780. Moreover, just using the word "Bible" in Spain was enough to end a conversation. But one advantage these brothers had was that, in general, the Spanish were quite interested in Germany and Germans.

As it is, these brothers were virtually the first of a long line of Witnesses who have come mainly from Germany, Britain and the United States to serve in Spain, where the need for Kingdom proclaimers has been so great, especially in past years.

A feature that made our work more of a strain for the foreigners was the need for constant vigilance

when working from house to house. If a foreigner was caught, it meant almost certain expulsion from the country. This imposed an extra tension, that of carefully watching the reactions of the householder during a discussion and after giving a witness. When the door was closed, the Witness had to determine whether the phone was used by the householder. Was the door slammed or closed politely? Also, it was necessary to be on the lookout for any neighbors leaving the building in a hurry, possibly going to call the police. Of course, it also was quite important to make sure that there were no police in the neighborhood where a person was preaching. The Bible and our literature had to be carried unobtrusively, perhaps under a raincoat or overcoat in the winter months. In summertime, however, it was not so easy to conceal the publications. So, some publishers even broke up the books into signatures or sections and would only carry the section that was going to be studied at a meeting or during a Bible study.

In 1959 Brother and Sister Taylor, who had moved from England to Spain to serve where the need was great, were assigned as special pioneers to Vigo, a port in northwest Spain. It was thought that since this was an international port, he would not be so noticeable as a foreigner. But it did not take long for the priests to get stirred up and warn their parishioners over the radio about this couple going from door to door. They were easy to identify—she was Spanish and did most of the talking, and he was a foreigner.

Before long the police made an appearance and arrested the Taylors. They were taken to the police station and interrogated all day long, while being deprived of food. When they were released, their passports were withheld and they were told to report to the police every Tuesday and Saturday. When Ron reported his case to the British Consul, his passport was returned and he was given fifteen days to leave the country.

As matters turned out, Ron and his wife Rafaela served in Gibraltar for two years. There they were able to lay the foundation for a congregation that had twenty-five publishers when they left. Finally, pressure from the Anglican clergy got results and, in December 1961, they were asked to leave Gibraltar, along with Ray and Pat Kirkup, an English couple who had also moved there to serve where the need was great.

The Taylors and Kirkups were assigned to Sevilla in January 1962. There already were four special pioneers there, but there were only twenty-one publishers

for a population of nearly half a million. So, there was much work to do. In 1963 Ron Taylor was assigned to the circuit work in Barcelona, and some time later Ray Kirkup received a similar assignment. All through the years there had been a shortage of qualified Spanish brothers for the circuit and district work in Spain, and therefore many foreigners were used for this work.

MORE HELP ARRIVES FROM GILEAD SCHOOL

During the 1958 service year the missionary couple Bob and Cleo Clay left Spain for Morocco, so that for a month or two there were only two Gilead missionaries left here. Reinforcements came in March 1958, however, with the arrival of René and Elsie Vázquez and two single brothers who came with the purpose of establishing regular circuit visits to the congregations for the first time.

The 1958 service year saw an increase of 33 percent here in Spain. For the first time we passed the 1,000-publisher mark. That was in August 1958, when 1,006 publishers reported field service. It had taken eleven years (since the revitalizing of the work in 1947) to reach that figure. But only three years thereafter we reached 2,000 publishers, and in another two years we passed the 3,000-publisher mark. By 1969 the total number of active Witnesses was almost 9,000. From that time onward the increase has snowballed to some 40,000 Kingdom proclaimers in the territories under the Spanish branch.

CANARY ISLANDS BEGIN TO SING JEHOVAH'S PRAISE

Off the west coast of Africa lies a group of thirteen islands that are Spanish territory. Of these, seven are the principal isles of the Canary Islands—Tenerife, La Palma, Gomera, Hierro, Gran Canaria, Lanzarote and Fuerteventura. In 1958 the total population was about 940,000.

When did the truth first reach these islands after the Civil War? In 1958 when an interested person moved there from Barcelona. In September of that year Carl Warner went there as a circuit overseer and gave the first Bible talk to be presented by one of Jehovah's Witnesses. The attendance was six—a small beginning, but at least a beginning. This took place in the provincial capital, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. Carl recommended that special pioneers be sent there. That was not immediately possible, but help did come from another source.

At the 1958 Divine Will International Assembly in New York city, Brother Knorr gave a talk on serving

where the need is great. His remarks were heard and heeded by a Danish family, the Gjedes. They decided to leave Denmark and settle in the Canary Islands, together with their twenty-one-year-old son, John. He went to the islands first in February 1959 to look over the situation for his parents, and certainly was delighted to find that Irvin People, an American brother, already was there for the same reason. At first they both stayed with an interested family that had moved there.

To start off, these brothers had the same problem—the language. This was solved by an unusual coincidence. One day, while looking for an address in order to make a return visit, they stopped a man in the street to ask him the way. It turned out that he was a teacher and also the owner of a school. They struck up a conversation and found that he needed someone to teach English at his school. Well, they needed someone to teach them Spanish. So, they made a deal. He would teach them Spanish if they would teach English at his school. At the same time, this opened up a new field of contacts for Irvin and John that eventually resulted in a family of Kingdom publishers, the Suárez family, whose daughter, Angelines, later became a special pioneer.

Another development occurred that was to be decisive in the later history of our work in the Canary Islands. In Madrid, José Orzáez married Pilar (Pili) Benito in April 1959, and by the following May they were in the islands serving as special pioneers.

Upon arriving in Las Palmas, José Orzáez found that the group was dominated by a crippled man who had first received a witness in Barcelona and now was teaching his own ideas, based loosely on the Society's literature. When José began directing the meetings in accordance with normal procedures, this man and his wife fell away from the truth. Here was a classic example, repeated so many times, of an individual who wanted to be important and desired to exalt himself by his teaching. As in so many cases, when he found that his self-importance was not appreciated, he dropped the truth and went to the things behind, in spite of attempts to help him.

In the meantime, John Gjede's parents had arrived from Denmark. Now the group activity thrived with the example of the special pioneers, and by April 1960 the six publishers had grown to twenty-one. By December they had reached a new peak of twenty-nine. Of course, all this activity was not going unnoticed by opposers, who made their presence felt in December 1960.

BIBLE STUDY GROUP RAIDED

On the night of December 24, 1960, seventeen brothers and interested persons were gathered together for Bible study in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. Among them were José Orzáez, his wife Pili, their three-month-old daughter, and the circuit overseer, Salvador Adriá. At 8:30 p.m. five policemen burst into the apartment, holding pistols concealed in their pockets. One snarled at José Orzáez, the lessee of the apartment, that it was his custom to enter such meetings with his gun blazing.

Not only did the police break in; the place also was surrounded by them. Why, it was as if they were raiding a meeting of anarchists or clandestine communists, instead of a peaceful Bible study group!

As any policeman knows, the first thing to do when dealing with criminals is to disarm them. That is what was done in this raid. They confiscated all the Bibles! Then they took the names of the children and sent them home. The fourteen adults and José's baby daughter all were herded to police headquarters. They were given no food that night or the next morning in spite of the infant's cries of hunger. Repeated pleas for the release of the mother and baby were ignored.

Another vital step when apprehending criminals is to take their fingerprints. Thus all fourteen were fingerprinted, but, mercifully, not the baby. After eighteen hours without sleep or food, the Witnesses were released, with the exception of José Orzáez and Salvador Adriá, the circuit overseer. They were thrown into a dark, dirty cell where there was nothing but a stone bench. The two brothers then prayed together. At eight o'clock that night they were taken to the court, still without having had any food. They had been without anything to eat for twenty-four hours. Finally, at 11 p.m., they were subjected to interrogation, a questioning that lasted three hours. The interrogators consisted of the judge, his secretary and the prosecutor. Their questions revolved around an attempt to establish that José had been sent to the Canary Islands as a leader and founder of the "sect" in the islands. Moreover, it was insinuated that the activities of the Witnesses were subversive.

The interrogation over, the brothers were taken to that small, bedless cell where three men already were sleeping on the floor. The next morning they were moved to the provincial prison and put in solitary confinement in parasite-ridden cells. Request for a Bible was refused, and, alone in his cell, José Orzáez had time to meditate. He wondered how this small

group of twenty-nine publishers would react after this attack upon them.

What could have motivated this police action that affected not only the Canary Islands but also many other parts of Spain? Normally, the police would not act on their own volition in such cases, since they have plenty to do with more important matters. With our case the cycle of action starts with the clergy, who notify their bishops of the activity of Jehovah's Witnesses. They, in turn, inform the civil governor, who activates the police. The Hierarchy also informs the Ministry of the Interior and this Ministry advises all the police headquarters around the country. There is actual official evidence to the effect that such factors were behind the police raid on the peaceful Bible study group in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, as well as actions against God's people elsewhere in Spain.

OUTCOME OF THE ORZAEZ CASE

After being detained during the days of his interrogation, José Orzáez was released. He was relieved to find that the Bible study group was in good spirits and that his wife and baby daughter had been cared for during his absence. Brother Orzáez had been released without paying bail, since he had no financial resources, and he had to wait until October 1961 for his trial to take place.

In the meantime, the *Awake!* article entitled "Totalitarian Inquisition Revived in Spain" was published simultaneously in English and Spanish in the issue of September 8, 1961. Toward the end of September, José was called to police headquarters again, and wondered what the reason was this time. He soon found out, for the police started to read to him the *Awake!* article just mentioned. They were furious to find themselves so openly exposed to world opinion, and they started to call him a liar. José began to wish that the earth would open up and swallow him. He wondered whether he would get out alive, for there were six angry policemen around him. However, as the interrogation progressed, he suddenly realized that the article was serving as his protection. They were afraid to lay a hand on him because their actions might be published in another issue of *Awake!*

At one point, the policemen said that the article's reference to a three-month-old baby was a lie. José calmly answered that he knew it was the truth because he was the father! Well, he came out of that ordeal alive and rejoicing, for now he saw that they were

obligated to treat Jehovah's organization with more respect.

José's trial came up in October 1961 before a tribunal of three judges, with one of them serving as the chairman. Although the case had not been announced in the press, the court waiting room was packed with brothers, interested persons, lawyers, doctors and others. Over sixty persons attended the trial.

The prosecution tried to prove that Brother Orzáez was the "leader" of the Bible study group in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. But witnesses for the defense would not acknowledge him as their leader. Moreover, in his concluding summary, counsel for the defense quoted the *Spanish Bill of Rights* and also showed that up to twenty persons could meet together without prior permission. As for the charge of proselytism, which had been brought against Brother Orzáez, again the *Bill of Rights* was cited, showing that it allowed freedom of speech in Article 12, which was read with appropriate emphasis.

In spite of the lengthy and reasoned defense, as well as the general opinion that the defense had won an acquittal, the verdict was "Guilty," and a three-month prison sentence was imposed. However, the case was appealed to the Supreme Court.

Two years and four months later the case of José Orzáez finally came up before the Supreme Court. In the meantime, our cases were piling up on appeal due to the ferocious wave of persecution that swept across Spain from 1960 onward, and that did not wane until 1966.

A HEARTENING DECISION

On March 2, 1964, the Supreme Court held a public hearing before a packed courtroom of some two hundred persons from various nations. Many other individuals were outside the building waiting to hear the decision.

Among other things, in his summary, the defense attorney pointed out that the Meetings Law of June 15, 1880, was still in effect. Article 2 declares that public meetings are gatherings of more than twenty persons, and only when this figure is surpassed would one have to ask for government permission to gather together for licit purposes. The attorney showed that Jehovah's Witnesses in Las Palmas were making every effort to conform to this law. He further reasoned that "illegal associations" are understood to be those whose purpose it is to commit crimes that would endanger the security of the State. But, he made clear, the meetings of Jeho-

vah's Witnesses are based on reading and commenting on the Bible. It was also shown that Jehovah's Witnesses teach that one who commits crimes against the security of any State is rebelling against God, and such an individual would never be allowed to be a witness of Jehovah.

Summing up, the defense pointed out that Article 6 of the *Spanish Bill of Rights* was openly violated in the case in question, for the State guarantees that "no one will be harassed for his religious beliefs, nor in the private exercise of his worship." Brother Orzáez not only was "harassed" by the police, but was tried and condemned for having been found teaching the Bible at a meeting of seventeen persons.

Now it was the prosecutor's turn to present his arguments. After giving a brief résumé of the defense presented, the prosecutor caused a stir by declaring: "I join myself with the defense in petitioning the absolute of the accused."

What was the decision of the Court? It declared: "We do absolve the defendant, José Orzáez Ramírez, of the crime of illegal association of which he was accused in the present case, with the declaration of the costs being annulled."

Coming as it did in 1964, this decision was heartening to the Spanish brothers and sisters. Especially was this so in the case of the faithful body of special pioneers who had been taking the brunt of the attack during the previous four years. The decision struck out at the religious intolerance that had been practiced in many Spanish provinces where Jehovah's Witnesses had been arrested, jailed and fined when apprehended while engaging in group Bible study. The ruling was a precedent-setting step toward upholding the right to meet together privately for the purpose of studying the Bible.

UNRELENTING OPPOSITION

The Ministry of the Interior, however, did not relent in its desire to extirpate Jehovah's Witnesses from Spanish territory, and on February 24, 1966, yet another circular went out to all civil governors. Since the policy of imposing fines of at least 2,500 pesetas was not having the desired effect, the Ministry of the Interior had consulted with the Ministry of Justice and had come up with the following recommendation:

"As a result, I urge Your Excellency on orders from His Excellency the Minister of the Interior, that you denounce to the Tribunals for Vagrants and Criminals such members of the said sect that should be caught

carrying out such activities, so that these Tribunals in their case can find motives for taking action. This without detriment to the prosecution and punishment of the crimes that may be committed as a result of the proselytism, and to the security measures that the Criminal Tribunals might take in the condemnatory sentences." This was a last-ditch effort to stifle the preaching activity of Jehovah's Witnesses and bring a halt to their work by means of intimidation. Truly, it was a matter of "framing trouble by decree."—Ps. 94:20.

MAINTAINING CHRISTIAN NEUTRALITY

Besides facing religious and other opposition, Jehovah's Witnesses under the regime that existed then in Spain had to cope with problems associated with Christian neutrality. (John 15:19) Through their individual study of the Bible, a number of young Witnesses at that time concluded that Isaiah 2:4 and other scriptures required their taking a firm neutral stand with regard to the affairs of the nations. When one talked with them about it, they said that it was their own conscientious decision, based on what they had personally studied in God's Word. Each made his own individual choice. For a time the authorities in Spain did not understand this neutral position, and some of these brothers were subjected to harsh treatment. However, in recent years the authorities have taken a more tolerant view of these conscientious Christians, treating them with greater understanding. Over the years, the faithfulness of these young Witnesses under trying circumstances has been a source of encouragement to others. We are pleased now to tell of some of their experiences as they followed the course of integrity.

In February 1958, Jesús Martín, from Madrid, was assigned to do military service in Melilla, the Spanish enclave in Morocco. Because he took a stand as a Christian neutral, Jesús was severely beaten and ended up in a military prison known as Rostrogordo (Fat face). There he received cruel treatment at the instigation of the lieutenant general then holding the chief military and civil authority at the Melilla garrison. Another "unforgettable" character was the chief of the military prison, a brutal, despotic man.

After eight days at this prison, Jesús Martín was horsewhipped for about twenty minutes without a halt, besides being insulted and kicked until he finally fell to the ground semiconscious. Still not satisfied, with his boot the captain pressed Jesús' head to the ground, desisting only when blood began to flow from his head.

Helped back to the captain's office, Jesús was told that he would get a similar beating every day, and the brutal captain also threatened him with physical mutilation.

Later, in his underground cell, Jesús prayed to Jehovah for strength and aid. Down there, the young man could speak to no one else, except the rats. Each day Jesús was taken out at rifle point to work for eight hours breaking stones with a pick—purposeless labor intended as demoralizing punishment.

But what about that threat of daily beatings? Well, the next day Jesús was given olive oil for his wounds and his head was bandaged. In that state he was taken out for his second thrashing, this time at the hands of a corporal assigned to do the job while the captain looked on to make certain that it was done properly. This barbarous treatment even caused indignation among the guards and other soldiers. His resolution beginning to waver, Jesús wondered if he really could stand this treatment daily.

On the third day, Jesús was called out for his stone-breaking stint. Halfway through the morning, however, he was again summoned to the captain's office. To his relief, there he found a military judge, who had arrived to investigate his case and start proceedings against him. When the judge saw the bandages and the evident signs of a beating, he asked what had happened. Jesús was almost afraid to tell him, for afterward there might be reprisals. Nevertheless, he told the judge the truth. At that the judge assured him that he would not be beaten again. Here was the answer to his prayers of the day before! During the remaining six years of that incarceration, Jesús never was manhandled again. And he was sure that Jehovah answers the prayers of the faithful.—Prov. 15:29.

After fifteen months in Africa, Jesús Martín was transferred to Ocaña prison in Spain. Interestingly, Jesús was condemned to fifteen years in prison for disobedience and four years for sedition, since it was held that his example could have influenced others. That meant nineteen years in prison for refusing eighteen months of military service! Later, he was given another sentence of three years for his disobedience in the Rostrogordo prison, making a total of twenty-two years. Incidentally, his fifteen-year sentence is the longest one yet handed down in a neutrality case in Spain.

PRESERVING SPIRITUAL HEALTH IN PRISON

While imprisoned at Ocaña, Jesús Martín enjoyed certain advantages. At first, the prison officials there

concluded, after reading his prison history, that he was a very rebellious type of inmate. In time, however, they realized that he was a model prisoner. So much was this so that he became the prison bookkeeper, in charge of paying all the inmates in accordance with the work they did in the prison workshops. Some months Jesús would have to pay out half a million pesetas in wages (about \$10,000 at that time).

One advantage at Ocaña was that Jesús could receive visits from his parents, even though they were only allowed to converse with him for fifteen minutes at a time. And how did he maintain his spiritual health? Well, he was not permitted to have any publications of the Watch Tower Society, but he did have the Nacar-Colunga Bible. And just imagine! He once read it through completely—apocryphal books and comments and all—in just twenty days!

Jesús knew that other Christian neutrals had also taken their stand and earnestly prayed that one of these brothers might be assigned to his prison. After four years of virtual isolation, his prayers were answered, for Alberto Contijoch was sent there. The two of them studied together and also preached more openly in the prison. In fact, they prepared their own "third" edition of the Bible textbook *"Let God Be True."* The new arrival did the writing, as he could better remember the book's contents, whereas Jesús did the correcting and adapting of the material.

Later, in 1961, a third Christian neutral, Francisco Díaz Moreno, was assigned to Ocaña prison. The three young men managed to acquire a copy of the booklet *"This Good News of the Kingdom,"* and Jesús was able to prepare additional copies, using the typewriter in the office where he worked. At one time, they were conducting fifteen Bible studies with fellow inmates.

These Christian neutrals had such a yearning for new Bible literature that risks were taken to obtain it. For example, consider what happened on September 24, 1963—the festival of "Our Lady of Mercy," the Catholic intermediary for prisoners and captives. This was a special holiday and extra visitors were allowed at the prison. So, on that day José and Pili Orzáez visited the prison with their two-year-old daughter, Ester Lidia. She was permitted to enter as Jesús' "niece," and gave him a box of clothing that also contained two of the Society's hardbound publications. On another occasion, Jesús' parents sent him the book *"Make Sure of All Things,"* in English, but the prison official would not let him have it, saying that letting such a book fall into his hands would be like giving a submachine gun to a bank robber.

In 1963 the group of Christian neutrals at Ocaña prison grew from three to four, with the arrival of Antonio Sánchez Medina. He already had undergone prison hardships elsewhere, and before he could associate with the other three Witnesses, he had to complete a thirty-day probation. In spite of being held incomunicado, however, Antonio figured out a way of witnessing without talking. When another prisoner showed interest in the truth, Antonio drew up a Bible crossword puzzle for that inmate to fill out. By means of various crossword puzzles, Antonio got the prisoner to search his Bible.

When Antonio's initial thirty-day period was about to end, he received a setback. While previously imprisoned at Zaragoza he had written a letter to the brothers, telling them about an interested prisoner. Antonio had hidden this letter in his mattress, awaiting an opportunity to get it out of the prison. But the letter had been discovered in a search of his cell. Now he was to pay the consequences at Ocaña—twenty days in the punishment cells for having written the letter and for proselytism.

Antonio was taken down to the "tube"—a tunnel with cold, dark cells. There was no furniture in his cell, just a washbasin, a toilet, an aluminum plate and a spoon. At night he was brought a mattress and two dirty blankets. But he had no reading or writing material. So, how was he going to endure those twenty days of boredom? The crossword puzzle idea was the answer. However, Antonio did not have paper and pencil. So, he broke off one of the handles of his plate and used it to write on the tiles of his cell floor. He turned the floor into a gigantic Bible crossword puzzle! Why, Antonio was so engrossed in recalling Bible personages and passages that those days passed quickly!

Unquestionably, there were various ways to maintain spiritual health. The four Christian neutrals now in Ocaña prison had some magazines and other literature. However, all their reading had to be done secretly and the literature had to be hidden. For that purpose, they had a chess set and used to hide the literature in the false bottom of the chessboard.

MEETINGS HELD WITH CAUTION

The four Christian neutrals at Ocaña prison were fully aware of the need to meet together for Bible study. (Heb. 10:24, 25) Finally, therefore, they arranged to have meetings every week, although they held them with extreme caution.

In Ocaña prison the beds were two-tier bunks ar-

ranged in parallel rows, with about eighty prisoners to each hall. The four Witnesses occupied two sets, side by side. So, while one of them was lying on top, listening and keeping an eye open for the guards, the other three sat below on the bottom beds, doing their best to present their parts on the program. With all the noise from the other prisoners, as well as the music or football match emanating from the loudspeaker above their heads, it was no easy task to discuss Scriptural matters. But these young men succeeded in doing so, even celebrating the Memorial of Jesus Christ's death under such circumstances during 1962.

FREEDOM AT LAST—FOR ONE

By the summer of 1964, Jesús Martín once again was alone in Ocaña, as the other three Christian neutrals had left in 1963. Francisco Díaz Moreno had finished one sentence and now had to present himself again, this time at El Aaiún, in the Spanish Sahara. Antonio Sánchez and Alberto Contijoch had similar experiences. However, before going their separate ways, they had decided on a new tactic. All four would request conditional liberty. In cases of good conduct, this allowed three months of freedom for each year served in prison.

The result of this effort was that three requests were rejected. But the petition of Jesús Martín was approved. He would be granted twenty-five months of provisional liberty and then would have to present himself again to the military authorities. So it was that in August 1964 Jesús stepped out of prison after having completed six years and six months of his sentence. For some reason he never was called up again.

UNBAPTIZED INTEGRITY-KEEPER

After a year in Ocaña, Francisco Díaz Moreno had terminated his second sentence, and in January 1964 he was temporarily free for two months, awaiting his third court-martial. He used that time to build himself up spiritually, before going on to the Sahara. By April 1964, Francisco had been transported to a punishment camp called La Sagia, deeper in the desert. Alberto Contijoch and Juan Rodríguez already were there. Interestingly, Juan by then had spent three years in prison as a neutral and still was not a baptized witness of Jehovah. He had taken a stand for Bible truth before having an opportunity to be immersed in symbol of his dedication to God.

In one of Juan's earlier places of incarceration, among other things, trickery was employed in an effort to make him violate his neutrality. The prison chaplain

—naturally a Catholic priest—told Juan that another Witness was going to visit him and bring the latest instructions from the Society.

Sure enough, a young fellow in a sailor's uniform presented himself as one of Jehovah's Witnesses. Juan, the sailor and the priest had just started their conversation when the "Jehovah's Witness" sailor pulled out a pack of cigarettes and invited Juan to take one! When Juan asked the "brother" which books he had read, the sailor mentioned *Green Leaves* and some other titles Juan had never heard of. Well, the next time Juan saw the priest alone he told him that on future occasions he should make sure that the Witness he brought to see him was genuine.

While Francisco, Alberto and Juan were at La Sagia awaiting their transfer to El Aaiún, they decided that they would baptize Juan in one of the wells outside the camp. Then, all permission to leave the camp was refused. So how were they going to perform the baptism in this drought-ridden desert? Well, in the camp there was a big covered water deposit, with two apertures for filling it and taking water out by bucket. But it had only fifteen centimeters (6 inches) of water in it.

On the night of April 19, 1964, however, the three young men already were in their tents when they heard the water relief truck arrive. Yes, the water tank was being filled—with enough water to drown a person. You guessed it! After a brief Scriptural discussion the three slipped silently across the sand to the water tank and Juan Rodríguez was baptized.

ENDURING IN EL AAIÚN

Eventually, after varied experiences such as a period of incarceration at Hausa, an even more remote outpost in the desert, four Christian neutrals—Alberto Contijoch, Francisco Díaz Moreno, Antonio Sánchez Medina and Juan Rodríguez—found themselves imprisoned in El Aaiún. There conditions were quite restrictive, for the prison was a rectangular building with the cell doors facing outward toward the prison wall that was covered with barbed wire and glass fragments. At each corner of the wall there was a platform for the guards, who were on duty with automatic rifles. The cells were small, two by three meters (6.5 by 10 feet), and each one had two or three occupants. Exercise periods lasted only one hour each morning and each afternoon. But the heat was easier to bear than at other desert locations because this prison was situated only about twenty-five kilometers (15 miles) from the sea and that helped to ameliorate the climate.

At first, the four Christian neutrals were able to preach and conduct Bible studies, as well as hold meetings. Francisco, for instance, was able to speak with a young man who had been sentenced to death on the charge of instigating a murder, although his sentence had been commuted to thirty years. One day he sought a conversation with Francisco to tell him that his mother had sent him a Bible. Both his mother and aunt were Evangelical Protestants. Francisco tactfully used his Bible to give a witness regarding God's name, and the interest flourished, so that a Bible study was started using the book *"Let God Be True."* After just a few weeks, the young man was transferred to the Santa Catalina prison in Cádiz in southwest Spain, but the truth already was at work in his heart. He continued to progress and eventually was baptized. His mother and aunt now are baptized Witnesses also. So it was that while in captivity Marcelino Martínez had found true freedom.

The situation at El Aaiún got to the point that fifteen Bible studies were being conducted with other inmates. Finally, the prison authorities clamped down and separated the Witnesses from the rest of the prisoners. Even their exercise hour was changed so that it would not coincide with that of the others. No room was going to be left for their "proselytism."

NEW TACTICS ADOPTED

After four or five years in prison, and with nothing happening in official circles, the imprisoned Christian neutrals began to study the Code of Military Justice in order to defend their position better. As part of their tactics, they wrote letters to all the government ministers to draw their predicament to the attention of those in official quarters. These neutral Witnesses virtually were condemned to life imprisonment, whereas a convicted murderer could be back on the streets after only seven years.

One of the legal problems was that in the court-martial the Witnesses were not permitted to make adequate statements that could be included in the record of the trial. Francisco Díaz Moreno decided to try to change all of that. He had read in the Code of Military Justice that the prisoner's final declarations should be included in the record. Thus, when his case came up before the El Aaiún court-martial, he waited until the prosecutor and the defense had nervously presented their respective cases. Then he was called upon to stand up and was asked if he had anything to state.

"Yes, Your Honor," Francisco replied. He then started reading off his prepared declaration. Several times the presiding officer of the court tried to interrupt and break off the reading. However, when he saw the resolute attitude that Francisco manifested, he called him up to the bench. "What is it that you want, young man?" Francisco answered that he only wanted his declarations to be officially included in the court record. "Well, we'll look into that and study the matter . . .," was the reply.

"Excuse me, Your Honor," said Francisco. "It is not a matter of looking into it or studying it, but rather that my declarations should be included. Otherwise, the trial is not valid."

When the presiding officer saw that there was no way around this argument, he relented, and Francisco's written statement was attached to the court record. Thereafter, it was possible for Christian neutrals to make such declarations during each court-martial in El Aaiún.

RISCO MILITARY PRISON—AND ITS COMMANDANT

One of the worst places of incarceration for Christian neutrals was the San Francisco del Risco military prison in the Canary Islands. The commandant there was an infamous officer nicknamed "*Pisamondongos*," crudely translated as "Guts Treader." He delighted in sadistic violence. Francisco Díaz Moreno spent some time there. When he arrived, he found that Fernando Marín and Juan Rodríguez already had spent a number of months there.

Soon Francisco was face-to-face with the commandant. "Are you one of Jehovah's Witnesses?" asked the commandant. "Yes, sir," was the reply. "Another traitor to the Fatherland!" thundered the commandant, also using unrepeatable expressions and ordering that Francisco be searched. Well, he happened to have one of our magazines in his pocket and had to give it up. As the sergeant continued his search, the commandant left and then returned. Impatient with the slowness of the search, the commandant himself hurriedly finished it. But he failed to find the magazines that Francisco had hidden under a body belt he was wearing. Thus copies of *The Watchtower* containing new information on the resurrection got inside that prison.

The three Witnesses were kept in a cell apart from other inmates and were not allowed to speak to the other prisoners. In the yard outside, a white line had been painted. Other prisoners were not allowed to cross it, so that they could not communicate with the brothers

through the cell window. Some who had attempted to speak to Fernando Marín during his previous nine months there had been beaten severely. Ostensibly this separation was so that the Witnesses would not be contaminated by the rest! Fortunately, however, their stay at San Francisco del Risco was not to last much longer.

CADIZ PRISON CONGREGATION GROWS

From the Canary Islands, Francisco was sent to the Santa Catalina prison in Cádiz in October 1965. Down through the years this prison had become famous among Jehovah's people, for it had reached the point of having as many as a hundred Witnesses there. Moreover, it has been visited by hundreds of brothers who have gone there to encourage their captive fellow believers. In May 1972 this prison was even visited by Grant Suiter, and later by Leo Greenlees, members of the Governing Body who were privileged to speak to this large congregation. In fact, the prison congregation was larger than the one outside in that same city.

Interestingly, with the passing of the years, the brothers incarcerated at Santa Catalina prison in Cádiz repeated the programs of all the circuit and district assemblies. On at least one occasion they even had representatives of the foreign press on hand for the wedding of one of the Witness inmates. The publicity given to that case drew worldwide attention to the lamentable situation of Spanish law with regard to conscientious objectors. Several weddings have taken place in that prison, but the first was that of Francisco Díaz Moreno to Margarita Mestre, in November 1967, in the presence of an officiating civil judge.

However, it should not be concluded that problems at the Santa Catalina prison in Cádiz were minimal. Often, for instance, the meals included blood sausage, which Witness inmates could not eat because they were determined to adhere to God's law on blood. (Gen. 9: 3, 4) However, with the development of a good prison organization among the Witnesses certain work groups were organized so that the brothers could earn money with which to buy acceptable food. Also, schedules were established for meetings, language studies and other activities. Arrangements were made for witnessing by mail, so that each month a certain number could be "vacation pioneers," as they then were called. All these arrangements helped to make the time pass more quickly in circumstances wherein rays of hope occasionally flickered and then died. The uncertainty of their situation in those years did not help the morale of

the brothers, although they became used to disappointments.

For example, in March 1970 the news media announced that the government was preparing a draft law to deal with the problem of the conscientious objectors, and to regulate the situation by means of new legal measures. This raised the hopes of many brothers in prison at that time. In September of that year the draft law was debated in a committee of the Spanish Parliament. Its members took the most unprecedented step of sending the law back to the government without approval, requesting further revision. When that news broke in the prisons, it came like a shower of cold water that dampened the spirits of the brothers. Again in 1971 the government tried to present a stiffer law that would satisfy the extremist elements of the Defense Commission in Parliament. When the government saw how drastically the original intent of the bill had been changed, they withdrew the draft law from further consideration.

FIRST NEUTRALITY CASE IN THE BASQUE REGION

Our record about those earlier years spent by Christian neutrals in prison would not be complete if we did not refer to the integrity-keeping course of Adolfo Peñacorada from Bilbao in the Basque region and Emilio Bayo from Logroño. Their passage through Spanish prisons coincided for several years.

On March 16, 1963, Adolfo Peñacorada presented himself at the Burgos barracks, where his father had served as a soldier thirty-five years earlier. For four days no uniforms were given out. Then, on the fifth day, Adolfo had a long discussion with the colonel about his conscientious objection. Finally, when the colonel realized that he was not getting anywhere, he changed his tactics and shouted at Adolfo, giving orders that he be taken to the "calaboose." Adolfo's conscientious objection became the talking point in military circles at Burgos, a city proud of its military and ecclesiastical history. The unthinkable had occurred—a man had refused to wear the military uniform in Burgos!

Under threat of punishment, all the troops were forbidden to speak to Adolfo. Different officers used to come to his cell to try to change his opinion, but they always went away with something to think about because of the witness that he gave them. He had a Bible text on view in his cell that mentioned Jehovah and included the words: "Do not be afraid. I myself will help you." (Isa. 41:10, 13) The name Jehovah prompted

many a conversation. And in Jehovah Adolfo did indeed put his trust and confidence.

Varied were the expressions that Adolfo heard from different officers down through the years. For example, one lieutenant, the colonel's adjutant, stated: "Adolfo, I have to tell you that the majority think as I do. We are amazed at you. We have been making life impossible for you, and the worse we made it, the more you smiled and had a kind word . . . you have made me think of the early Christians."

In time, Adolfo was completely trusted, to the point that his cell door was left open and different soldiers used to come to him to ask about the Bible. One said: "I would like to study the Bible. I have seen that you have the true religion."

One of the guards had such a desire to read the Bible that he would go into Adolfo's cell to read. At the same time he had Adolfo do "guard" duty outside the cell, just in case someone should come along and surprise them. So the prisoner guarded the sentry!

A CHRISTIAN NEUTRAL FROM LOGROÑO

In September 1963, Adolfo was taken to the Military Tribunal for his court-martial. There he got to see Emilio Bayo, who was being tried at the same time. They already knew each other, because two years earlier they had been among Witnesses who had experienced a raid by the police in Logroño.

When he had reached the age of twenty-one, Emilio had presented himself at the Tudela barracks, in the province of Navarra. It happened to be March 16, 1963, the very same day that Adolfo presented himself in Burgos. The following day Emilio refused to accept the military uniform and failed to attend Mass with the recruits. He was taken to the dungeon, where he was to pass his first ten weeks virtually without any natural light and almost without any outside exercise. His bed was taken away every morning and brought back at night, and he was not allowed to speak to anyone. Only because of the kindness of a certain captain was he given a seat on which he might sit during the day.

After those first ten weeks, Emilio was transferred to Burgos for his court-martial. During that day of travel, handcuffed to a civil guard, he made up for his ten weeks of silence. Emilio was witnessing on the train and using his Bible the best he could with one hand fastened. The guard tried to hide the handcuffed hand, but Emilio kept pulling it out so that people

would know that he was in chains for his Christian belief.

The courts-martial of Adolfo and Emilio were held separately. But the results were the same—three years and one day in prison. In November they were transferred to the Burgos Civil Prison, where they had to mix with the normal run of civilian delinquents and criminals of all kinds.

Adolfo arrived first and the prison director sternly told him: "I know you people and I know your methods. If you attempt any proselytism here, you will rot in the punishment cells." Fortunately, after a few days that director was replaced, and within a short time Emilio and Adolfo had the prison turned upside down with their preaching. Of course, the only literature they had was the Catholic Nacar-Colunga Bible, and that proved to be enough. Everything that they said during the week got to the ears of the prison chaplain in time for Sunday Mass. However, the brothers already had gained the respect and admiration of the new director, as well as that of the other prisoners. So, the chaplain was not able to stop them from preaching and could not do them any harm. The director was so impressed by them that he recommended that they be transferred to an open prison in Mirasierra, not far from Madrid.

Emilio and Adolfo started their journey to this new prison in January 1964. On the way, they had to pass through the prisons of Avila and Carabanchel. Eventually they arrived at the prison in Mirasierra.

LIFE AT MIRASIERRA OPEN PRISON

Mirasierra was a group of prison huts used for trusted inmates who worked for a construction company building chalets, mainly for foreigners. In effect, it was like being free, for the prisoners mixed with outsiders during their working hours. For Adolfo and Emilio this respite was short-lived—seven months to be exact. But, at least, it was a breathing space. The work was heavy and it was hard for these young men who had spent nearly a year in prison with very little physical activity.

Adolfo and Emilio took advantage of their opportunities to witness on every occasion, and they had good results. For instance, a Bible study was started with a person who later became a baptized Christian. Additionally, they soon had a *Watchtower* study organized, which was held in the entrance to a tunnel of an as yet unused railway line. Four persons would sit on the tracks and enjoy this interesting study.

After a while, Adolfo and Emilio were given lighter work inside the chalets. This enabled them to witness to some of the owners. Another fine witness was given by the group of brothers that visited them every Sunday, for the guards and the inmates recognized the love existing among Jehovah's Witnesses.—John 13:34, 35.

ON TO AFRICA

Their sentence having expired at Mirasierra, Adolfo and Emilio were freed for a month, but with instructions to make their way to El Aaiún in the Spanish Sahara. That month of freedom was used to associate with fellow believers and build themselves up spiritually. Renewed physically and spiritually, they set off at the end of September, heading for their new prison in Africa.

When Adolfo and Emilio arrived at El Aaiún they learned that three Christian neutrals—Francisco, Alberto and Juan—were already in prison there, although there was no way to get to see them. Adolfo and Emilio were anxious to talk to these three fellow believers to find out what issues would be presented in this new setting, especially since there might be details about which they would have problems in making decisions.

From El Aaiún, Adolfo and Emilio were sent to Hausa, where they knew that Antonio Sánchez was located. At least they felt that it would be possible to get some information from him. When they arrived, however, he had already left—just a few hours earlier. All seemed lost. But they had to go to the camp barber, a certain Benito Egea, a person who had recently been studying the Bible with Antonio Sánchez. He was able to give some helpful information. They continued the Bible study with him until it was decided that they were going to be moved. To El Aaiún? No. They were going to Villa Cisneros, 1,000 kilometers (620 miles) to the south—a military base where Jehovah's Witnesses had not yet set foot. They were going to have to plow a new furrow. Incidentally, the camp barber later was baptized and even served for a number of years as a special pioneer.

In torrential rain, their convoy of trucks set out across the desert on December 21, 1964. That uncomfortable journey took several days to complete. On awakening after their first night in Villa Cisneros barracks, they were greeted with the news that one legionnaire had killed another in an act of jealousy over homosexual relations. That was the kind of world into which they had moved. Now they were completely isolated from the brothers and from Jeho-

vah's earthly organization, and could consult no one except Jehovah God. This they did intently, seeking guidance. Amid 2,000 to 3,000 soldiers, they were the only ones moving about in civilian clothing.

Emilio and Adolfo did not feel that they always made the right decision. But they were trying to please Jehovah and, in February 1965, their neutrality definitely was brought out into the open. The whole battalion was assigned to leave the barracks on maneuvers, but the two brothers would not comply. At that, the lieutenant got them out of the hut by shoving and kicking, and then had them put in the last line of the ranks. Then came the order, "Forward march!" The whole battalion moved off, leaving behind two immobile and solitary figures, Adolfo and Emilio. Fortunately, the captain treated them in a civil manner and had them handed over to the guard at the barracks.

Shortly thereafter, Adolfo and Emilio found themselves in the punishment platoon. The legionnaires in charge practically had a free hand to do what they liked to the prisoners, even to kill them, and no questions would be asked. When ordered to stand at attention, the brothers refused. The guard hurled abuse at them, and the corporal in charge started to punch and beat them. Adolfo ended up with a black eye, along with a collection of bruises.

Adolfo and Emilio were in the punishment platoon for a month. Inasmuch as they would not do any work in the barracks, they were taken out each day at sunrise to a place about three kilometers (2 miles) away. There they had to break stones and dig sand. Since the food was inadequate and often inedible as far as a Christian was concerned, they were hungry and exhausted. Occasionally, their state moved the guard to pity and he would allow them to seek shelter from the heat in a nearby cave where they could get some sleep. But the majority of the guards were tyrants and the prisoners were not allowed to speak or do anything without their permission.

In April of that year, Adolfo and Emilio came out of the punishment section and wondered just how much longer they would be able to stand the war of nerves in Villa Cisneros. The physical punishment was one thing, but the nervous tension was another. There was a constant fight to keep integrity to God, to remain neutral in this highly charged military atmosphere. Their prayers were answered when, in July, they were sent back to El Aaiún by plane, to face another court-martial for having refused the uniform in Hausa.

Their arrival in El Aaiún brought the number of

Christian neutrals there to seven. Little did they know then, in 1965, that the first of the seven would not be released until 1970, and that four of them would still be in prison in 1973.

In January 1966, the group of seven was broken up. Four were sent to the Santa Catalina prison in Cádiz, and the other three were assigned to the military prison in Mahón, in the Balearic Islands. Thus Adolfo and Emilio, for instance, were separated after three years of shared imprisonment. Emilio Bayo and Antonio Sánchez Medina were sent to Mahón, arriving there in April 1966, and soon thereafter they were joined by Julio Beltrán. Their three-month journey included stops at Cádiz, Vicálvaro, Madrid and Zaragoza.

By the time the two brothers reached Zaragoza it was April 4, and the very next day was to be the Memorial of Jesus Christ's death. They started to plan for its commemoration but were told to get ready to travel on to Barcelona. During the train journey, they asked permission of the guards to buy a little wine, which they hid, in case the next guards would prohibit it. Well, when it came around to six o'clock in the evening, Emilio and Antonio explained to the guards that it was the hour for them to have a special celebration by considering a Bible theme. The guards permitted it, and in this way the brothers celebrated the Memorial by means of a forty-five-minute talk, a discourse heard by the guards and two prisoners to whom the Witnesses were handcuffed. Though their train compartment was empty at first, toward the end of the talk four or five other persons were listening. That discourse ended just as the train drew into the station at Barcelona.

CONSCIENTIOUSLY HOLDING TO FAITH RESULTS IN GREAT WITNESS

At every turn, efforts were being made to break the integrity of those imprisoned Christian neutrals. For instance, when Emilio Bayo and Antonio Sánchez Medina arrived at Mahón they found that another brother, Francisco Díez Ferrer, had already been there for some time. Interestingly, he had been very friendly with Corporal Bernardo Linares, not realizing that this man had been assigned to develop a friendship with him and cause him to break integrity to God. Well, that did not happen. Instead, the final result was that, after a lengthy association with Francisco, and later with Emilio and Antonio, Bernardo Linares himself became a witness of Jehovah. In July 1967 he told the captain of the prison that he was taking off

his uniform and joining with the conscientious objectors. Though an effort was made to convince him to do otherwise, all of that was to no avail. He was put under arrest to await a court-martial, but the captain general of the Mallorca region had Bernardo's army contract annulled and the case went no farther. He was retired to civilian life and took up active service to Jehovah.

Despite difficulties that were encountered by these Christian neutrals, there was spiritual growth and development within Spanish prisons. To illustrate: As the group in Cádiz continued growing, so did their spirituality. Fine progress was made, and the brothers even inaugurated a Kingdom Hall in the prison on August 5, 1968, two years before official legalization of our work took place in Spain.

It might be mentioned that certain brothers we have named were released from prison in the early 1970's. Alberto Contijoch was freed in 1970 after eleven years in prison, having been condemned four times to a total sentence of nineteen years' imprisonment. Francisco Díaz Moreno was let out of prison in April 1972, after completing eleven years, six months and nineteen days of a total sentence of twenty-six years. Juan Rodríguez was released in May 1972, after having completed eleven years in prison, and a number of others were set free in February 1974. Among them were Antonio Sánchez Medina, after twelve years of imprisonment; Adolfo Peñacorada and Emilio Bayo, after eleven years; and Fernando Marín, after ten years behind prison walls.

Of course, many other brothers in Spain have suffered imprisonment as Christian neutrals. But this time was not wasted, for it served to give a witness to a large sector of the Spanish nation that otherwise would not have heard of Jehovah's Witnesses, their beliefs and their integrity. The military and penal sectors have been given a great witness, a testimony that has affected all parts of the country, since these Christian neutrals have had to present themselves in countless barracks and military and civil prisons of Spain. Thus, a record of integrity and neutrality has been written into the military and judicial records of this country, and it stands as evidence of the fidelity of Jehovah's Witnesses to the just and peace-loving principles of God's Word, the Bible.

In the course of the years since 1958, 825 brothers have been sentenced to a total of 3,218 years of imprisonment, of which they have served 1,904 in Spain's military and civil prisons. Perhaps the most appropriate comment on this record of integrity is that of

the Catholic writer, Jesús González Malvar, who wrote under the subtitle "An Example for Catholics":

"Such is that of the courageous Jehovah's Witnesses, although it becomes humiliating for us to recognize it. In this they have certainly set for us the evangelical ideal. These brave men are not terrified by the loss of freedom, although prison be prolonged month after month and year after year, nor by the pharisaical scorn of a society still so remote from the spirit of the Beatitudes . . . To our great shame, for this our so-trail-blazing Catholicism, is the fact that the so ridiculed and persecuted Jehovah's Witnesses have gone ahead of us in the manifestation of this Christian charisma, and that only by walking in their blood-stained tracks have our most determined ones dared to venture forth in the same course. We cannot deny, if we are honest and sincere, that they have understood in this, better than we, the spirit of the Master, who, not even in self-defense, allowed the use of arms."

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS AFFECTING CHRISTIAN NEUTRALS

What have been the more recent developments for these Christian neutrals in Spain? Well, in 1973 a law was passed that limited the penalty for conscientious objection to a single term in prison that can be from three years and one day to a maximum of eight years. This has put an end to the previous procedure of a never-ending series of sentences for the repetition of the same offense, that of maintaining Christian neutrality by refusing to participate in military organizations.

The immediate benefits of this law were that all those having served more than three years in prison were released, which resulted in 114 brothers gaining their freedom. Later, on July 30, 1976, King Juan Carlos proclaimed a general amnesty, and as a result another 204 brothers were set free. What an unexpected joy it was for them to be able immediately to attend the "Sacred Service" District Assemblies and there build up the gathered throngs with their experiences of Christian integrity!

Are Christian neutrals still being imprisoned in Spain? During the autumn of 1976 there was a kind of moratorium on the conscription of declared conscientious objectors, and in December of 1976 a decree was published that allows those with religious objections to military service to "substitute" the present eighteen months of military training with three years of other services.

But what viewpoint have the youthful Witnesses

taken on this question? Already more than 150 young brothers have demonstrated their belief that it would be hypocritical to refuse military service on grounds of conscience and then participate in activities that are recognized as a substitute for military duties. As a consequence, they are now in custody, the majority awaiting trial by court-martial, for having refused to perform the substitute service.

The reaction of the military authorities has been tough and unrelenting, and in June 1977 a number of our brothers were sentenced to the maximum penalty of eight years' imprisonment. It remains to be seen whether the new government formed in July 1977 will take steps to reduce these harsh sentences and implement a more reasonable and equitable law.

BETTER ORGANIZED FOR THE WORK AHEAD

Having considered the experiences of these Christian neutrals, suppose we step back in time and pick up the thread of our story in the year 1959. At that time certain developments helped us to become better organized for the work ahead.

In April 1959, M. G. Henschel, from the Watch Tower Society's Brooklyn headquarters, visited Spain as zone overseer. He gave good counsel to Ray Dusinberre, who then was in charge of the Society's branch office in Spain. Brother Henschel recommended that the circuits be increased from one to four, and that the visits of circuit overseers take place every four months in order to build up the spirituality of the brothers and sisters.

At that time there were seven Gilead missionaries in Spain, including two sisters. Four of the missionaries were serving as circuit overseers. During that same service year, Sinfioriano Barquín, the former fervent Catholic from Bilbao, became the first Spanish circuit overseer. By the end of that service year (1958-1959), 1,293 Kingdom publishers were associating with thirty congregations in five circuits.

In effect, each small group within a congregation was functioning like a little congregation itself, with all the meetings being conducted in the group. This meant that the circuit overseer had to visit each group. If there were only two, the visit would last a week. But, with three or four groups, the visit lasted two weeks. In later years, when some congregations had up to ten groups, the circuit overseer would have to visit a single congregation for as long as five weeks in order to serve all the groups.

Brother Henschel's 1959 zone visit was combined

with a new and special treat for the Spanish brothers. A Spanish assembly was held in Perpignan, just across the border in southern France, and many of the brothers were aided financially so that they could attend. For those living in southern Spain, another assembly was held in Tangier, Morocco.

MAINTAINING A WORKING ORGANIZATION DURING DIFFICULT YEARS

During the years now under consideration, Jehovah's people in Spain were experiencing hardship and persecution. Of course, they needed Bible literature in order to remain spiritually healthy and so as to share the Kingdom message with others. As it was, many packages of literature were being received at various addresses in Madrid. With relatively large stocks of our literature in Madrid, a lot of shipping was done from there, and one of the Gilead graduates was put in charge of that work when the branch "office" was moved from Madrid to Barcelona in 1960.

It might be mentioned that all branch matters were spoken of in code and, of course, the brothers and sisters never knew where the branch office was located. The place where the Gilead brother worked became known as the *Cueva* (Cave). Why was that? Because our cache of literature was hidden in the cellar of a stationery store. To get to the cellar—the "cave"—one had to raise a trapdoor and use a stepladder. However, the actual preparation of the packages of literature was cared for in a narrow back room behind the counter. In that small space, a little shipping department was set up, with a cupboard and a folding table. The brother would work there for hours, often in biting cold in the wintertime. Certainly, care had to be taken so that the customers did not learn that a foreigner was working there. Hence, he could not converse and could not afford to be seen when customers were around. He attended to this work until 1964, when he became a circuit overseer.

But suppose we tell you about branch moves during those difficult years. From 1948 to 1957 the work in Spain was directed mainly from different addresses in Barcelona. Just how long a certain address would be used was determined by the intensity of the police activity. The branch files were kept down to suitcase size, so that a rapid getaway could be made at any moment. This "fly-by-night" arrangement was made possible because different brothers allowed the office to be in their homes, at great risk to themselves.

When Ray Dusinberre assumed the responsibility of

branch overseer in 1957, the center of operations was moved to Madrid. But in 1960, the branch was once again taken back to Barcelona because of police pressure in Madrid. At first it functioned in a brother's house, then in a private apartment rented by the missionaries. In the spring of 1961, a detached *torre* (house with gardens) was located in San Justo Desvern, on the outskirts of Barcelona. Incidentally, while this house was in use, Ray's wife, Jean, fell ill with tuberculosis and the Dusinberres reluctantly departed from Spain in 1963.

The house in San Justo Desvern served its purpose for two years. Then something happened that put the brothers on the alert. Two men who said they were from the electric company asked to inspect the electrical installations. They would have to check the lights in every room. While there was no proof that this was a police trick, it appeared to be, and so the branch was moved once again—this time to a separate villa on its own grounds in the town of San Cugat del Vallés, about sixteen kilometers (10 miles) from Barcelona. In 1967, however, that home was broken into by thieves who, apart from stealing money, also saw the office setup there. So, it was decided that a fast change of locale would be appropriate. In a matter of two days the branch had been discreetly transferred to an apartment in Barcelona—a place that served as a Bethel home and branch office until November 1971, when the Bethel staff of thirteen moved into a new branch building in Barcelona at Calle Pardo, No. 65, the present address of the Association of Jehovah's Witnesses in Spain.

For seven years the branch work was done in three different homes simultaneously, for not all the work was centered around the main branch home. How did the congregations keep in touch with the Society and vice versa? Well, several Barcelona addresses were used for the receipt of mail, and all of these had contact with a centrally located market where several brothers worked.

We also had to exercise care in printing and shipping literature. Some of our printing was done on a mimeograph machine. About 1960 the shipping department was transferred to a shed in the patio outside Francisco Serrano's apartment in Barcelona. The shed came to be known as the *Nevera* (Ice Box) because of the frigid temperature during the winter. This name stuck for years as the name for the shipping department, even when it was later moved to a sister's apartment in the old Gothic quarter of the city. The location of

the main branch office was known as the *Castillo* (Castle) regardless of where this might be located.

"FOOD" SUPPLY GUARANTEED

In those days it was not possible to import our Bible publications legally. So scarcity of literature was one of our big problems. But true to Jesus' promise, the faithful were fed "at the proper time." (Luke 12:42) Tourists from other countries were a valuable help in bringing literature into Spain. One of the most-used addresses was in Calle Menéndez y Pelayo in Barcelona, the missionary home-office, for which Eric Beveridge was responsible during the years 1965 to 1971. Many of the new missionaries spent their first few months in that home, learning Spanish, with Sister Hazel Beveridge as their teacher. Also two veteran Gilead School graduates, Timothy and Judith Dickmon, served there for some time before being transferred to a new missionary home in Valencia.

That Barcelona home was visited by many literature-carrying tourists from all over western Europe and the United States. Although the neighbors knew that foreigners lived in that apartment, they were inclined to wonder how the residents could have so many friends from so many different countries. The automobile license plates often gave away the nationality of the visitors.

Interestingly, on one occasion a brother from France presented himself, literally staggering with the weight of his suitcase. Of course, it was loaded with books. In order to avoid suspicion when he left, he walked up the street still struggling with that case—and it was empty!

At a later time, Spanish brothers would go to France to obtain literature. So, a weekly routine was arranged with different pickup addresses in Perpignan. Some brothers went by private car, whereas others traveled by train and bus. This activity was especially intense during the months of January to March, when they went to obtain the *Yearbooks*. The brothers were determined to have their spiritual food.

From 1966 to 1970 a variety of outside printers were used to produce some of our literature. Happily, however, in July 1970 our work was legalized and so, starting with January 1971 our journals were imported by normal means, license for importation being obtained. Thanks to this arrangement, it has been possible to obtain importations of large quantities of literature, including magazines—to the point that books

now arrive in containers weighing from fifteen to twenty tons at a time!

Do you remember the *Nevera* (Ice Box)? It was the shipping department we moved from a shed to an apartment. For a long time it had been too small. Therefore, in 1970 a change of locale was possible. A two-story warehouse was rented in Barcelona. Downstairs there was room for perhaps twenty tons of literature, and upstairs we had room for a workbench and another ton of literature or magazines. This place received a strong dose of sunshine every day and was quite a contrast to the old *Nevera*. So, the new location was called *el Solarium*, a name that could mean "the Sunhouse."

In 1972, when the new Bethel building was completed, the ground floor was assigned to the shipping department. Then we had space for at least a hundred tons of literature, as well as plenty of working space. When the first container of literature arrived in June 1972, it caused a sensation in the street, and even the neighbors were straining to see what was going on. For many it was the first time they had seen a roller ramp. This one is twenty-seven meters (89 feet) long, of sufficient length to take the boxes out of the container and down close to the far end of the shipping department. When a container arrived in those days, because the work force was quite limited, most members of the office staff joined in to get it unloaded, doing so in less than two hours.

This brief review makes it evident that Jehovah has always made ample provision in a spiritual way. True, for years it was difficult to obtain Christian literature in Spain. But Jehovah's hand was not short and he continued to bless us abundantly with spiritual food at the proper time.

RISE OF THE INQUISITION SPIRIT

The spirit of religious intolerance that prevailed during the Spanish Inquisition arose again in connection with Jehovah's Christian witnesses. Among other things, they were falsely accused of being Freemasons or of being financed by them, a serious charge in a Catholic country. During the period of 1958 to 1960, the police in Granada held such views. Moreover, they were unrelenting in hounding God's people.

Consider, for example, what happened to Manuel Mula Giménez, a special pioneer assigned to Granada in October 1958. On October 5, 1960, Manuel had just finished conducting a Bible study and was standing on a street corner chatting with some fellow believers when a member of the secret police accosted him and

asked him to open his book bag. Naturally, the policeman found Bible literature in it and accused him of breaking the police order against preaching. After taking the names of the other brothers, the policeman told Manuel to accompany him to the police station. Manuel recalls: "When I reminded him that the only ground he had for arresting me was that I was talking with some friends on the street and that I would like to know why I was being arrested, he became so infuriated that he said to me, 'I arrest you because I have a badge like this and a pistol with which I can fill your head full of holes,' and then he took out the pistol and pointed it at me. This was in the middle of one of the most central streets of Granada."

Manuel was taken along to the Civil Government building and was charged with the crime of teaching others about the Bible, and of "distributing booklets and reading texts in such a way that he deliberately insulted the Catholic Religion, outraging the dogmas, rites and ceremonies, and openly advocating for the abolition of national traditions."

Manuel was sentenced to provisional detention in prison until he could produce bail of 50,000 pesetas (\$833). Because he was unable to pay such an exorbitant bail, Manuel was held in prison for forty-three days. For twenty days, he was in solitary confinement, and after that, under threat of punishment, was forbidden to speak to anyone about his religion.

The prison chaplain (a Catholic priest), who was supposed to give spiritual comfort to the prisoners, made sure that there would be none for Manuel. This priest had the only Bible removed from the prison library, and when another prisoner gave Manuel a copy of the Gospels, this was snatched away from him. The prison guards constantly shouted at Manuel and tried to make life unbearable with a form of treatment that was not meted out to any other prisoners. And who was the instigator of all of this? None other than the prison priest.

Such persecution did not bring our work to a halt in Granada, any more than it did elsewhere. On November 18, 1960, when Manuel was freed, he wrote to the Society's branch office, saying in part: "It is a pleasure for me to tell you that, thanks to Jehovah, I am now free; also that on coming out I have found the congregation participating in good theocratic activity . . . Here a local study conductor has been able to direct everything in an organized way." Interestingly, that group study conductor later became an overseer of the Granada Congregation.

MISSIONARY ARRESTED

In March 1960, a missionary made a circuit visit to the Usera Congregation in Madrid, and Brother Patricio Herrero asked him for help in working the isolated territory of Villaverde, just a few kilometers outside the city. While a foreigner might be conspicuous in such an area, the arrangement seemed safe enough because the work was that of starting Bible studies with persons who already had shown interest in Bible truth. However, trouble started as soon as the missionary set foot in Villaverde.

Although Patricio used caution and did not draw close to the bus stop when the circuit overseer arrived, later one of the priest's local spies saw them walking together to make one of the return visits. The two brothers started a Bible study with a bedridden woman who had a heart condition. Then, just before they were about to leave, the missionary noticed from a window that a large group of women had formed around the entrance to that apartment house. But the brothers said nothing to the householder because they did not want to aggravate her physical condition.

The secret police started calling at every door to find the two Witnesses. Finally, there was a knock at the door of the apartment where the return visit was in progress. The householder told her four-year-old daughter to answer the door. "Are there two men here carrying book bags?" the police asked gruffly. In all innocence, the four-year-old replied: "Here there are only some of my mother's friends." So the police left.

That return visit was prolonged until it seemed that it would be safe to leave. The brothers made plans to walk back to Madrid following the railroad tracks, for surely the police would be watching the bus line. But when they arrived at the rail line, the police were waiting for them. They knew that by controlling the highway and the railway, sooner or later they would catch their prey. Before the missionary had said a word, they asked: "You're a foreigner, aren't you?"—apparently judging from his stature, for he is over six feet tall.

As the brothers sat waiting at the police station, suddenly the doors swung open for a moment and a man was seen giving a positive nod of the head. It was the priest's spy who had filed the complaint, and now the brothers were identified positively. Then began the game of trickery used by the police to get the information they desired. But the two brothers were

determined not to reveal the name of the woman with whom they had been discussing the Bible.

POLICE INTERROGATION A VALUABLE EXPERIENCE

When the police did not receive the answers they wanted, another "tough" policeman was used to try to obtain the information by force or threats. He accused the brothers of having come to Villaverde to plant a bomb, and held that their silence as to where they had been only proved that they were guilty. They held their ground, with the missionary continually asking that he be allowed to get in touch with the American Embassy—permission that never was granted.

When the tough tactic failed to produce the desired results, the next tactic of the police game of deceit went into operation. Another secret policeman entered and started to attack the "tough" policeman because of his vile and base methods. Of course, all of this was part of the act, and so the "tough" policeman moved off center stage grumbling. Then the new one started with his 'sweet talk.' "There really have been some bomb threats around here lately," said he, "and our only interest is in verifying your story, since we don't know you; nor are we aware of any neighbor with a heart condition such as you describe. If it is true that you were only visiting a friend interested in the Bible, you will be released immediately. But you can't blame us for being somewhat suspicious when you say that you were only doing something innocent that was not an offense, and yet you refuse to provide the information that will exonerate you of any suspicion."

After a good deal of such smooth talk, it was agreed that only this "kind" policeman would accompany Patricio to the house that they had visited in order to verify the truth, and that he would say nothing to the householder. The policeman would only make sure that she really did have a heart condition.

As soon as those two left, the missionary was hurried off to the General Bureau of Security in downtown Madrid. To his protests that they should wait for Patricio's return and confirmation of their story, the police cruelly retorted that he, too, soon would be brought along to downtown Madrid. The lies and deceit of the police had been effective, and the trusting brothers had fallen into their trap—a lesson that the missionary was never to forget. Later, it was learned that the lady they had visited was severely persecuted by the police, who charged her with knowingly harboring the brothers in her house during the police search.

Because of fear, she rejected any additional return visits.

The principal information desired by the police at the General Bureau of Security was the missionary's local address. No question was asked as to his religion; nor did they look in his book bag, which, in any case, contained only a Catholic Bible. Nevertheless, not long thereafter, he was ordered to report once again, and he was invited to leave the country. He responded that he did not want to accept the invitation, but was told that if he did not leave voluntarily his exit would be compulsory—"an experience that will be very disagreeable both for you and for us," said the police commissioner.

When asked about the motive for the expulsion, the commissioner replied only in general terms, stating that one can be thrown out of a country for three reasons—political, social, "or religious." "You know," said the commissioner, "there are only two kinds of persons in Spain—Catholics and unbelievers—and we cannot tolerate anything else." Consequently, on June 6, 1960, this missionary moved to Perpignan, France, but retained the hope of getting back into Spain someday since he had left "voluntarily." As a matter of fact, within three months he was back in Spain, and he served as branch overseer for some years. The interrogation experience proved to be of great value, and it later served as the basis for a service meeting program that showed the brothers how to respond under police questioning. It prepared them for deceitful police tactics and helped them to avoid falling into the trap of betraying the Kingdom interests or their fellow believers. Now they could really apply Jesus Christ's admonition: "Look! I am sending you forth as sheep amidst wolves; therefore prove yourselves cautious as serpents and yet innocent as doves."—Matt. 10:16.

INVITATIONS TO GILEAD SCHOOL

Through the years a number of graduates of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead have served in Spain, and we have been blessed by their fine activities. However, it was back in 1953 that pioneer José Cejudo turned out to be the first brother from Spain to attend Gilead School. Incidentally, he was assigned to serve in Argentina.

At the beginning of 1961, Salvador Adriá and his wife, Margarita Comas, were in the circuit work visiting the group at Torralba de Calatrava. The postman delivered a rather bulky letter, and Salvador went aside to read it alone. Well, the next thing that Margarita

heard was a shout, "An invitation to Gilead!" For months they had been studying English, just hoping for this day. But then came a blow. Salvador alone had been invited to a special ten-month course. Immediately, Margarita thought of the Spanish refrain '*Mi gozo en un pozo*,' that is, 'My joy down the well.'

In the summer of that year, the Adriás attended the international assembly of God's people in Paris. There they heard a talk on the great need existing in certain territories of Spain where our work had not yet started. Margarita decided to ask the branch office to assign her to one of these while her husband was in Gilead School. At the close of the assembly they spoke to M. G. Henschel, who told Margarita that she could go with her husband to London for three months to perfect her English, and that, if she did well, she would be invited to Gilead with Salvador. Well, Margarita nearly fainted with emotion and surprise.

As matters turned out, therefore, instead of going back to Spain, the Adriás went to London Bethel for three months. There they completed their study of English, and in November 1961 they set off for New York city, where they attended Gilead School. Later, the Adriás returned to Spain as the first Spanish couple having received Gilead training.

Today there are sixty-nine graduates of Gilead School serving in various parts of Spain. Their work is greatly appreciated, and they are a source of encouragement to their Spanish brothers and sisters.

POLICE ATTACK IN GALICIA

Another region in which Jehovah's Witnesses have experienced persecution through the years is Galicia. Toward the end of 1960, Francisco Córdoba and his wife, Margarita Roca, were each fined 1,000 pesetas (about \$20) for the crime of having participated in proselytism as special pioneers in La Coruña (Galicia) since 1958. In actual fact, they had not been caught preaching from house to house, nor had they been denounced by any citizens of the area. The police simply took the initiative against them. Their appeals against the fines were rejected.

During this period, our meetings were being held at a farm in Joane, but extreme caution had to be exercised. Because there was a store attached to the farm, customers were coming and going at all hours of the day and night. So, our meetings were held outside in an *hórreo*, a narrow rectangular building typical of Galicia and one that serves as a granary. The meetings would start at 10 or 11 p.m. and would continue past

midnight. Each time someone entered or departed, the lights were extinguished so that no one on a nearby farm could tell that people were coming and going. After working all day in the fields, to get to meetings some traveled by bicycle as far as twenty-two kilometers (14 miles). Special pioneers Francisco Córdoba and Jesús Arenas had to make a round trip of seventy-seven kilometers (48 miles) to visit the group and direct the meetings.

In December 1961, the police turned up at the farm, where Ramón Barca, his wife, Carmen, and her brother, Jesús Pose, were going about their daily chores. Without any legal warrant, the police searched the farmhouse and confiscated the literature they found, including a Nacar-Colunga Bible. The three Witnesses were taken into custody and were subjected to a ten-hour interrogation in the nearby town of Carballo. Two days later they appeared before the local judge who admitted that they could practice their religion privately at home. But he contended that they could not participate in anything that amounted to a public manifestation of their faith. Three weeks later the result came through—a fine of 500 pesetas each. The fines were not paid, as our policy was to appeal all fines rather than pay them, and thus try to get justice through the law.

In his reports to the Provincial Governor, the Chief of Police stated that the family's conduct was "favorable in every respect, without any unfavorable background," and that Ramón Barca was "classified by the *Guardia Civil* as an orderly person and in harmony with the Regime." He added that while the three were Jehovah's Witnesses, "it is very possible that acts of proselytism were not carried out in the hamlet, because of the difficulty that would be found in making members in our region where the Catholic religious belief is so rooted." So, he said that the Witnesses were possibly "limiting themselves to the practice of privately reading commentaries on the Bible in their own home." However, it was noted that the married couple frequently visited a Witness in the capital, La Coruña. So it was assumed that the crime of threatening the enigmatic "spiritual unity of Spain" had been committed.

In regard to the Bible study material that was confiscated, the police official opined that "it is to be supposed that they will distribute it among their friends or future members of the mentioned Sect." Here supposed intention of an act was the basis for an accusation. During the police search, some addresses were found, which were "without doubt visited in

their proselyting work," although "it is not considered that these acts might have any great repercussion," concluded the Chief of Police. (*Italics ours.*)

In spite of this relatively favorable report, the fines were imposed. The official notification gave a clue as to the reason why. The Provincial Governor justified his action in writing by saying: "Not only was the new report issued by the Superior Police Headquarters kept in mind, but also the contents of the confidential circular of the Ministry of the Interior . . . which warns against the activities of the sect 'Jehovah's Witnesses,' to which the three sanctioned ones belong." This confidential circular was the one of March 1961, which instructed the governors to impose fines of at least 2,500 pesetas on Jehovah's Witnesses. So, from the Provincial Governor's point of view, he was letting the Witnesses off lightly with fines of only 500 pesetas.

The case was appealed to the Supreme Court, which chose to consider it in private and in the absence of the accused and the lawyers. On June 27, 1964, the Court ruled that the three accused persons were guilty of committing the crime of threatening the "spiritual unity of Spain." Although the Court admitted that the *Spanish Bill of Rights* permits the private exercise of non-Catholic religions, they decided that the evidence was sufficient to prove that the three Witnesses had participated in proselytism and had infringed upon the spiritual (Catholic) unity of the nation.

CORDOBA'S MIDDLE-AGES MENTALITY

Another focal point of persecution was Córdoba, a city of about 200,000 inhabitants at that time, in the Andalusian region of southern Spain. The city has a strong Moorish-Arabic tradition due to centuries of occupation by the Moors. One of its most famous buildings is the *Mezquita* (Mosque) that has been converted into a Catholic place of worship. This structure is one of the most extensive religious buildings in the world, being 180 meters long and 130 meters wide (about 590 by 425 feet). It consists of nineteen naves, and the building's many arches are supported by 850 columns. In this same city a Jewish synagogue is preserved from the time when religious tolerance was practiced there. But how different the Córdoba of the 1960's!

Among the Christian witnesses of Jehovah who suffered persecution in Córdoba during the early 1960's were pioneers Manuel Mula and Antonio Moriana. They had been assigned to Córdoba in February 1961. One day two policemen came and took them to the

police station, along with a small amount of our older literature. At the station, the brothers were interrogated, but the police could get no useful information out of them. So, they started to beat the brothers, first with the hand, and then with a rubber truncheon, beating them on the back and the legs. Manuel ended up with a black eye, but the police still did not get any revealing information.

From the police station, the pioneers were taken to prison, where they were held for four days. Then they were notified that Antonio would have to pay a fine of 2,000 pesetas and Manuel a fine of 5,000 pesetas within ten days. Manuel was ordered to leave the province, and within a short time was back in Barcelona, awaiting a new assignment. Despite this experience, however, Antonio Moriana was able to continue his activity in Córdoba until May 1962.

The experience just related is merely typical. Actually, a number of pioneers were compelled to leave Córdoba because of police pressure. But in actual fact, the police themselves were under pressure applied by the clergy, enemies of Jehovah's faithful servants.

Because of the constant threat of being caught and expelled from the city of Córdoba, our work there, as in all other parts of Spain at that time, was carried on with extreme caution. None of our literature was offered or even carried from house to house. Publications were placed during return visits when individuals manifested genuine interest. Instead of working from door to door right down a street, isolated calls were made all over the territory, and no buildings were ever covered in a consecutive manner. In that way the police had great difficulty locating Witnesses as territory was being worked.

Also, only the Catholic Bible was used in the preaching work. Yet, even that was considered a dangerous weapon in the hands of Jehovah's Witnesses. The clergy applied pressure wherever they could and encouraged the authorities to track down anyone who studied with the Witnesses. Sometimes the police were their willing tools, but on other occasions they were just reluctant participants. Of course, that depended on the city or province. In Córdoba, they were willing tools.

A SHAMEFUL ATTACK

One of the most shameful attacks against Jehovah's Witnesses took place in mid-1962 at Los Lastres farm near Lucena, in the southern part of Córdoba province. The Montalbán family there had accepted the truth

and had started preaching it to their neighbors on nearby farms. Soon, Christian meetings were organized, and from twenty to thirty persons were attending.

On May 28 a very uncouth sergeant of the *Guardia Civil*, together with another guard, came to the Montalbán farm. The sergeant asked for the head of the family and threatened to take him to jail if the Bible study at the farm was not stopped.

Just four days later, on June 1, a captain, a sergeant and two additional guards turned up at the farm. Gruffly they mumbled something about an "anonymous complaint" about political activities. These men demanded the names of all those who visited the farm to study the Bible, most of whom were relatives of the family. Unwisely, and due to lack of experience, these names were supplied. The next step was to search the farm, even though the guards had no search warrant. They then went to another farm, and although the owner, who was studying the Bible, was not at home, they searched his house and took away some of our publications.

On that occasion the only member of the family that was baptized, Juan Montalbán Ortega, was openly insulted and accused of living in concubinage because he had been married in Gibraltar under British law, rather than accepting a Catholic rite in Spain. The captain wrote up a report of his visit and told those present that they all had to sign it. Once again lack of experience led them into a trap, and about twenty-eight of them signed the statement. Nevertheless, they insisted on adding the following words: "We study the Bible because it is the inspired Word of God, and in the Bible it states that one must preach it and make it known for the purpose of giving a witness of salvation to all the nations and then the end will come. Matthew 24:14."

On June 15 the Civil Governor of Córdoba fined these humble country people a total of 40,000 pesetas (\$666). Twelve persons were fined, with the fines ranging from the basic 2,500 pesetas recommended by the Ministry of the Interior circular to a maximum of 5,000 pesetas imposed on four of them. They were charged, in the words of the standard phrase, with "threatening the spiritual unity of Spain, by doing proselytism in favor of the Jehovah's Witnesses sect."

This group of interested persons wanted to appeal. So, the father, Antonio Montalbán, and his son Juan traveled to Córdoba, the capital city, to find a lawyer who would defend them. To the disgrace of the body of lawyers in that city, not one was willing to take on the defense or give them any assistance. Hence, they

did their best according to limited knowledge of the law, deposited one third of the total value of the fines, and lodged an appeal on behalf of all twelve defendants. However, no one had told them that they needed legal authorization, signed by a notary, in order to appeal on behalf of the other ten persons. On this technicality, the Civil Governor rejected those ten appeals, but kept the money that had been deposited. So, the only valid appeals were those of the father and son who had journeyed to the city. These two appeals were rejected by the Civil Governor and by the Ministry of the Interior, but, since they were valid, they could be taken to the Supreme Court. However, the final result of the two appeals was a defeat for the brothers and for freedom of religious expression.

In spite of setbacks during those years of persecution, it is encouraging to know that there are now four thriving congregations in Córdoba with about 350 publishers, and another eight congregations in the province, including one in Lucena, not far from the Los Lastres farm.

COPING WITH CONTINUED PERSECUTION

This persistent persecution of Jehovah's Christian witnesses in Spain showed that the police authorities were taking to heart the circulars sent out from the Ministry of the Interior from 1959 to 1966. Arrests and arbitrary imprisonment, together with fines, involved pioneers in such places as Córdoba, San Sebastián, Jaén, Castellón de la Plana, and Murcia, as well as a group of five publishers in Ciudad Real. In most cases the minimum stipulated fine of 2,500 pesetas was exacted, although it never was paid voluntarily. This has to be clarified because, in cases taken to the Supreme Court, the fines had to be deposited beforehand, and, if the case was lost, the fine automatically was forfeited. On the other hand, if the case was won, the money could be reclaimed, although it usually took much longer to get it back than the minimum period required by law for depositing it.

Getting legal assistance was not easy. For instance, consider what happened to two young special pioneers, Francisca López and Francisca Almarza. While serving in the provincial capital of Palencia in the early 1960's, on more than one occasion, they were fined heavily for their preaching work. In one instance, a lawyer was paid to appeal their case and then failed to do so. His negligence led to the two pioneer sisters having to spend thirty days in prison.

This problem with that particular lawyer illustrates

a situation that was general throughout Spain—the lack of lawyers willing to defend Jehovah's Witnesses. One or two started off with good intentions, but, when they were intimidated by being told that their defense of the Witnesses could hurt their career, their fighting spirit withered overnight. One refreshing exception to this has been the courageous defense of Jehovah's Witnesses waged by lawyer Eduardo Ajuria, who, while not being a Witness, has shown himself to be truly dedicated to the cause of justice by the rule of law. He has represented Jehovah's Witnesses on countless occasions, even as far as the Supreme Court.

SUPREME COURT VICTORIES

There have been times when Jehovah's Witnesses in Spain have been victorious in legal battles carried to the Supreme Court. So, let us tell you something about certain victories won there.

In 1963 police inspectors visited the "Monte Carlo" pension in Málaga, owned by Francisco Alonso Valle and his wife, Esperanza. They were accused of holding unauthorized meetings. The house was searched, and those fingerprinted included their two small children who were only eight and four years of age. One person who had attended the meetings, Brother Fernández, was so harassed at the barbershop where he worked that he finally lost his job. As a result of this police investigation, four of the accused were fined 500 pesetas each, and Brother Fernández, as a second offender, was fined 2,000 pesetas. He had been fined the year before for being one of Jehovah's Witnesses and had spent fifteen days in prison in lieu of the fine.

The case of these five persons was appealed to the Minister of the Interior. But the appeal was rejected on the grounds that it was deemed that, by their activities, the Witnesses had "threatened the spiritual unity of Spain." So, the case was appealed to the Supreme Court. On October 20, 1966, that Court annulled the decision of Málaga's Civil Governor. It reasoned that obviously in private meetings the commentary given on the Bible would be in agreement with the doctrine professed in common and that, therefore, it could not be considered as proselytizing propaganda. Furthermore, it had not been proved that more than twenty persons had attended the meeting, so that it was not outside the law as an unauthorized meeting. With regard to the holding of our meetings this was a notable victory.

It is interesting to note that during the three years 1964 to 1967 the Supreme Court upheld thirty-eight of

the more than fifty convictions that Jehovah's Witnesses had appealed to that Court. Most of those lost cases had to do with the preaching activity, which constituted for the judges a public manifestation of non-Catholic religious beliefs that they considered to be a violation of the law as it then stood.

On June 10, 1964, two young sisters, Santiaga Sánchez and Encarnita García, were arrested while waiting in a bus they had boarded to go back to their hometown of Torralba de Calatrava. They were taken to the police station in Ciudad Real where they were interrogated from 8 p.m. to 4:30 a.m. Both of them were fined 2,500 pesetas (\$42) for "belonging to the sect 'Jehovah's Witnesses'" and "for making trips to this Capital to carry on proselyting activities for the mentioned sect." The same night that the sisters were interrogated, three more "suspects" were rounded up and questioned, ending up with their being fined the stipulated minimum of 2,500 pesetas. These fines were appealed to the Ministry of the Interior, which upheld them. The last step was to appeal to the Supreme Court.

The question before the Court was whether one's admission during interrogation that he was one of Jehovah's Witnesses was in itself basis for incrimination. The Court observed that, "apart from the individual interrogations," the police affidavit "had been drawn up without any other activity or effort, neither documental nor by witnesses, either direct or referential, which could serve as a verifying element." The judges perceived "not only imprecision" in regard to the police investigation, but a complete absence of proof, which evidence is necessary "in any case in order to consider as true the facts upon which the assumption is based." Hence, the Court concluded that from the "interrogations, only a personal conviction is deduced." As to the charge of public proselytism, the Court held that "not in any case is verification achieved nor does the affidavit even try to do so." For these reasons the five accused persons were acquitted, although they never recovered the full amount deposited for the fines.

In comparison with the convictions that were upheld, the legal victories were few and far between. Yet, in spite of imprisonment, fines and expulsions from their assignments, the pioneers kept up their intensive preaching activity and faithfully followed the example of the apostles. (Acts 5:27-29) While congregation publishers often were affected by the persecution, it was the pioneers who bore the brunt of the attack, and frequently in isolated assignments where they did not even have the stimulus of association and meetings in a congregation.

THE TRUTH IN A NUTSHELL

We would like to punctuate our story at this point by telling you about an unusual way in which some brothers cared for the spiritual and physical needs of their imprisoned fellow believers. It all started on December 7, 1961, when Félix Llop was conducting a study with a small group in Oviedo. Without warning there was a raid by two carloads of police, the house was searched, and the Bibles and Bible literature were confiscated. Félix and Sergio Cruz, the latter a Cuban brother, were taken off to jail. The next day their wives were required to report to the police station. After being interrogated for two days they too were put in prison. All four were photographed and fingerprinted, and then held in jail for ten days before sentence was passed. The Civil Governor decreed a total of 17,000 pesetas (\$283) in fines for the four of them, for "acts of clandestine proselytism in Oviedo for the sect called Jehovah's Witnesses." No provisional liberty was granted them.

Well, while the four Witnesses were in prison, the brothers outside were conscious of their physical and spiritual needs. So, one day a trusted prisoner delivered a package of food items to Félix. It included a bag of walnuts. Félix gave a handful to the prisoner and sent half the bag to Sergio. A little while later, the prisoner came back and said, "Look what we have found in the walnuts!" Inside there were pages from the book "*Make Sure of All Things*"! Félix quickly opened the nuts he had and found that every one of them contained pages from that publication. One of the brothers had carefully opened up all the nuts, taken out the nutmeat, folded up a page, put it inside, and sealed the shell with glue. Félix and Sergio hid the pages inside borrowed library books so that they could read them without getting caught.

Later that month Félix and his wife María were sent back to their province of origin, Barcelona, some 1,130 kilometers (700 miles) away. Their journey dragged out over eleven days and through six dirty, dingy prisons. During this time, Félix was continually handcuffed to common criminals. On arrival in Barcelona, their ordeal was not over, for there were more interrogations, and they were not finally released on provisional liberty until they had spent thirty-seven days in different prisons.

WITNESS CHILDREN ALSO SUFFER

During the many years of persecution, children of Jehovah's Witnesses in Spain also endured opposition

and other hardships. For instance, on October 20, 1961, all children were lined up to go to Mass in the junior school of Torralba de Calatrava (Ciudad Real). Juan García, the nine-year-old son of one of the local Witnesses, stepped aside and explained to the teacher, as he had done before, that he belonged to another religion and therefore could not attend the Mass. The teacher ordered him to take his books, leave the school, and not come back.

Juan's father visited the school and tried to reason with the teacher. But the teacher maintained his position that he could not tolerate non-Catholic pupils in a Catholic school. The father pointed out to him that the town did not have any non-Catholic schools, and since the law guaranteed education for every child, it was not a just act to expel his son on a matter of religious principle. However, the teacher would not give way and refused to readmit the child.

The local mayor took the case to higher authorities, and in February 1962 the teacher was required to accept Juan García in the school once again. In the meantime, he had lost over three months of schooling due to this intolerant attitude.

A similar case occurred in another small town just a few miles away, Carrión de Calatrava, where the teacher beat ten-year-old Félix Angulo and took him by force to the Mass. He was then expelled from school, along with his brother and sister. This took place three months after the Torralba case had been resolved.

Another case arose in Manresa, Barcelona, with Juanito Belmonte, the eleven-year-old son of José Belmonte. The teacher had ordered all the children to stand and salute the national flag. Juanito stood up, but did not salute. The teacher started to strike him and tried to force his hand up in salute, but to no avail. The boy then was ordered to leave the school and not return.—Ex. 20:4-6; Ps. 3:8; 1 John 5:21.

Juanito's father, José, tried to reason with the teacher, pointing out that saluting the flag was not a prerequisite for receiving an education in school. José also showed that his son had displayed more respect for what the flag represents than the teacher, who had committed assault and battery and had taken the high-handed action of expelling Juanito from the school. But the teacher refused to reason and slammed the door in the father's face.

The matter did not end there. The teacher denounced the father and son to the police for alleged disrespect for the flag and for holding illegal Bible meetings in the home. Fulfilling their role, the police went to the brother's place of work and arrested him for the

purpose of obtaining a statement from him. The outcome was that José Belmonte was fined 5,000 pesetas by the Civil Governor of Barcelona for allegedly inciting his son to commit disrespectful acts toward the flag.

TEEN-AGERS SUFFER PERSECUTION

In October 1962, Jesús Laporta, a sixteen-year-old regular pioneer, moved to Castellón de la Plana, on the east Mediterranean coast of Spain. His pioneer partner was Florentino Castro. Their presence brought the group there to a total of five Kingdom proclaimers and gave impetus to the preaching activity. Naturally, this brought them to the attention of the clergy and the local police.

By July 1963 the preaching work in that area was producing small groups of believers, not only in Castellón, but also in nearby towns scattered throughout this rich orange-growing region. On July 5, Florentino was arrested, and three days later the police located Jesús Laporta at his pension. Both of them were charged with illegal propaganda and proselytism and were kept in prison for thirty days.

In December 1963, Jesús was made a special pioneer, and, in the meantime, his fourteen-year-old sister came to live with him in Castellón. On April 2, 1964, police forced their way into his home during his absence and, without an official search warrant, they ransacked the place and confiscated Bibles and Bible literature, as well as the keys to the house. When they raided the home, they found regular pioneer Florentino Castro there and arrested him. While they were searching, seventeen-year-old regular pioneer Juan Pedro Ruiz turned up at the house and he was arrested. Because there was not sufficient time to appeal the fines imposed on these two brothers, they had to spend twenty days in prison.

About a week after the raid on his home, Jesús was picked up by police, who had been looking for him. He was fined 5,000 pesetas (\$83), but the decision was immediately appealed. Nevertheless, Jesús spent eight days in jail, and during this time his teen-age sister was left alone and without a guardian.

The authorities were pitiless in their persecution of this group of young people, returning to the attack in September 1964, when they again arrested Florentino Castro and Juan Pedro Ruiz. For "propagating ideas and proselyting activities" of the "Protestant sect Jehovah's Witnesses," they were fined 5,000 pesetas

each. So it was that within fifteen months Florentino had been fined three times for the same offense.

The appeal against Jesús' fine was heard in the Supreme Court on February 4, 1966, and the defense was based on the fact that no evidence or proof was presented against the accused. No complaint had been laid against him. The prosecution based their arguments on Jesús' previous reputation and the statement of the police that he was known to participate in proselytism. The Supreme Court upheld the conviction and established a dangerous precedent that would convict anyone known to be one of Jehovah's Witnesses. Fortunately, however, this decision was counterbalanced in November of that same year by the favorable Ciudad Real decision mentioned earlier.

In 1966, Florentino was still working in Castellón, although not as a pioneer. At 12:15 p.m. on March 22, two policemen came to his place of work and arrested him. During the interrogation at police headquarters, he was struck twice as they tried to get information from him about other brothers in the group. Florentino was charged under the country's vagrancy law, even though he had been taken away from his place of work, which obviously indicated that he was no vagrant. However, after six days in prison, orders came from Madrid for his release, since plainly there was no basis for a charge.

During those years of bitter persecution, progress was slow in Castellón. So, by March 1966—after four years of pioneer activity—there were still only thirteen Kingdom publishers in that area.

In spite of the Religious Liberty Law passed in 1967, the Castellón police still tried to harass Jehovah's Witnesses, so that in April 1970, they raided a private home where sixteen adult persons and five children had met together to consider the Bible. The police produced a search warrant, but, when they saw that they had interrupted a Bible study, they left on the understanding that the brothers would present themselves at the police station. At the station they were accused of holding an illegal meeting, and the accusation was passed on to the local judge. Steps were taken to draw the matter to the attention of the newly established Commission for Religious Liberty. This was sufficient for no further action to be taken by the police, and was evidence that in certain respects the Commission was able to guarantee religious liberty.

By 1970 the Castellón Congregation had flourished in an amazing way. In April they reported 79 publishers, and by June the number had risen to 108.

Shortly thereafter, separate groups were formed in the nearby towns of Burriana and Vall d'Uxó. Then, when the Association of Jehovah's Witnesses was legalized, Castellón became the first congregation to build its own Kingdom Hall. This hall, with a seating capacity of over 200, was inaugurated by the branch overseer in the spring of 1971. What a change of circumstances after nine years of harassment by the police! Here was yet another example of how the eight-year campaign by the Ministry of the Interior to stamp out Jehovah's Witnesses had failed completely, despite zealous obedience to its orders and circulars on the part of the local police.

ARRESTS IN ALMERIA

In those days, police harassment occurred in place after place, including the city of Almería on Spain's southern coast. Young special pioneers Ester Sillas Evangelio and Ana María Torregrosa were assigned to work there in March 1962. During April they were visited by the circuit overseer Enrique Roca and his wife, who were staying with them in their rented apartment.

One morning a knock came at the door and Ester asked who it was. The response? "*¡La policía!*" "*¿La policía?*" Ester repeated in a loud voice. That was a warning for the circuit overseer and his wife, although the police never realized it. Quick-witted Ester acted at once and asked the policemen if they had an official search warrant. No they did not, but she was to accompany them to the police station. Of course, while they were at the station, Enrique and his wife departed. In fact, Brother Roca left so fast that he forgot to arrange his bedroom, so that when the police walked in, there was one narrow single bed and, on the floor, the mattress on which he had slept—with his pajamas left behind in full view!

The policeman asked Ester who slept there. "I do," she said. "What? On both beds?" asked the policeman. Ester tried to treat it as a joke, replying: "The mattress is so comfortable that when I am tired of sleeping on the bed I use the mattress." The policeman laughed at that and there were no more questions then.

The sisters were detained in the police station cells for four days and three nights. They were constantly interrogated, and generally this was done separately. The interrogation was no amateur affair. Ester was put under a strong light and surrounded by policemen who fired questions at her. She acted a bit silly so that

her answers often had no logic to them. But when they triumphantly caught her in a contradiction, she queried: "A contradiction? Please let me see what I signed yesterday." They gave it to her to read, and she read it all through very carefully so that she would not make the same mistake again. She was not as silly as she acted. When they asked her difficult questions, Ester requested a moment to concentrate—time she used well to pray to Jehovah for help.—Compare 1 Samuel 21:12-15.

A KIND JUDGE

The pioneers were next taken to court, where they were questioned by the judge and yet another statement had to be signed. According to Spanish court procedure, after declarations or statements are taken by the police, the accused is taken to court to be questioned by the judge, who then decides if there is a case. If so, he determines the penalty. By a different administrative procedure, the cases can be determined by the Civil Governor, who bases his decision on the evidence presented in the police report and the statements of the accused. Most of the cases involving Jehovah's Witnesses were decided by this latter method.

When the sisters had signed a statement for the judge, he started to ask them more questions, but in a kind manner. He told them there was nothing to fear; they had signed their statements and nothing further would be taken down against them. Ester took this opportunity to give a witness in the presence of some fourteen persons, including court officials and policemen. When she had finished speaking, what a surprise to hear the judge say that they were free to go and that they could pick up their belongings that the police had taken in the search!

When the sisters stepped outside into the corridor, however, the picture changed. Two uniformed policemen came forward and told the girls to accompany them to the police station to deal with the matter that was pending. When Ester and Ana María got there they were informed that the Civil Governor had fined them 2,000 pesetas each, and that, in default of payment, they would have to go to prison. So, off to prison they went.

In prison a new territory opened up for them, as they were able to preach to the inmates, officials and nuns located there. However, it was difficult to find ways of witnessing to the other prisoners, since the nuns did everything within their power to make such contacts impossible. When it was the recreation hour, all the

prisoners were free to wander around except Ester and Ana María, who were kept in their cell. This was no obstacle, though, for the other prisoners who wanted to talk to the sisters climbed a fig tree outside their cell window and spoke to them. The sisters, in turn, put their bed against the cell wall and climbed up to continue witnessing. When the nuns came around and the sisters could not communicate, they would sing Kingdom songs, which amazed the other inmates. How could they be so happy when everyone else was so sad?

The month-long stay in prison was beneficial to Ester in an unexpected way. It gave her time and opportunity to read the Bible all the way through.

Miguel Gil, the special pioneer in Granada, was sent to Almería to seek a lawyer who might help the sisters. The lawyer spoke to the judge who had handled their case, and the judge reacted with such indignation at the treatment the girls were experiencing that he came to the prison to see them. However, he was not allowed in on the pretext that they were being held incommunicado, which was a lie. He insisted on seeing them and finally was able to do so. The judge offered the sisters every kind of help, even writing their families to reassure them. He also encouraged them to keep up their good work once they got out of prison, saying that he would be pleased to see them on their release. This kindly intervention was a great encouragement to Ester and Ana María.

Finally, when the girls stepped out of prison they had the joy of finding Miguel Gil there to greet them. Incidentally, all the evidence pointed to the fact that their month in prison was due to the activities of the priest in the Pescadería quarter of the city. He had aroused fear in the people and no doubt was the person who had denounced the sisters to the police.

Of course, this was not the only encounter with the police in Almería. But it was noteworthy because of the kindness expressed by a judge in that city. With the passing of the years the congregation in Almería has grown. In 1972, after some difficulties with the mayor's office, the brothers there inaugurated their Kingdom Hall. Today the congregation in that city has 124 publishers, eight regular pioneers and two special pioneers.

CONTINUING FIGHT ON MALLORCA

Having reviewed some of the experiences of Jehovah's people on the mainland, let us consider their activities on the island of Mallorca. In 1961 the position of the brothers in Mallorca worsened. All those receiving

packages of literature were under surveillance, and Witnesses walking the streets with literature in their briefcases ran the risk of a week "inside" if they were stopped by the police. By June of that year, the brothers were being bothered even in their homes by constant visits of the police.

One never knew when trouble would arise. For instance, on one occasion Antonio Molina and Gabriel Vaquer were preaching in Palma de Mallorca when a householder invited them to enter and consider the booklet *"This Good News of the Kingdom"* with him. First of all, he had to fetch his glasses. Then his wife left to go and buy some milk. In a few minutes she came back with the "milk"—two plainclothes policemen who started to question the brothers. Antonio and Gabriel asked that they produce their identification. Well, one turned out to be a lieutenant colonel of the *Guardia Civil* and the other a brigadier. This "milk" was decidedly sour! Furthermore, the householder also was a member of the *Guardia Civil*. The brothers were interrogated and then led off to prison, where they were kept for fifteen days.

For Jehovah's people in Palma the situation was atrocious. It seemed that there were spies and enemies everywhere, just waiting to trap Jehovah's Witnesses as they spoke about the Word of God. For instance, on May 27, 1962, Félix Lumbreras, the father of three children, and Catalina Forteza de Mula, the wife of the much-arrested Manuel Mula, were chatting with a lady interested in the truth. As they did so, a policeman living across the hall came out of his home and went downstairs. When the Witnesses left the building, they found him waiting to arrest them. They were fined 1,000 pesetas each.

On November 14, 1963, Jaime Sastre and Antonia Galindo were arrested while preaching from house to house. Unknowingly they presented their Bible sermon to a civil guard. When Jaime's wife went to the police to check on his whereabouts, they denied that he was in custody. But she went to the Civil Governor's office and, through his secretary, determined that her husband was being held at the *Guardia Civil* headquarters. So, she went there to inquire about him and was told that the next time her husband was caught it would mean three months in prison. After that, he would be locked up and the key would be thrown away. She was not allowed to see him, but the outcome was that both she and her husband were fined, and their appeals were turned down by the Civil Governor.

On December 25, 1963, five brothers from the Inca Congregation were witnessing in the unassigned town

of Petra. While waiting for the train back to Inca, the brothers noticed that a fanatical person they had met that morning put in a brief appearance at the station and then left. Shortly thereafter, a civil guard appeared, asking all the brothers to accompany him to the police station. They were searched and all their publications, including Bibles, were taken away. Each brother had to make a statement, and then they were released. Subsequently, four of them were fined.

SUPREME COURT RULING

On December 10, 1965, the Supreme Court decided to lump together several of the Mallorca cases. So they handed down their decision on the appeals of Félix Lumbreras and Catalina Forteza de Mula, Jaime Sastre and Antonia Galindo, as well as four brothers from Inca who were apprehended in Petra.

The single decision for all these cases was that the Witnesses had not restricted themselves to a private exercise of their religion. Rather, it was contended that they "preferred to manifest themselves openly as active and conscious agents of proselytism, publicly exercised by means of the diffusion of propaganda and abundant visits to homes, by which they obviously invaded the sphere of prohibition." The appeals were rejected and all the cases were lost.

There was no doubt about where the authorities stood with regard to Jehovah's people. They were determined to stamp God's servants out of existence by means of fear and regular imprisonment. A brother in Inca went to visit a lieutenant of the *Guardia Civil* that he knew personally. During the conversation the lieutenant said: "Up till now we haven't tried to do you any harm, but now our orders are to 'exterminate' you. Rather than lose my uniform, I will certainly see all of you dance. . . . We have received orders from the Governor to go from house to house in Inca to warn every householder that when you call they should advise us. Our orders are to take you handcuffed, from wherever we might find you, directly to jail."

CLERGY RESPONSIBILITY

Of course, the Catholic Church was behind this persecution and the clergy rejoiced in the ill-treatment of the Witnesses. For instance, on September 18, 1962, the Bishop of Mallorca said in a radio broadcast: "We give thanks to God for helping us to see who in reality do good. We give thanks to God for helping us to see who in reality are falsifying the Word of the good God. Look at them! In prisons, prosecuted and punished.

... Now let us take a look at the Catholic religion. Once again we give thanks to God that it still continues to be the true religion." Rather than giving thanks to God, gratitude should have been expressed to the Civil Governor and the *Guardia Civil* for trying to preserve the Catholic monopoly.

A fanatical fighter against Jehovah's Witnesses was the priest of the *Cristo Rey* parish in the town of Inca. He also was responsible for radio broadcasts against the Witnesses, and published defamatory articles against God's people. Moreover, he went from house to house to collect literature left by Jehovah's Witnesses so that he could burn it. Ten years later, there was a strange sequel to all of this. Luis Salazar was vacationing in Inca in 1971 and, by chance, called at the home of this priest. He was invited in and, after a brief discussion of Bible subjects, the priest said that he wanted to ask forgiveness for his past actions against Jehovah's Witnesses. He now realized his mistake and was aware of his anti-Christian attitude. The priest showed Brother Salazar that he had the Society's books on his shelves, and then went on to comment: "If there are any good men or saints in this world, they are among Jehovah's Witnesses."

STRENGTHENED BY PERSECUTION

Those years of difficulty in Mallorca only served to strengthen Jehovah's people. In December 1972, there were 500 publishers in Mallorca, 26 on the island of Ibiza and 40 on the island of Menorca. Today Mallorca has 950 publishers, Ibiza 61, and Menorca 91. Interestingly, Palma has one Witness for every 385 persons, as compared with the national average of one for every 908.

Throughout Spain, by means of his visible organization, Jehovah helped his people in the especially difficult years of 1958 to 1967. During that period there was persecution of some kind in most of the major cities. This account includes only a few representative examples of the ill-treatment suffered by the pioneers and Jehovah's Witnesses in general.

Among others, cases also arose in Huelva and Alicante. In Manresa (Barcelona) fourteen persons were arrested in 1962 for studying the Bible together, although the charges later were dropped. At Zaragoza, where special pioneer Máximo Murcia and his wife were imprisoned for fifteen days in 1960, an American family was harassed by the priest and the police for allowing Bible meetings in their private home. The list could go on to include the deportation of missionary Carl

Warner in 1961. Yes, there were innumerable cases of persecution, and there was continual harassment throughout Spain during that ten-year period. But all the hardships strengthened the faith of the brothers and Jehovah helped them to carry on in doing the divine will, so that the increase continued by leaps and bounds.

The opposition of the clergy—both Catholic and Protestant—has never ceased. Of course, they had the active collaboration of the Ministry of the Interior for years. As clear evidence that there was no change of heart, even though the government was preparing the Religious Liberty Law, we quote from Circular No. 5 of 1966, from the General Director of the Interior in the Ministry of the Interior. Dated February 24, 1966, it stated, in part, as a directive to all Civil Governors:

"It is necessary to obtain a greater exemplariness in the repression of the illicit proselyting activities that members of the sect known as 'Jehovah's Witnesses' are carrying out in all the national territory . . . The reason lies in the fact that the present measures of a monetary nature lack sufficient efficacy to stop such activities. . . . In consequence, I urge Your Excellency on orders from His Excellency the Minister of the Interior," to denounce to courts handling vagrancy cases "all members of the said sect that may be caught carrying out such activities." Eighteen months later the Religious Liberty Law was put into effect and the general attitude toward Jehovah's Witnesses became more favorable. Also, the official attitude became more flexible as a consequence of the new law.

EMINENT JURIST ANALYZES THE LEGAL BATTLE

The battle waged by Jehovah's Witnesses during those years of bitter persecution served as an outstanding witness in the legal circles of the nation. Many lawyers and judges had their first contact with God's people because of our tenacity in appealing every possible case to the Supreme Court, in order to obtain justice and religious freedom. This fact was noted by a prominent Spanish jurist, Lorenzo Martín-Retortillo, formerly professor of law at the University of Salamanca and now at the University of Zaragoza. In 1970 he published a legal study on Religious Liberty and Public Order.

This study consists of a seventy-eight-page analysis of many cases that came before the Supreme Court and that obligated the Court to define the private exercise of religious expression in Spain, and to interpret the phrase "the spiritual unity of Spain."

As a result of this jurist's study of the accusations in

the cases he considered, he wrote: "It is not difficult to arrive at a conclusion: the following types of conduct are sanctioned and prosecuted as contrary to public order: the holding of meetings to comment on the Bible or other religious texts; the possession of propagandistic literature of the religion; the making of visits to the homes of friends or unknown persons with the aim of propagating the religion; traveling and making contacts with the same end in view, etc. Therefore it is a matter of acts of religious celebration, as occurs with many of the meetings . . . or acts of religious evangelism."

Although the cases of Jehovah's Witnesses are cited on nearly every page, the third chapter of this study is specifically entitled "The special incidence of sanctions against 'Jehovah's Witnesses.'" In part, it states: "As one studies ten years of Jurisprudence, and observes the governmental sanctions for reasons of public order that affect religious conduct, there is one fact that decidedly catches the attention: It is that in almost all cases considered, those who have intervened are members of *only one religious group*. Those who have appealed against the administrative decisions are, practically in all cases, members of 'Jehovah's Witnesses.'"

As a result of this conclusion, Señor Martín-Retortillo raises the following questions: "Are 'Jehovah's Witnesses' the only group among the non-Catholics that carry out their activities, going beyond the tolerated limits? Does the Administration think that this group should be the object of special attention because of its special danger, significance, activity or any other circumstance? . . . As one can appreciate these are questions that I cannot resolve now, nor do I endeavor to do so. . . . However, that is no obstacle to expressing the perplexity it produces to find that, in the period under study, and in relation to the subject of religion, the sanctions have centered unanimously on members of a determined confession."

One of the basic conclusions that Señor Martín-Retortillo reached from his analysis was that the official persecution of Jehovah's Witnesses was the result of their active proselytism, their position as conscientious objectors and because some of their publications had been critical of the Spanish regime. Of course, Jehovah's Witnesses actually are neutral as to politics. (John 17:16) Nevertheless, from this we can draw the conclusion that if the Protestant sects were not officially subject to persecution, they obviously were not engaged in public preaching activity and they were not maintaining Christian neutrality—

two fundamental requirements for true followers of Jesus Christ.

BENEFITING FROM THE KINGDOM MINISTRY SCHOOL

During the years of intense persecution, every effort was made to provide spiritual aid and direction. Accordingly, in December 1961, the Society's branch office in Spain organized the first classes of the Kingdom Ministry School. Of course, the school could not be held as it was in other countries—for a month or, later, for two weeks. Rather, it had to be held for two months and at night. The first two classes were held in Barcelona. And, in order not to attract attention, the classes were kept down to from twelve to fifteen students.

From 1962 to April of 1968, 347 servants and pioneers received training and instruction in the Kingdom Ministry School. When it was held in Barcelona, members of the branch office staff were able to get personally acquainted with the overseers and listen to their problems. Also, the lectures were given by five members of the Bethel family. To date, 1,342 individuals have attended the Kingdom Ministry School in Spain.

UPBUILT BY ASSEMBLIES

During all the years of our "underground" activity, we continued to receive spiritual food through special arrangements that were made for holding circuit assemblies. Since it was dangerous to bring all the brothers together at one time, a special procedure was adopted whereby the assembly program could be transmitted to all the congregations in each circuit. Overseers received copies of the program and then attended the assembly. In this way the attendance was kept down to around 100 to 200 persons. Moreover, assembly locations were wisely chosen, usually in the open air, such as the woods, the mountains or a beach. Then again, a private house served well, if it was some distance from the neighbors. At any rate, the attending overseers followed the program carefully, taking notes. Later, the assembly program was repeated in their own congregations.

Great precautions had to be taken to make sure that the assembly site was not found by the police. A problem did arise during a circuit assembly in 1969, when the Sevilla police learned of a big meeting in the patio of a private home and turned up with police cars and trucks. Some 250 brothers and interested persons were in attendance. All the men and the single sisters were carted off to police headquarters for interrogation, and all the books were confiscated and

never returned. Ten brothers were kept in prison for four days. One of those arrested was a sister's opposed husband who had attended out of curiosity. He was so impressed by the conduct of the brothers in prison that, on his release, he started to study and became a baptized brother. This police raid received worldwide publicity, and perhaps as a consequence, no legal proceedings were taken against the brothers.

ATTENDING DISTRICT ASSEMBLIES HELD ABROAD

What about district assemblies during this period of persecution? How did the brothers get the benefit of those programs? Well, special trains and buses were hired each year, and the brothers traveled to France, Italy or Switzerland to attend these gatherings.

For example, the Spanish brothers were delighted to attend an assembly in Rome during 1969. Since most of them were ex-Catholics, it thrilled them to think that they could hold a convention in the Pope's "backyard." Of course, the paradox of the situation was that they could *not* hold an assembly in "more papist than the Pope" Spain! Incidentally, while in Rome, some of the Spanish Witnesses visited the catacombs, once associated with early Christianity. These attracted much curiosity, as the Spanish brothers were still in their "catacomb" period of secret meetings hidden from their persecutors.

In July 1970 Jehovah's Witnesses were granted legal recognition in Spain and could thus hold assemblies there. However, the contract already had been made for the 1971 district assembly to be held in Toulouse, France. Due to a cholera scare at the last minute in Spain, the French authorities refused permission for the Spanish assembly. Thus immediate steps were taken to find a suitable meeting place in Barcelona. After overcoming great difficulties, it was possible to rent the older and dirtier of the two Barcelona bullrings, the one called *Las Arenas*. Time was short, and the brothers really worked to clean the bullring. In fact, the caretaker said he had never seen it so clean in thirty years, and he was amazed at the spirit of the brothers.

But then a "bomb" fell. The Civil Governor of Barcelona was away and his substitute refused to allow the holding of the assembly on a technicality—the fact that permission had not been requested a full ten days before the event. This news was broken to the brothers working at the bullring just a day before the assembly was due to start. Many Witnesses from distant parts of the country already were on their way to the con-

vention. When they arrived at Barcelona they were met with the sad news. However, with typical Spanish adaptability, they converted their trip into tourism and visited the local Kingdom Halls, as well as Bethel and other places of interest. So, they derived some spiritual benefit from their journey. Later, substitute assemblies were held in various places, with a total attendance of 20,176. During these gatherings 483 persons were baptized.

We encountered various difficulties in endeavoring to hold Christian assemblies during later years. However, with Jehovah's help we have been able to cope with these problems in one way or another. So far, during the 1970's we have had many splendid and spiritually upbuilding gatherings.

The last time the Spanish brothers had to go abroad for an assembly was in 1973, when it became impossible to hire an adequate site for an international assembly in Spain. Thus they once again took to their chartered planes, trains and buses, and private cars, with the result that over 19,000 flocked to the massive assembly facilities at Brussels World's Fair Grounds in Belgium. This "Divine Victory" International Assembly was a joy to the Spanish Witnesses, as they mingled with their 31,000 French, Flemish- and Portuguese-speaking brothers from many countries. What a thrill when 1,273 new Spanish Christians were baptized in symbol of their dedication!

Since then the district assemblies have been held in Spain in a variety of cities and locales, including soccer stadiums in Salamanca, Gijón, Sabadell, Almeria and Estepona, and bullrings in Barcelona, Madrid and Marbella. With each assembly the Spanish brothers have gained valuable experience and are now eagerly awaiting the 1978 international assembly to be held in Barcelona, where they look forward to serving their fellow believers from many lands, especially those who served them so hospitably in past decades in France, Switzerland, Italy and Belgium.

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES LEGALIZED IN 1970!

For many years before the Religious Liberty Law was passed in 1967, Jehovah's Witnesses had been endeavoring to get their organization legalized in Spain. The first attempt was made in 1956, when a petition and copy of the proposed statutes were presented to the Civil Governor of Barcelona for his approval. This attempt did not prosper. Another effort was made in 1965, when Brother Knorr directed a written appeal to the Spanish government, asking what procedure should

be followed to get the Society and Jehovah's Witnesses legalized. Again no practical result was obtained.

On June 28, 1967, after protracted debate in *Las Cortes* (the Spanish Parliament) and even longer preparation by legal and ecclesiastical experts, the Religious Liberty Law was accepted and passed. Although it was a law permitting religious liberty, it also brought about religious control, for the provisions of the law obligate each religion, except the Roman Catholic, to lay itself open to scrutiny by the Ministry of Justice. The law provided for a strict control of members and also a yearly presentation of the accounts, with a clear definition of the source of income and the expenses.

The Protestant sects did not like the law and delayed their request for legalization, so that the government granted an extension for registration until May 1968. However, the Watch Tower Society was probably the first to request the registration and presented its petition on December 12, 1967. The Ministry of Justice directory dated May 31, 1969, revealed that the initial religion to be registered was the Reformed Presbyterian Church, with its one place of worship and one registered minister approved in May 1968. That issue of the directory listed 105 religious groups—among them Brethren, Christian Science, Mormons, Jews, Pentecostals, Anglicans, Baptists, Adventists, Assembly of God, Evangelical, Moslems—in fact, practically every religion except the one especially conspicuous by its absence, Jehovah's Witnesses. Their legalization had to wait until July 10, 1970. When that next list of approved religions came out, Jehovah's Witnesses were No. 131. But at last their legalization had been achieved in Spain!

The latest listing was dated December 15, 1975, with 238 religious groups included. This latest booklet contains a total of 83 pages, in which each religious group is listed by cities and towns, and then also by places of worship. Jehovah's Witnesses occupy fully 37 percent of all the pages of the directory, making them indisputably the largest religion in Spain after the Catholic Church.

With legalization, plans promptly went ahead to open Kingdom Halls and to obtain a suitable place for the Bethel home. The first Kingdom Hall was inaugurated on December 19, 1970, in the *Barrio del Pilar*, a new building project in a populous, working-class area of Madrid.

During February 1971, Brother Knorr visited Spain and spoke to public audiences in Madrid and Barcelona,

with a total attendance of over 14,000. Even he found it hard to believe that he was actually speaking to such large numbers of Spanish brothers, and *in Spain!*

Brother Knorr made use of that visit to check over possible buildings for the branch office, and decided on a six-story edifice in Barcelona at Calle Pardo, No. 65, where the branch office and Bethel home are located today. Once the purchase was completed, the work of transforming the place was organized. Volunteers were invited from the Barcelona congregations, and specialist pioneers were called in for the carpentry work, brick-laying, plastering, painting, and so forth. The building was a new structure that had never been used, and, in fact, was originally designed for industrial use. So, there were no dividing walls on any floor and no facilities of any kind. Hence, starting from scratch, the Society's architect was able to design each floor according to the suggestions that Brother Knorr had left behind. The brothers worked for thirteen months to complete the installations for the new office and home, which provided room for sixteen workers.

On June 2, 1972, Brother Knorr inaugurated the new Spanish branch building, and the following day he gave a special talk to 13,350 brothers in Barcelona's principal bullring, *La Monumental*. This visit and the talk in the bullring got good publicity in the press, but also served to sharpen the opposition against Jehovah's people. Certain elements in "high circles" were not pleased with the fact that Jehovah's Witnesses had been given this permission, and they increased their pressure on the Religious Liberty Commission to have this fledgling religion's "wings clipped." Thereafter, we had some problems in obtaining permission for the use of facilities for district and circuit assemblies.

Legalization meant the opening of Kingdom Halls, as already mentioned. From December 1970 through May 1977, 482 Kingdom Halls have been approved by the Ministry of Justice. In large cities like Madrid, Barcelona and Valencia the rents are high, so that most halls are used by more than one congregation in order to share the financial burden. At present there are sixteen Kingdom Halls within the city limits of Barcelona, and these are being used by fifty congregations. Additionally, ninety-two congregations in the province of Barcelona hold their meetings in another seventy-five Kingdom Halls. In Madrid twenty-five halls are used by forty-six congregations. We are thankful to Jehovah for the freedom we now enjoy and for these excellent meeting places.

MESSIANIC KINGDOM PROCLAIMED IN ANDORRA

Now, let us tell you something about Andorra, a tiny mountain principality squeezed between the Spanish and French borders. On the Spanish side is the town of Seo de Urgel. Along with the president of France, its bishop is coregent of Andorra. This dual rulership was instituted in 1278 C.E. to bring an end to the blood-spilling battles that had taken place between the forces of the Catholic bishop of Seo de Urgel and the army of the French counts of Foix.

Today Andorra has a population of some 32,500, most of whom work in the shops and hotels that deal with the constant tourist trade. Prices of goods are much lower in Andorra than in Spain or France, so that commerce is the main activity. Some of the local people still devote themselves to shepherding, agriculture and the cultivation of tobacco, but these are now the lesser occupations and the general atmosphere is one of materialism.

Although some sporadic witnessing had been done earlier, it was not until 1962 that a Spanish family decided to move from Barcelona to Andorra and begin preaching there systematically. The family was that of Manuel Escamilla. Despite economic and health problems, they stayed in Andorra for seven years, and, little by little, the small group of Christians prospered there.

The first person to show interest was Rosé Boronatz, who had received a witness from her aunt in Barcelona and had also been encouraged by a French sister who used to visit Andorra. The Escamilla family started to hold meetings and, with Rosé present, they had an attendance of four. Problems developed quickly, for Rosé lost her job and her room at the pension. Then she had to face a decision with regard to her fiancé who was not favorable to the truth. She chose the truth and the engagement was broken off. However, a short time later brothers in Barcelona were able to witness to him, he accepted the truth, and in 1964 both he and Rosé were baptized. When Manuel Escamilla had to leave with his family in 1969, this brother, Miguel Barbé, became the one responsible for the group. In November 1971, he and his wife were appointed as special pioneers to care for the territory in Andorra and Seo de Urgel.

It is curious to note that although religious freedom exists in France and Spain, Jehovah's Witnesses have not been able to get permission to open a Kingdom Hall in Andorra, where they now have a prospering congregation of eighty-four publishers. Why not? Be-

cause of the feudalistic influence of the bishop of Seo de Urgel who puts impediments in the way. Meanwhile, the brothers continue to hold their meetings in private homes, which, of course, lays a heavier burden on the two elders serving there.

SPANISH ENCLAVES IN MOROCCO

On the northern Mediterranean coast of Morocco, there are two Spanish enclaves—Ceuta, not too far from Tangier, and Melilla, farther to the east. The Spanish army maintains garrisons in these enclaves. Ricardo and Consuelo Gutiérrez, formerly of Barcelona, were assigned directly from the publisher ranks to the special pioneer work due to the need for Kingdom proclaimers in Ceuta. Ricardo had once been a military man there and already spoke French and some Arabic. These languages, along with Spanish, are the tongues used in Ceuta.

Brother and Sister Gutiérrez accepted this assignment in spite of having a seven-year-old son, and they began serving in Ceuta in January 1969. After six years of valuable service and faithful example, Consuelo died of cancer. They had helped to lay the foundation of the present Ceuta Congregation that now has thirty-one publishers and three special pioneers. The congregation also has a Kingdom Hall, which is the only legal meeting place of Jehovah's Witnesses in the whole of northern Africa.

In Melilla there are Jewish and Moslem as well as Spanish communities, so that the pioneers assigned there in 1970 had an interesting territory to work. At first, they encountered problems with the police, who tried to stop their house-to-house preaching work. But after legal steps were taken by the Society's branch office in Spain, they no longer were bothered and all their confiscated literature was returned to them.

So far, Melilla's population of 53,000 has produced twenty Kingdom proclaimers, in spite of problems experienced in dealing with the military mentality that predominates in that garrison city.

The population is a mixture of Spaniards and Arabs, with the former decreasing in number and the latter increasing. The special pioneers are doing good work there, and several of their Bible studies are being held with Moslem women, at the time of this writing.

RELAXATION OF CENSORSHIP

One of the consequences of legalization of the Association of Jehovah's Witnesses in 1970 was that all our publications had to pass through the hands

of the official government censor. While the majority were approved for circulation, some, such as *Learn to Read and Write* and, for a time, "*Make Sure of All Things*," were put on the prohibited list. During one year, more than half of all issues of *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* were prohibited for distribution to the public. However, the Society legally appealed several cases and now we have gone for more than a year without any issue being refused. Without a doubt, the general relaxing of controls in many fields has also favored our situation here.

The monthly *Our Kingdom Service*, known here as *Nuestro Servicio Teocrático* ("Our Theocratic Service"), now has a circulation of over 60,000 copies.

VISITS BY MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNING BODY

The last few years have seen encouraging visits by various members of the Governing Body, and these visits have been appreciated greatly by the Spanish brothers. In 1974 Brothers N. H. Knorr and F. W. Franz visited Spain together, and were due to address a large crowd of brothers in a Barcelona bullring. However, permission was not granted by the authorities, as the date coincided with the religious holiday of December 25. Swiftly, plans were changed and all the pioneers and elders were invited to a special meeting that had to be held some twenty-one kilometers (13 miles) from Barcelona in an unused industrial building that was under consideration for purchase as an assembly hall. Over 5,000 packed in to listen to Brother Knorr talk about the worldwide expansion of the work, and then paid rapt attention to Brother Franz' exposition of Psalm 91. Just over a year later, Brother Raymond Franz was invited to inaugurate that same building, which had been converted into a magnificent assembly hall with seating for 1,300, as well as an ample cafeteria dining room, and baptism pool.

Prior to that, in November 1975, an assembly hall was inaugurated in Madrid by F. W. Franz, in what had formerly been a cinema. Other visits were made by M. G. Henschel in May 1974, and L. K. Greenlees in 1976. Brother Henschel spoke to 22,417 brothers in a Barcelona bullring. The maximum attendance to date at any one meeting was for the visit of L. A. Swingle, when there was an audience of 27,215 in the Barcelona *Las Arenas* bullring on May 1, 1977. Brother Swingle also addressed meetings in Madrid and the Canary Islands, so that the total attendance at his four talks came to 45,617.

PUBLICITY BY PRESS AND RADIO

In many cases, the press has given fair and impartial coverage to the Witnesses and their assemblies. The Madrid daily *El País* devoted a whole page to the teachings and history of the Witnesses, based on an interview with a lawyer, Brother Julio Ricote. Various writers have come out in defense of the Witnesses, as in the case of the Catholic who wrote in *Sur* of November 12, 1976: "The Witnesses may be mistaken in their interpretation, but no one can doubt the immense faith that sustains them. In this religion, not sect, there is no room for lies, fornication or stealing, the three most abominable sins in God's sight. How much the world has to learn in this respect from the Witnesses!" Another, writing in the *Hoja del Lunes de Gijón* (June 21, 1976), under the heading "The Bishop of Santander and Jehovah's Witnesses," stated: "It so happens that Jehovah's Witnesses . . . have a much deeper and more careful knowledge of the Bible than the majority of Catholics."

Because of the issues of conscientious objection to military service and refusal to accept blood transfusions, the Witnesses have often been in the news. A prominent Spanish surgeon, the son-in-law of the late General Franco, invited the Witnesses to participate in his radio program on medical matters, together with another doctor and a priest, to discuss the blood transfusion issue. Among the brothers taking part was a lawyer who was able to make a good defense of our position on that issue. On another occasion, a Barcelona radio station invited representatives of the Witnesses for an interview and to handle questions from listeners. These two broadcasts really served to stir up public interest.

As far as television is concerned, the Catholic Church has an almost complete monopoly of the government-controlled TV channels up to this writing. Some priests have used that advantage to attack the Witnesses.

THE QUEEN OF SPAIN IMPRESSED

During 1976 a fine witness was given in university circles. This came about when one of Jehovah's Witnesses, a student of medicine studying at Madrid University, gave a witness to some of his fellow students. Some of these were participating in other studies in the Interfaculty Department of Contemporary Humanities, organized for the benefit of students and graduates. As a result, Jehovah's Witnesses were invited to present a lecture on the theme "New Man and His Future." Two Witnesses developed the subject,

bringing out the facets of the new personality and Jehovah's purpose in relation to the earth. This talk resulted later in an invitation to present a series of nine lectures on the teachings of Jehovah's Witnesses. One of the students was Queen Sofia of Spain, who paid close attention to the arguments, took notes, and participated fully in the discussions that took place after each talk. After the lecture on the soul and hellfire, the queen declared that she had never known anyone who used the Bible with such knowledge and facility for answering any question that arose. "For every subject it appears you have an answer in your Bible," she commented.

These lectures created quite a stir, and the final one, on "Blood, Medicine and the Law of God," was held because of the queen's special interest in the subject, even though the study course had terminated. This last talk, presented by a brother who is a pathologist, was attended by several clergymen and doctors, and a good, clear witness was given.

BETHEL EXPANSION

It was known from the beginning that the original branch building at Calle Pardo, No. 65, would not be big enough for future expansion. But in view of the uncertainty in 1970 as to how religious liberty would be applied, it was felt best to start in a small way. Since then the Society has bought three additional apartments around the corner in the same block, and these are used as living quarters for fifteen Bethel family members. In 1975 the Society also acquired large warehouse facilities just two blocks away, and they have been a boon to the shipping department that already had severe problems with regard to literature storage. Now we can carry stock sufficient for about two years of preaching activity, thus obviating difficulties that might arise should there be strikes or conflicts.

To attend better to the needs of the congregations in the Canary Islands, off the west coast of Africa, the Society bought a warehouse and small apartment in Santa Cruz de Tenerife. Thus the twenty-five congregations located on the six major islands receive their literature and magazines from that depot.

A GREAT WORK AHEAD

It is recognized that there is yet a tremendous amount of work to be done in Spain. We calculate that about a million Spaniards still are not being reached with the good news on a regular basis. The special

pioneer ranks are being expanded, and at present we have over 600 preaching mainly in the territories of greatest need in Extremadura, Andalusia, Galicia and Asturias.

In some cases, great endurance and courage are required to persevere in such places. For example, in June 1976, in the town of Yecla, a sister was murdered by her fanatical husband, after he had threatened her and the brothers and had even used physical violence against the special pioneers there. This murder took place just nine days after the inauguration of the Kingdom Hall. Later, a mob came around and smashed the Kingdom Hall windows, threw red paint over the facade, and then left a sign on the door falsely accusing the brothers of being "Sons of the Pasionaria" (a famous female Communist orator).

Shortly afterward, a young man began to attend the meetings, but he turned out to be a member of a gang of delinquents in the town. However, he accepted the truth, changed his way of life, and got baptized. This served to give a witness to many of his friends and relatives who are amazed at his change of heart. For example, one day another young man came to a meeting and said he wanted to know what the Witnesses had done to one of his friends (the now-baptized former delinquent), who used to be a villain, but now was meeker than a lamb. Though now studying and attending the meetings, this second young man had been a member of the gang that had thrown the red paint at the Kingdom Hall.

Some 1,922 years have passed since Paul wrote to the Romans, "Whenever I am on my way to Spain, I hope, above all, . . . to get a look at you." (Rom. 15:24) From Paul's present heavenly position, undoubtedly he is delighted with the spiritual paradise that is so evident among his twentieth-century Christian brothers and sisters in this hospitable and delightful country. We do not know how much time is left for this system of things, but, Jehovah willing, here in Spain we are expecting further increase, and we are planning for even greater expansion. The Governing Body has approved the construction of a new Bethel home and factory complex near Barcelona. This will permit the printing of our magazines in Spain, and will equip us for future growth.

To Jehovah God go the praise and thanks, through Christ Jesus, for the wonderful results that have been achieved through the acts of Jehovah's Christian witnesses in modern Spain.

Corporate Societies

After a long, faithful life of service as one of Jehovah's Witnesses, having been baptized in 1923, Brother Nathan H. Knorr finished his earthly course on June 8, 1977. He had succeeded Brother Rutherford as president of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society in 1942, and served faithfully and well. He became a member of the Bethel family in September 1923. Brother Knorr felt a deep responsibility for pressing the expansion of the preaching and teaching work world wide and had a great love for the missionaries scattered throughout the countries of the world. (Acts 1:8; Matt. 28:19) While he is missed by all who recognized his love of theocratic service, they rejoice in the words at Revelation 14:13: "Happy are the dead who die in union with the Lord from this time onward. Yes, says the spirit, let them rest from their labors, for the things they did go right with them."

On June 22, 1977, Brother Frederick W. Franz, vice-president, was elected to serve as president of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania.

The various corporate religious societies (associated with the principal one, Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania) that have been formed by Jehovah's Witnesses throughout the earth in compliance with the laws of various governments cooperate with the Governing Body in carrying on the evangelizing work commanded by Jesus.—Matt. 28:19, 20.

The Governing Body

The Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses has continued to give a good lead during the service year in caring for the interests of Jehovah's kingdom earth wide. The Governing Body holds weekly meetings, with all the committees represented, to discuss matters presented to it by the various Branch Committees and to consider recommendations for appointment of branch personnel and traveling overseers, as well as other business coming before it.

During the service year Charles J. Fekel finished his earthly course, as did also Nathan H. Knorr. This resulted in there being three vacancies on the Governing Body, inasmuch as the place of John O. Groh, who finished his course on January 23, 1975, had not been filled.

Accordingly, action was taken to fill these vacancies, and the following brothers were named to serve on the Governing Body, to wit, Carey W. Barber, John E. Barr and Martin Poetzinger. There are now eighteen members of the Governing Body.

Jehovah's favor has been manifest on the Kingdom-preaching and disciple-making work of his name-people during the past service year and all of us are determined to hold "firmly to the faithful word."—Titus 1:9; Luke 11:28.

Your brothers,

GOVERNING BODY OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

"They will not prevail against you, for 'I [Jehovah] am with you . . . to deliver you.'"

—Jer. 1:19.

Faith—this is a very desirable and enduring quality. It is a grand help, indeed a vital necessity, when one is suffering under severe hostile pressure. In one way or another, every true Christian is in that situation today. Jeremiah was in that situation in his day, stretching over a period of forty years. Have you endured that length of time in Jehovah's service? There are quite a number of Jehovah's Witnesses who have, and they are still maintaining their stand.

The pressure to discontinue Jehovah's service is not always as obvious as when a ban is publicly imposed on Christian activity. It may be by opposing members of one's household or by other things working against our active participation in Jehovah's service. But we find help and encouragement to bear up under such pressures by looking at Jeremiah.

The importance of faith is seen in the opening words of Jeremiah's prophecy. On his part, Jehovah showed both love and faith toward Jeremiah by telling him: "Before you proceeded to come forth from the womb I sanctified you. Prophet to the nations I made you." But Jeremiah was not ready. He pleaded to be excused: "Alas, O Sovereign Lord Jehovah! Here I actually do not know how to speak, for I am but a boy." We might be inclined to sympathize with Jeremiah, feeling we would likely have said the same thing. Did Jehovah ignore or allow such a plea? No. His response was straight to the point: "*Do not say, 'I am but a boy.'*" But to all those to whom I shall send you, you should go; and everything that I shall command you, you should speak. Do not be afraid because of their faces, for 'I am with you to de-

liver you,' is the utterance of Jehovah."—Jer. 1:4-8.

After telling Jeremiah more about his commission, not only concerning the nations and the kingdoms, but also about Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, and how "they will be certain to fight against you," Jehovah repeated that fine assurance: "But they will not prevail against you, for 'I am with you . . . to deliver you.'" (Jer. 1:9-19) Though at one time Jeremiah felt that he could no longer speak in Jehovah's name because of the persistent adversity, he did not quit. As he said: "But Jehovah was with me like a terrible mighty one . . . [those] persecuting me will stumble and not prevail." (Jer. 20:9-11) Can we not say the same? When approaching his darkest hour, what did Jesus say? "In the world you are having tribulation, but take courage! I have conquered the world." We can respond to such encouraging words if we constantly exercise love and faith.—John 16:33; 1 John 4:18; 5:4.

Jehovah is the "one who can, according to his power which is operating in us, do more than superabundantly beyond all the things we ask or conceive." Like Jeremiah, we too might feel at times that "we are being put to death all day long." Yet, by maintaining strong faith and devotion, we can say like Paul that "in all these things we are coming off completely victorious through him that loved us," and we know that there is absolutely nothing that can "separate us from God's love that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."—Eph. 3:20; Rom. 8:35-39.

DAILY TEXTS AND COMMENTS

There is a text for each day and a comment on that text. The comments are taken from *The Watchtower* (W) of the year 1977. Figures following the date of the *Watchtower* issue refer to paragraphs in the first study article, where further comment on the text may be found. When "a" follows the paragraph number, comment is found in the second study article; when "b" is shown, it refers to the third study article.

Sunday, January 1

I began to hear the voice of Jehovah saying: "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" And I proceeded to say: "Here I am! Send me."
—Isa. 6:8.

In the spirit of these words of Isaiah, in recent years multitudes of honest-hearted persons have offered themselves for service to the Sovereign Lord Jehovah. And with what result? The joyous good news that Jehovah God has established his heavenly kingdom in the hands of his Son Jesus Christ has been proclaimed "to the extremities of the inhabited earth." Those who have made great sacrifices in order to share fully in this grand work have been greatly blessed. Along the way there have been bitter trials and persecutions, and many of us have grown old in Jehovah's service. Like faithful Isaiah, we have had to endure in witnessing, time and again, to people whose hearts are unreceptive, whose ears are unresponsive and whose eyes have been pasted together so that they are unable to recognize the glorious message of God's kingdom now in operation. Are you persevering in this grand work? *W 1/1 1, 2*

Monday, January 2

God is for us a refuge and strength . . . That is why we shall not fear, though the earth undergo change and though the mountains totter into the heart of the vast sea.
—Ps. 46:1, 2.

The humiliation and destruction of the world empire of false religion is only Part I of the "great tribulation." As Part II, the kings of the earth and their armies together with the wild beast will be dealt with next, and they will not escape destruction but will suffer the second death.

There is still something to follow that "great tribulation." This will be the seizing and binding of Satan and his demons with a "great chain," and the hurling of them into an abyss. (Rev. 20:1-3) Do we believe what Jehovah has said by the mouth of his prophets concerning this "great tribulation" that all mankind is facing? If so, we will face this inescapable tribulation with strong assurance and with the complete confidence that the inspired psalmist expressed. Of course, it is one thing to say we do; it is quite another matter to prove it by our actions. *W 1/15 16, 18, 19*

Tuesday, January 3

Although a sinner may be doing bad a hundred times . . . yet I am also aware that it will turn out well with those fearing the true God . . . But it will not turn out well at all with the wicked one.
—Eccl. 8:12, 13.

Are we not glad when people deal patiently with us, not treating us harshly? We appreciate it when they take into consideration our problems and circumstances, kindly assisting us to the extent of their ability. Life today is accompanied by enough problems without one's being subjected to needless pressure from impatient persons. Moreover, if we were to become impatient ourselves, this would not make our life more enjoyable. Rather, we would be irritating others and making it more difficult for them to deal kindly with us. Our impatience could even hurt persons to whom we look for help and encouragement. But how can we remain patient when we see injustice and oppression, and when godless people seem to prosper? It calls for faith. Yes, we must be convinced that Jehovah God will set all things straight. *W 2/1 1, 2*

Wednesday, January 4

Remove the wicked man from among yourselves.
—1 Cor. 5:13.

Knowing what God's righteous standards call for, the judicial committee is obligated to get all the facts before rendering a decision. If the wrongdoer, or the one accused, does not openly make confession of a serious offense, then witnesses must be heard to establish whether a matter is true or not. Even though the wrongdoer is guilty of a serious offense, elders realize that their aim is, wherever possible, to help one who has fallen into a wrong course. If he "listens to them," showing true repentance, it may result in his being 'gained' as a brother and thus spared from being disfellowshipped. (Matt. 18:15-17) Otherwise, they cannot continue to deal with him in mercy, for this would show a disregard for God's standard of righteousness and holiness. Such an unrepentant wrongdoer, if permitted to remain among God's people, would be a bad influence on the spirit of the congregation. In such cases disfellowshipping clears away reproach and maintains the purity of the congregation. *W 3/1 12, 13*

Thursday, January 5

A true companion is loving all the time, and is a brother that is born for when there is distress.—Prov. 17:17.

How good it is to have someone who will stick loyally by you in times of difficulty! Doubtless you have known occasions when, perhaps due to your own errors or weaknesses, you have gotten into circumstances that left you depressed or that brought you suffering. How much you appreciated it when someone, out of unselfish devotion to you, kindly excused your fault in the matter

and came to your aid, bringing you out of your distress. It is even as the Bible proverb expresses it. Sadly, such examples are rare today. And, on the other hand, there are many persons who fail to appreciate it when they are the object of such devoted kindness. Many husbands with loyally devoted wives take these for granted, seldom expressing gratitude for their loving interest, and this is true of many wives in their attitude toward devoted husbands. But what a joy it is when such devoted kindness is shown and is received with grateful thanks! *W 2/15 1, 2*

Friday, January 6

"Return, O you renegade sons," is the utterance of Jehovah. "For I myself have become the husbandly owner of you people."—Jer. 3:14.

In his relationship with Israel, Jehovah was ever loyal, never turning his affections to other nations nor entering into relations with them. Only after centuries of effort at preserving the union did God finally divorce himself from the nation that had become like an adulterous wife. (Jer. 3:8) So, no one can say that God asks us to do what he himself is not willing to do when he exhorts us to make every effort to keep marriage in honor and to work to preserve the marital union. Surely anyone who seeks a pretext for divorce for selfish reasons could never be pleasing to Him. Our respect, admiration and love for God, combined with our desire for his favor and approval, should move us to shun whatever might bring our marriage or that of anyone else into disrepute. Therefore we will never cast a bad reflection on God's use of marriage to illustrate his own dealings and the outworking of his purposes. *W 3/15 13, 14*

Saturday, January 7

O God, let there be no silence on your part . . . For, look! your very enemies are in an uproar; . . . may they become abashed and perish; that people may know that you, whose name is Jehovah, you alone are the Most High over all the earth.
—Ps. 83:1, 2, 17, 18.

Time and again we find God's Word telling that Jehovah will call a halt to wickedness, in order that men will know that he is the Sovereign Lord of the universe. Some sixty times in Ezekiel's prophecy alone Jehovah tells that he will act so that 'men will know that he is the true God, Jehovah.' (Ezek. 6:7-39:28) The Hebrew psalmist prayed that God would act so that people would know that He alone is the Most High over all the earth. Yes, not only because Jehovah has compassion for suffering mankind, but primarily because his sovereignty and name are involved, he will bring about the global catastrophe that will put an end to all wickedness and suffering on earth. It is our privilege to make this important truth known to others. Are you doing your part?
W 4/15 16

Sunday, January 8

Make disciples of people of all the nations, baptizing them.
—Matt. 28:19.

The command to make disciples was given by the resurrected Son of God who could say regarding himself: "All authority has been given me in heaven and on the earth." (Matt. 28:18) The authority of Jesus Christ is not limited to the living. He is the Judge also of the dead and, by reason of his resurrection power, can summon before him all those in gravedom. Surely the command of one vested with such awesome au-

thority should be treated as of the highest importance by those to whom it applies. Already more than nineteen centuries have passed since Jesus gave that command. Might the passing of so many years mean that this command no longer applies? Not in the least. After stating it, Jesus added the assurance: "Look! I am with you all the days until the conclusion of the system of things." (Matt. 28:20) Since the end of this system has not yet come, the command to make disciples continues in force. W 5/1 1, 2a

Monday, January 9

I saw, and, look! a great crowd, which no man was able to number, . . . standing before the throne and before the Lamb.—Rev. 7:9.

Noah proved that he had complete reliance on Jehovah's warning by the way he lived day by day. He worked hard at his God-given assignment of constructing the ark, and in preaching to others. He demonstrated absolute trust and confidence in the ability of Jehovah to protect and deliver him during that greatest time of trouble ever experienced until then. There was also Lot. Warned ahead of time to leave Sodom, and at the urging of angelic forces, four of that household left the city, but only three of them lived to tell about it. Why only three instead of four? Because, contrary to instructions, when in flight out of Sodom Lot's wife looked back, evidently for some selfish reason. In those instances only a few persons survived. But Jehovah can just as easily deliver a great crowd of persons even as he did in the case of the nation of Israel at the Red Sea. He will do the same in the near future.
W 1/15 21-23

Tuesday, January 10

Even when a person has an abundance his life does not result from the things he possesses.—Luke 12:15.

In view of what the future holds in God's new order, how shall we regard things that the world today looks to for security, such as one's home, bank account, job or material comforts? Since Jehovah created humans to enjoy material blessings, would it be wrong to have these things now? No, it could not be said that such things are wrong in themselves. Jehovah created us with the mental, emotional and physical capacity to enjoy good things. And he promises the best of material blessings. But at this point in human history, the question is not whether we were made to enjoy material blessings. What is at stake today is our very lives. Why? Because soon God will execute his adverse judgment against this wicked system of things. Yet there will be a "great crowd" that will survive. They will survive because of having God's approval and protection, not because of any material advantage they may have.—Rev. 7:9, 14.
W 4/1 4, 5

Wednesday, January 11

You at one time walked according to the system of things of this world.
—Eph. 2:2.

Jehovah's time is close at hand for the "strangers," the tyrants of the nations," to use the ax upon the present wicked system of things. Its downfall is getting ever closer. (Ezek. 31:11, 12) Despite all its prettiness in the eyes of the world, it is not the planting of Jehovah and is not part of his organization. It is the visible part of Satan the Devil's organization. In the light of these revealed facts and in the face of the

impending fulfillment of Ezekiel's prophecy about the cedar of Lebanon, what is it incumbent upon us to do? What is it in our interest to do? What should we do in this ominous time? This: Get out from under the symbolic tree. We do not want to suffer eternally from its crash. So we need to abandon the "present wicked system of things," the antitypical Pharaoh the king of Egypt and his crowd. We need to put ourselves on the side of Jehovah's organization. We should cease walking according to this world's ways. W 5/15 33, 35a

Thursday, January 12

Lord, are you restoring the kingdom to Israel at this time?
—Acts 1:6.

The true followers of Christ Jesus have always served in expectation of the end. At Luke 19:11 we read that Jesus' disciples "were imagining that the kingdom of God was going to display itself instantly." Later, when Jesus appeared to his apostles after his resurrection, they asked him the above question. And to expectant Christians at a still later time, Paul wrote that they were to be made "firm in every good deed and word." (2 Thess. 2:1, 2, 17) Though they lived in hope of that "day of Jehovah," none of those first-century Christians survived to see its arrival. Did this affect their zeal and faith? Not at all! No matter when the wicked system might end, the "good news of the kingdom" remained just as glorious, the service of the Kingdom just as joyful, and their blessed relationship to Jehovah and his Christ just as precious. Though they did not live to see the "end," yet they got to preach the good news "in all creation that is under heaven."—Col. 1:23. W 1/1 5, 6

Friday, January 13

Jehovah saw that the badness of man was abundant in the earth . . . And Jehovah . . . felt hurt at his heart.

—Gen. 6:5, 6.

Human justice may be lax, and criminals may be able to escape punishment through some legal loophole. Lawless persons may think that they are getting away with something. But their badness brings no lasting reward. Their life passes quickly, "like a shadow," and all their shrewdness and scheming will be of no benefit in lengthening it. (Eccl. 8:12, 13) On the other hand, fearers of Jehovah are not really put at a disadvantage. They preserve a clean conscience, find satisfaction in doing what they know to be right and, even if they should die, have the hope of being raised to life. Yes, "it does indeed turn out well with those fearing the true God." Further, we do well to keep in mind that the lawlessness that is disturbing to us is also distressing to Jehovah God. We know this because of what God's Word says about the way he felt toward the violent world of Noah's time. W 2/1 3, 4

Saturday, January 14

Let us always offer to God a sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of lips which make public declaration to his name.

—Heb. 13:15.

When offering a "sacrifice of praise" we can stress what Jehovah IS. We can show that 'he alone is the Most High.' (Ps. 83:18) We can explain that truly knowing him and his Son can bring eternal life. (John 17:3) And we can focus on some of his superb qualities that can draw persons to him—his unsurpassed wisdom, understanding, generosi-

ty, faithfulness and his loving-kindness. Each of us should examine his own "public declaration" to see how he might give more emphasis to these positive aspects. For example, as you conduct a regular Bible study with your family or others, could you somehow highlight God's loving-kindness? You might ask the student what the point being discussed helps him to understand about Jehovah. Doing so will bring the student closer to Jehovah, making God more real and personal for him, stimulating him to learn more about this wonderful God and to praise him. W 2/15 6, 7a

Sunday, January 15

Fight the fine fight of the faith, get a firm hold on the everlasting life.—1 Tim. 6:12.

Exercising the faith that means survival is not a case of following the lines of least resistance. It is not easy, but also it is not too difficult. Faith manifests itself by works, for without works it is like a corpse, a lifeless body. Faith without works is vain; it will not mean survival. To survive we must fight, even as the apostle Paul reminded his friend Timothy. By fighting the fine fight of faith we will not be "tossed about as by waves." Rather, with the "large shield of faith" we will "be able to quench all the wicked one's burning missiles." (Eph. 4:14; 6:16) Faith also serves as a breastplate to protect our heart from being infected by all the gross selfishness that is in the world today. With such protection we will be able to consider it all joy when meeting up with various trials. Having such faith, Jeremiah was able to bear witness fearlessly to a rebellious people for more than forty years. W 4/15 16, 17a

Monday, January 16

I tell everyone there among you not to think more of himself than it is necessary to think; but to think so as to have a sound mind, each one as God has distributed to him a measure of faith.

—Rom. 12:3.

Occasionally, there may be someone in the body of elders who wants to project himself above others. If a competitive spirit develops or exists, it indicates a lack of humility. One elder may feel strongly about personal ideas that lack merit according to the judgment of the body of elders. If he seeks support for such ideas by stirring up sympathy among others, the congregation's unity is likely to be sacrificed. In order to avoid any such tendencies each elder should constantly examine himself, being careful to heed the words of Paul above. To preside in a fine way all elders want to work hard, but they should take care to do so with a right motive, an earnest desire to help the flock in all humility. And, of course, this counsel of Paul all Christians should apply in their relations with others. W 3/1 10a

Tuesday, January 17

Man must live, not on bread alone, but on every utterance coming forth through Jehovah's mouth.

—Matt. 4:4.

Today there is much anxiety because worldwide economic difficulties have caused many to lose jobs and incomes. God's servant in this circumstance also has cause for concern. But he keeps his balance. He remembers that God's Word tells him not to be "forsaking the gathering of ourselves together, as some have the custom, but encouraging one another, and all the more so as you behold the

day drawing near." (Heb. 10:24, 25) The balanced Christian appreciates the truthfulness of Jesus' words above. So while he conscientiously does what he can to find employment to supply his needs, he does not let it interfere with his meeting together with other Christians for the study of God's Word. Nor does he let such concern affect his service performed on behalf of others in the community who do not yet know Jehovah and His purposes. He keeps in first place the more important things related to God and his will.—Phil. 1:10. W 4/1 16a

Wednesday, January 18

If her husband should fall asleep in death, she is free to be married to whom she wants, only in the Lord.

—1 Cor. 7:39.

What of a Christian who really desires marriage? While he may not have the gift of singleness, this does not mean that he has to rush into marriage. Especially when a person is still in his twenties, much remains to be learned about life and there is experience to be gained in the field of human relations through association with single people, married couples and children of all ages. A number of years spent in living as a single adult may give one the experience and insight needed to use good discernment in choosing a lifelong mate and to care well for marriage responsibilities. A Christian should never forget that the Most High is interested in the marriages of his faithful servants. He knows full well how spiritually disastrous a poor marriage can be and, therefore, commanded the Israelites not to enter into marriage covenants with worshippers of other gods. The apostle Paul makes the same point. W 5/1 9, 10

Thursday, January 19

Without fail he will act against it. According to its wickedness I will drive it out.—Ezek. 31:11.

Hardheaded politicians of today may laugh at the thought that Jehovah will bring heavenly forces against the modern-day cedar of Lebanon. But he did so in the days of King Sennacherib. (2 Ki. 19:35, 36) In fact, Jesus in his prophecy on the conclusion of this system of things assured us of that fact. (Matt. 24:29-31) As a memento of his victory at Har-Magedon in the war of the great day of God the Almighty, there will lie on the ground the fallen trunk of the symbolic cedar of Lebanon, the modern-day counterparts of Pharaoh and his crowd. These will be like those who go down in death to the land down below, yes, into the pit of burial. The question is, Do we, who live in the midst of this system of things, want to go down there with them? Certainly if we do not want this to happen, we shall have to get out from any place of shelter and refuge under that doomed "tree"! Let not its fall mean our destruction. W 5/15 14-16a

Friday, January 20

For your confidence to come to be in Jehovah himself I have given you knowledge today.—Prov. 22:19.

Today there are more than two million persons around the world who are facing the future with great optimism. They are very confident that this present wicked system of things will shortly be replaced by a new and righteous order—God's kingdom for which Jesus taught us to pray. (Matt. 6:9, 10) At the moment we may be one of these persons, and we may feel quite

confident of our position and of what we are facing in this time of the end. But still the apostle Paul's inspired warning applies: "Let him that thinks he is standing beware that he does not fall." (1 Cor. 10:12) If we heed this counsel, there are a number of things that we can do now to strengthen our state of confidence. First of all, we should remember what the proverb says, that one's confidence in Jehovah must be based on knowledge of him and of his past dealings with mankind, as well as knowledge of his present and future purposes. W 1/15 2-4a

Saturday, January 21

Until the cities actually crash in ruins, to be without an inhabitant, and the houses be without earthling man, and the ground itself is ruined into a desolation; and Jehovah actually removes earthling men far away.—Isa. 6:11, 12.

Like Isaiah, at times we may have asked the question, 'How long, O Jehovah, will these people continue to show such obstinacy?' Jehovah answers as above. Patiently and with zeal we must keep on giving the Kingdom witness to the full extent purposed by Jehovah God. And as we hold fast to the full assurance of our hope we can know for a certainty that God is not unrighteous so as to forget our work and the love we showed for his name. (Heb. 6:10-12) How grand our privilege of serving out of sheer love for our God Jehovah! The marvelous Kingdom purposes of Jehovah will be carried out to their completion on time. (Isa. 55:11; Heb. 10:37) For our part we must continue to praise his beauteous name with thankfulness, as we eagerly anticipate the early fulfillment of his precious Kingdom promises. W 1/1 2-4

Sunday, January 22

Exercise patience . . . brothers, until the presence of the Lord. Look! The farmer keeps waiting for the precious fruit of the earth . . . You too exercise patience; make your hearts firm.—Jas. 5:7, 8.

Should we not want to help as many as possible to learn of God's way of salvation? And when it comes to the shortcomings of others, should we not be willing to put up with these patiently? If we sincerely appreciate that God's patience has meant salvation for us, we will be stirred at heart to do so. Our continuing to exercise patience, in imitation of the faithful prophets, can lead to our seeing fine fruitage. This is evident from what James wrote. The farmer can do nothing to hasten the rain or the growing of his crops. He can industriously do his job in preparing the soil, sowing the seed and caring for the cultivated field. But he has no control over the rains, nor can he change the Creator's fixed laws relative to the growth of his crops. His waiting is referred to as exercising patience. So it is with us today. W 2/1 16-19

Monday, January 23

Keep on the watch, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming, . . . in order that when he arrives suddenly, he does not find you sleeping.—Mark 13:35, 36.

The joy of God's people was great when Jehovah's energizing spirit was poured out upon them as they assembled at the 1919 Cedar Point convention. A further high point of happiness was reached at the Cedar Point assembly in 1922, when the call went forth: "Advertise, advertise, advertise, the King and his kingdom." Truly, the Master had entrusted to this slave all his belongings,

the performing of a Kingdom role on earth. (Matt. 24:45-47) Jehovah had richly rewarded his anointed Witnesses as they continued faithfully to proclaim the Kingdom during those years. And later their joy overflowed when the great crowd, with hopes of living forever on this earth, began to join them. The "slave" class and all co-workers must keep on the watch as they hold fast the joy of Kingdom service, appreciating that any who become sluggish are in danger of losing everything. W 1/1 11, 12

Tuesday, January 24

How precious your loving-kindness is, O God! And in the shadow of your wings the sons of men themselves take refuge.—Ps. 36:7.

Jehovah's loving-kindness is not a casual thing. Rather, there is solidarity and loyalty inherent in it. This quality is precious to Jehovah, something that he delights to display, particularly toward faithful individuals. It should also be precious to those who receive of it even as David wrote. A fundamental law of the physical universe is that for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. However, this is not automatically the case in spiritual matters. Each of us can ask: What is my reaction to God's displays of loving-kindness? Many might find that question difficult to answer, for the expression "loving-kindness" may seem rather abstract. Have you, though, ever reflected on concrete examples of how you have been affected by Jehovah's loving-kindness? Doing this may greatly increase your appreciation for this loving-kindness, drawing you closer to him. Such examples abound in visible creation and in his Word. W 2/15 5, 6

Wednesday, January 25

Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.—1 Pet. 5:6.

Here the apostle Peter touches on something that we all need to work on, humility. It helps elders especially in their communication and dealings with one another. Each elder should determine whether he presents truly vital information when matters come up for attention. Men who consult with one another are respected by their fellows and the whole congregation. Frequent communication and "confidential talk" regarding the interests of the flock bring practical results. Otherwise, what might be initially planned may not work out so well if elders do not keep in touch to see how matters are progressing toward accomplishment. This is emphasized at Proverbs 15:22: "There is a frustrating of plans where there is no confidential talk, but in the multitude of counselors there is accomplishment." Humility paves the way for closer ties among elders and smoother relationships with all in the congregation, all to Jehovah's glory. W 3/1 8a

Thursday, January 26

Let marriage be honorable among all, and the marriage bed be without defilement, for God will judge fornicators and adulterers.—Heb. 13:4.

In view of its divine origin and God's obvious blessing on the arrangement, it is easy to see why Paul gave this exhortation. There is a very powerful reason for keeping the marriage bed without defilement, even as noted at Genesis 2:24. Jesus showed that those words were spoken, not by Adam, but by Jehovah God. Jesus went on to say that, in view of this union,

"what God has yoked together let no man put apart." (Matt. 19:3-9) He stated that the only ground for divorce allowable by God was that of *por-nei'a*, sexual misconduct of a gross kind with another person or even with an animal. God, therefore, takes very seriously the attitude shown by his creatures toward this divine marital arrangement. It should properly be a permanent, lifelong union, dissolved only by the death of one of the mates. At Malachi 2:14-16 God warned the Israelites against viewing marriage lightly by resorting to unrighteous divorces. W 3/15 3, 4

Friday, January 27

Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

—Matt. 6:21.

When Jesus warned, "Stop storing up for yourselves treasures upon the earth," he fully appreciated how temporary and insecure any treasures would be in this present system of things. (Matt. 6:19) Nor was this advice for the rich only; poor people can be just as intent upon gaining and storing material wealth. People expose their true motives by what they make their objective in life, regardless of their financial standing. If a person constantly reaches out to collect more and more material things, such as a bigger and better home, more money in the bank, a better job, regardless of the consequences, then he betrays himself as really wanting the things of the world. He proves by his works that his mind is primarily on the present system's benefits. But how shortsighted this is in view of the words of the apostle John that everything in this world originates with the world and will soon pass away.—1 John 2:15-17. W 4/1 11

Saturday, January 28

Jehovah kept warning Israel and Judah by means of all his prophets . . . saying: "Turn back from your bad ways and keep my commandments." . . . and they did not listen.

—2 Ki. 17:13, 14.

Yet despite such unresponsiveness, prophets such as Isaiah, Jeremiah and Micah faithfully served for decades. They were concerned about the welfare of their countrymen, appreciating that acting in harmony with the prophetic warnings meant life. The people's general failure to listen was not the only obstacle with which the prophets had to contend patiently. Many were reviled, physically abused and even killed. In the time of Israelite King Ahab, for example, all prophets of Jehovah that his Baal-worshipping queen Jezebel could seize were put to death. One hundred others, helped by God-fearing Obadiah, escaped by hiding in caves. During the same time, Jehovah, because of what he had in mind for Elijah, protected him from falling into Ahab's hands. Truly we do well to heed James' admonition to consider the patience of these.—Jas. 5:10. W 2/1 8-10

Sunday, January 29

As substitutes for Christ we beg: "Become reconciled to God."—2 Cor. 5:20.

How often do we express gratitude to God for our many material blessings? (Prov. 20:12) There are, nonetheless, far more powerful reasons for thanking and praising Jehovah. These are found in his wonderful works that make it possible for us to enter into an approved relationship with him. Thereby not only can we be objects of his general kindness to all mankind but we can become the objects of his loyal love, his loving-kindness

demonstrated to those of the sons of men who have responded to his merciful provision and who gratefully serve him. Paul wrote that Gentile Christians in ancient Ephesus had once been 'without Christ and had no hope and were without God in the world.' (Eph. 2:12) Because it was God's will that both Jews and Gentiles have the opportunity to accept Christ, the message of reconciliation went to those Gentiles. That was an outstanding reason for them to thank Jehovah God for his mercy. Is it any less so with you? W 2/15 8-10

Monday, January 30

The days will come upon you when your enemies will . . . distress you from every side, . . . and they will not leave a stone upon a stone in you.

—Luke 19:43, 44.

Did first-century Christians put their trust and confidence in Jerusalem's worldly-wise men and their predictions? No, not at all. Jehovah had revealed ahead of time to his Great Prophet, Jesus Christ, something that He had determined would shortly occur within that generation. Yes, "there will be great tribulation such as has not occurred since the world's beginning." (Matt. 24:21) In the face of such a coming tribulation, did Christians living in and around Jerusalem have any reason to face that foretold disaster with confidence? They certainly did. For God's true prophet also told them how they would know when it was about to occur and what action they should take to ensure their safety. He said: "When you see Jerusalem surrounded by encamped armies, then . . . let those in Judea begin fleeing." (Luke 21:20, 21) True Christians today have like reason for confidence. W 1/15 6, 7

Tuesday, January 31

As a fine soldier of Christ Jesus take your part in suffering evil. No man serving as a soldier involves himself in the commercial businesses of life, in order that he may gain the approval of the one who enrolled him as a soldier.

—2 Tim. 2:3, 4.

Paying too much attention to material things can get us sidetracked from the most important thing—doing Jehovah's will and gaining his approval. As noted by the apostle Paul at Hebrews 12:1, lack of faith can easily overcome us if we are too involved in

Wednesday, February 1

For the Scripture says: "None that rests his faith on him will be disappointed."

—Rom. 10:11.

Have God's people lost out on anything in that the great day of Jehovah has not yet burst forth upon the wicked of the earth? No, for along with the anointed remnant of Jehovah's Witnesses, some two million persons now stand in the place of spiritual security. (Ps. 91:9, 10) Even though some may yet die from persecutions, old age or other causes, their resurrection is assured. (1 Thess. 4:13, 14) Those who keep zealous in their service to God will not be disappointed. Continuously from 1879, when it was first published, the *Watchtower* magazine has encouraged such wholehearted Kingdom service. Thus in the issue of January 1, 1914, page 3, it was stated: "Let us remember that the moments and the hours are important . . . we can always find some time for the service of the truth." Yes, Jehovah's faithful servants have always regarded the service of our king as important. W 1/1 7, 8

the pursuits common to this system of things. Just as a runner strips himself of unnecessary weight to run his race, so we need to do in running for the prize of eternal life. Paul likens the Christian to a soldier who does not divert his attention by engaging in other pursuits. From this, however, we should not conclude that, since we are so close to this system's end, God requires us to abandon homes, jobs and money. Rather, the point is that while it is necessary to make a living, that should not become the center of one's life. W 4/1 3-5a

Thursday, February 2

They gathered them together to the place that is called in Hebrew Har-Magedon.

—Rev. 16:16.

For years we have been most active in telling others what the Bible says about inescapable coming events. From the "housetops," so to speak, we have proclaimed to all the world what Jehovah has revealed concerning the coming great tribulation. This will not be an all-out nuclear war among nations. Well, does this fact reduce the danger? This depends entirely on which side we stand on, the winning side or the losing side. The world of mankind have every reason to fear the war of Har-Magedon. This is because they have willingly or unwillingly aligned themselves with the kings of the inhabited earth and are therefore being gathered along with such kings to the "war of the great day of God the Almighty." But not so Jehovah's people! We have taken our stand solidly, uncompromisingly on the winning side, God's side. We are therefore able to face the foretold great tribulation with confidence. W 1/15 10-13

Friday, February 3

I say to you, not, Up to seven times, but, Up to seventy-seven times.—Matt. 18:22.

Jehovah's example of forgiveness can help us greatly in being patient with fellow humans. The apostle Peter had raised the question: "How many times is my brother to sin against me and am I to forgive him? Up to seven times?" Jesus replied as above. Then he related the illustration of two slaves. One of these owed the king 60,000,000 denarii. When the time came for settling accounts, this slave pleaded: "Be patient with me and I will pay back everything to you." Moved with pity, the king canceled his debt. But this slave then approached a fellow slave, demanding that he repay a 100-denarius debt. Ignoring that one's plea for patience he had that fellow slave imprisoned. Hearing this, the king changed his mind and had the impatient, merciless slave committed to jail. Applying the illustration, Jesus said: "In like manner my heavenly Father will also deal with you if you do not forgive each one his brother from your hearts."—Matt. 18:21-35. W 2/1 9a

Saturday, February 4

I will declare your name to my brothers; in the middle of the congregation I shall praise you. You fearers of Jehovah, praise him! . . . glorify him!

—Ps. 22:22, 23.

As a dedicated Christian you may have had experiences that truly are reasons to thank Jehovah for his loving-kindness. Have you, for example, been the object of ridicule because of upholding Christian principles? Maybe it was for refraining from dishonest practices on your job, refusing to cheat at school or declining to share in neighborhood

gossip. Or pressure may have been applied to force you to compromise on your worship. That abuse or opposition was not pleasant, was it? Yet in time it may have stopped. The opposers may have grown weary or come to respect your sticking to Bible principles. But the point is that you upheld the issue of Jehovah God's sovereignty by doing what was right in Jehovah's eyes, and he aided you to remain firm until relief came. Is that not a manifestation of his loving-kindness for which to thank and praise him?—Ps. 23:6. W 2/15 18

Sunday, February 5

Let your manner of life be free of the love of money, while you are content with the present things.—Heb. 13:5.

While money is needed and is useful now, it is folly to stake one's trust in it. For no matter what actions authorities may take to patch up today's economic systems, soon they will all totally collapse, and this time forever. The day is fast approaching when, as has happened before, "into the streets they will throw their very silver, and an abhorrent thing their own gold will become. Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to deliver them in the day of Jehovah's fury." (Ezek. 7:19) In view of this, God's Word wisely counsels as above. Because of not heeding such counsel, and, instead, developing a love for money, "some have been led astray from the faith and have stabbed themselves all over with many pains." (1 Tim. 6:10) So, not only does the love of money divert one from the interests of Jehovah God's kingdom, but it leads to many pains because of all that a person must go through to get it and to keep it. W 4/1 14a

Monday, February 6

This I am saying for your personal advantage, . . . to move you to that which is becoming and that which means constant attendance upon the Lord without distraction.

—1 Cor. 7:35.

The apostle Paul was one who derived real satisfaction from his sacred service as a single man. He was able to labor in excess of all the other apostles, traveling thousands of miles on sea and land and establishing many congregations in Europe and in Asia Minor. With a wife and children, he could never have undertaken such an extensive evangelizing work that repeatedly brought him into dangerous situations. (2 Cor. 11:23) Through his unselfish, whole-souled service, Paul experienced the superlative happiness that comes from giving. This also endeared him to his fellow believers. (Acts 20:24-27, 31-38) Clearly, when Paul recommended singleness, he was not encouraging a life of self-interest, ease or self-indulgence. No, he was recommending a course of life that would mean "constant attendance upon the Lord without distraction." W 5/1 16, 17

Tuesday, February 7

He was well reported on by the brothers in Lystra and Iconium.—Acts 16:2.

Even as Timothy, Mark and others served as attendants for elders in the first-century congregation, many do today. Without them, the Governing Body would find it difficult to care for the spiritual interests of the congregations world wide. Since much of the work done at Bethel requires physical strength, young men are especially needed. If you are a young man, have you ever given thought to making your-

self available for hard manual labor in behalf of your spiritual brothers, as well as for those who might become such? Of course, spiritual qualifications also are involved. Timothy, for example, had proved himself to be a young man of fine reputation. By his words and actions he must have gained the respect and confidence of fellow believers. Though young, he was well grounded in the Scriptures, having been taught these from infancy by his mother and grandmother. Young men with Timothy's qualifications certainly can be used at Bethel. W 6/1 5-7a

Wednesday, February 8

By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love among yourselves.

—John 13:35.

Elders of the first-century congregations had to be vigilant spiritually if the 'spirit was to be saved.' Admittedly, problems arose at times. Nevertheless, nothing abounds with greater warmth, love and mutual concern than the spirit of early Christian congregations in general, even as Jesus had declared. Such love was being manifested constantly. For instance, John spoke of his fellow worshiper Gaius as "the beloved, whom I truly love." (3 John 1) The apostles were working with their brothers and sisters in the faith, not browbeating them. They were not issuing harsh commands. Rather, these men made appeals to the hearts of fellow believers. Fittingly, Christian associates were referred to as "brothers," "beloved ones" and "sharers . . ." in the undeserved kindness." (Phil. 1:7; 4:8; 1 Pet. 4:12; 1 John 4:1) This loving attitude was based on deep interest in the spiritual welfare of others as fellow heirs of life. W 6/15 9, 10

Thursday, February 9

As these things start to occur, raise yourselves erect and lift your heads up, because your deliverance is getting near.

—Luke 21:28.

We today have even greater reason to be patient than did the ancient faithful prophets. Why? Because we have so much more than they had. They were looking forward in faith to the Messiah's coming but knew that they would not live to see that grand event. (Matt. 13:17) Many of the things they had awaited in faith were fulfilled centuries ago. Moreover, many living today have personally witnessed the fulfillment of yet other prophecies. By giving his life in sacrifice, Christ furnished a guarantee that all of God's promises will be fulfilled. Daily we see evidence that we are living in the time of the end. Hence Jesus' encouragement applies to us. Yes, soon, as "King of kings and Lord of lords," he will take action against the ungodly, bringing welcome relief from all suffering and oppression. Should we not wait patiently for that great day, especially since it is so near?—Rev. 19:11-21. W 2/1 15, 16

Friday, February 10

We have come to a unanimous accord.—Acts 15:25.

We can learn much about the value of humility and the factors that serve to resolve disputes by considering Acts 15:1-29. Because a major doctrinal matter was causing considerable disturbance to the brothers, it had to be resolved. Appropriately, the problem was brought to the attention of the responsible elders in Jerusalem. Though initially there was "much disputing" they finally reached "unanimous accord." The Greek term for "disputing" is

related to the verb meaning "to seek"; it thus indicates that to find the truth, or the best manner of doing something, diligent effort is required in searching out a matter—questioning, discussing things and thus arriving at a right conclusion. And the context shows that this was done, for after Peter, Paul and Barnabas spoke then James summed up matters, also drawing on the words of the prophets. From that strong position he made a proposal, which was accepted unanimously. A controversial matter had been resolved in all humility. W 3/1 12-15a

Saturday, February 11

Happy are those conscious of their spiritual need . . . Happy are those hungering and thirsting for righteousness.

—Matt. 5:3, 6.

Even as knowledge of the truth is essential to acquiring faith, so is a right heart condition essential to acquiring such knowledge. One needs to be honest, meek and hungry for the truth. The religious leaders of Jesus' day, not being honest but being hypocrites, simply could not believe Jesus. Nor are the proud likely to put their faith and trust in what God has said, because to do so one must be willing to learn, and the proud are anything but meek and teachable. Besides, we are told that faith is a gift of God. Since God opposes the proud, he is not at all likely to give them that gift. And since being spiritually hungry is likewise a prerequisite, the person who is smug, complacent, indifferent about his own sins and world conditions, is not spiritually hungry. A spiritually hungry person is conscious of his spiritual need, and so heeds Jesus' invitation recorded at Matthew 11:28-30. W 4/15 5-7a

Sunday, February 12

A large door that leads to activity has been opened to me.—1 Cor. 16:9.

Through letters from the central body of elders at Jerusalem and the visits of various faithful brothers, the congregations were built up and strengthened. Additionally, inspired letters did much to fortify the disciples spiritually. Truly, the beginning of the Christian era opened up grand opportunities for service. All disciples had the privilege of proclaiming the good news, and of encouraging fellow believers and helping them in difficult times or in spiritual ways. Evangelizers were needed to declare the good news in new territories. There was also a need for capable brothers who could spend time working with congregations for a period of time to strengthen them and to share in making appointments of elders and congregational servants. Since a heavy load of responsibility fell on these traveling brothers, they were aided by young men who could help in various ways. Today opportunities of this kind are still open. W 6/1 15, 16

Monday, February 13

Jehovah himself will sustain him upon a divan of illness.—Ps. 41:3.

Sickness befalls poor and rich alike. Jesus described his spiritual brothers as being ill at times. Early Christians such as Epaphroditus, Timothy and Trophimus were also at times stricken with sickness. So God's modern-day servants can draw some comfort from the knowledge that illness is not a unique experience. When on earth, Jesus brought about both physical and spiritual healing. The basis for these cures was the ransom sacrifice that God provided

through Christ. Therefore, Christians can be confident that by means of the resurrected Jesus Christ and under the rule of God's kingdom, obedient mankind will receive permanent release from sin, disease and death. In the meantime, what can an ailing Christian do? While undergoing appropriate treatment, he can pray to Jehovah for fortitude to bear his illness, and for spiritual strength to maintain integrity to God under these difficult circumstances. Such a person can be assured of the above. W 6/15 6-8a

Tuesday, February 14

With the exultation of a bridegroom over a bride, your God will exult even over you.—Isa. 62:5.

The marriage of a man and a woman should be a most happy occasion. It was for the first human pair as can be seen from Adam's words: "This is at last bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh." (Gen. 2:23) And their entire married life could have been one of unending joy, for God had made every provision for just such a life. Even now under imperfect conditions marriage can still be a source of genuine happiness where sincere effort is made to put Bible principles into effect. Weddings are often cited in God's Word as representative of happy times among God's servants. (Gen. 24:67; John 3:29) When foretelling the desolation due to come on unfaithful Jerusalem, Jehovah said there would be an absence of weddings, typical of the loss of joy and exultation that devastation would bring. (Jer. 7:34) By contrast, when speaking of the restoration of Israel from exile, Jehovah's prophet said the above of Jerusalem. W 3/15 1, 2

Wednesday, February 15

The name of Jehovah is a strong tower. Into it the righteous runs and is given protection.—Prov. 18:10.

When Jehovah God's anger comes against the present world, all its political, religious, military and economic systems now dominating mankind will be brought to nothing. Hence, they certainly will not provide any security. So what may appear strong and protective today will crumble when God's destructive forces strike. In the year 1978 we are now in the sixty-fourth year of the time of the end, counting from the autumn of the crucial year of 1914. In fulfillment of Bible prophecy, it is obvious from the events of our times that the present wicked system will soon receive its deathblow. What, then, will our attitude be? It all depends. Upon what? It depends upon what we make our goal, or refuge. If we make our goal eternal life in God's new order, then we will do everything in our power to search for Jehovah, learn his will, and do it to the best of our circumstances. The material things will not be our main concern.—1 Tim. 6:8. W 4/1 6, 10

Thursday, February 16

He gave himself for our sins that he might deliver us from the present wicked system of things.—Gal. 1:4.

Not in literal Egypt, out of which he was brought as a child, but in what is called Egypt "in a spiritual sense" Jesus Christ was sacrificed as the Lamb of God. (Rev. 11:8) Not by mere chance was Jesus Christ sacrificed as the Lamb of God on Passover Day of 33 C.E. Why not? Because he had been foreshadowed by the lamb that was sacrificed on the first Passover Day 1513

B.C.E. down in ancient Egypt. The Egyptians who did not sacrifice a Passover lamb and sprinkle its blood upon their doorways lost their firstborn of man and beast. This led to Pharaoh's releasing the Israelites from slavery that they might go out a free, liberated people. The plague-stricken land of Egypt pictured this worldly system of things, and Pharaoh and his crowd pictured the ruling factors of this system. In full accord with this truth, the Egypt from which the faithful disciples of the Lamb Jesus Christ are delivered is this worldly system of things. W 5/15 13, 19

Friday, February 17

My decision is . . . to write them to abstain . . . from blood.—Acts 15:19, 20.

At the Brooklyn Bethel there are many who have spent a lifetime of faithful service to God as devoted disciples of his Son. During this time they have gained a wealth of experience in Christian living and in helping fellow believers with their problems. They have also deepened their understanding of God's Word. Among these are those dedicated men who constitute the governing body for the worldwide congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses. At no other one location on earth are so many elders available for immediate consultation. At Brooklyn Bethel, therefore, can be found an excellent representation of Christian knowledge and experience that have been gained up to this time by the worldwide congregation of God's people. Understandably, when elders in other congregations are faced with perplexing problems, they write the Society for Scriptural assistance, which is readily provided in keeping with the first-century example. W 6/1 3, 4a

Saturday, February 18

Be . . . children of God without a blemish . . . keeping a tight grip on the word of life.—Phil. 2:15, 16.

What is the "word of life"? It is God's message about the hope of life, which began with his promise of the Seed. (Gen. 3:15) This assured the eventual triumph of righteousness. For some four thousand years, Jehovah added to that "word" until the Bible's completion about the year 98 C.E. Since then the "word of life" has consisted of the Holy Scriptures in their entirety. They reveal that God makes life eternal possible through Jesus Christ. Persons desiring divine approval and eternal life must understand God's Word, declare it to others and live according to the Bible, thus "keeping a tight grip on the word of life." There is great value in doing this. Any person having such a grip on it can maintain a close relationship with Jehovah God. Also, thereby we are better able to cope with life's problems. Furthermore, this makes it possible for us to endure adverse circumstances. How do you measure up in this respect? W 6/15 4, 5a

Sunday, February 19

Jehovah is not slow . . . but he is patient with you because he does not desire any to be destroyed but desires all to attain to repentance.—2 Pet. 3:9.

Thus we see why the Almighty God has patiently put up with rebellious mankind. Note that God's patience has been for the benefit of Christians, for Peter addressed fellow Christians with the words, "he is patient with you." Just what does this mean? The apostle was showing that what some people interpreted as slowness on God's part should

be viewed in an entirely different light. The fact that Jehovah's day of vengeance has not yet come proves that he loves mankind, that he wants people to live, not to die. At one time Christians were unbelievers and, hence, did not have an approved standing before God. Had the Most High executed his judgment against the ungodly world then, they, too, would have perished. So Jehovah God's patience has worked to the salvation of Christians, even as it opens to all the opportunity for salvation. W 2/15, 6

Monday, February 20

The heavens are declaring the glory of God; and of the work of his hands the expanse is telling.—Ps. 19:1.

The fact that one's confidence in Jehovah must be based on knowledge of him and of his past dealings with mankind, as well as knowledge of his present and future purposes, emphasizes the importance of personal study and group study in the congregation. Learn all you can about this Grand Creator, not only from his Word, but also by observation of the material creation around you, even as the apostle Paul said to the people of Lystra and in his letter to the Romans. (Acts 14:17; Rom. 1:20) In addition to observing the created things here on earth, we should turn our attention toward the physical heavens. (Isa. 40:26) What a vast and impressive witness the cosmic bodies of the heavens present—countless billions of stars all testifying to the eternal greatness of Jehovah! David expressed it beautifully when he wrote the above. It is our privilege and duty to tell others about our Grand Creator even as did the apostle Paul. W 1/15 4-6a

Tuesday, February 21

In like manner my heavenly Father will also deal with you if you do not forgive each one his brother from your hearts.—Matt. 18:35.

Compared with the large debt of sin that Jehovah God has forgiven us on the basis of his Son's sacrifice, whatever transgression may be committed against us by a Christian brother is small indeed. So if he is repentant, what right do we have to become impatient with him or to want him to suffer for what he may have done against us? Never should we lose sight of the fact that the basis on which Jehovah God grants forgiveness was provided by him at great cost to himself. He loved his Son deeply. (John 5:20) Still, the Most High was willing to give him for the world of mankind as a "propitiatory sacrifice" for our sins. (John 3:16; 1 John 2:2) No human has ever sacrificed that much in providing a basis for restoring good relations with someone who has sinned against him. What a superlative example Jehovah has set in encouraging us to be patient with those who may sin against us! W 2/1 10, 11a

Wednesday, February 22

Give thanks to Jehovah, you people, for he is good, for to time indefinite is his loving-kindness.—1 Chron. 16:34.

After the Israelites entered the Promised Land the Ark of the Covenant remained for years, not in its tent at Shiloh, but at Kiriath-jearim. David wanted to bring it to Jerusalem where he sat on Jehovah's throne. His first attempt to do that failed. Finally, he brought the Ark, properly carried by Levites, to Jerusalem. (1 Chron. 15:1-28) This grand occasion prompted an expression of praise. (1 Chron. 16:

1-36) Do you respond likewise when a progressive step is taken that elevates true worship? Perhaps a new provision is made so that additional persons can learn of Jehovah. It might be a new book used in teaching Bible truths. Or there may be an improved arrangement involving the spiritual elders in the congregation. Do you find yourself responding as King David did, thanking Jehovah God for the loving-kindness of such progressive steps in true worship? Certainly there is ample reason for our doing so. W 2/15 19, 20

Thursday, February 23

I wish all men were as I myself am. Nevertheless, each one has his own gift from God.—1 Cor. 7:7.

Paul was convinced that continued singleness for those who had the gift would mean a happier life if it was spent in giving. Today also there are single men and women who are proving themselves to be an asset to the Christian congregation. Their greatest joy comes from spending themselves completely for others. Their singleness is rewarding because they are serving, not their own interests, but those of Christ. And should not their gift be appreciated by all others in the congregation, because of the fine service that it has enabled so many of them to perform? In their having forgone marriage and parenthood, their life is surely not a waste but continues to be meaningful and satisfying. Though having no families of their own, they have in the Christian congregation found those who love them as deeply as natural mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters, yes, as sons and daughters. —Mark 10:29, 30. W 5/1 17, 19, 20

Friday, February 24

We . . . are declaring the good news to you, for you to turn . . . to the living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all the things in them.—Acts 14:15.

Are you talking about a trip to relax at the seashore or in the mountains and to enjoy Jehovah's creation? You appreciate the natural beauty and restfulness of what he has made, so why not mention it? Even if you are conversing with an unbeliever, with discretion you may be able to speak of God, briefly mentioning, for example, the pleasure you derive from the things that *your Creator* has made; for is he not ever on your mind? Someone might note your success in training your children. Could your reply include a brief expression of thankfulness to Jehovah God for his counsel that enables a person to be wise in this field? (Ps. 19:7) Perhaps a workmate comments on your spending vacation time to attend an assembly instead of using it all for "pleasure." You could sincerely reply that you enjoy learning more about the loving-kindness and will of your Maker. W 2/15 11, 12a

Saturday, February 25

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.—Matt. 24:14.

In answer to a question by his apostles as to when the end of this system of things would take place, Jesus Christ foretold widespread wars, famines, earthquakes and pestilences as marking the nearness of that end. Certainly in our generation we have seen all these things occur on an unprecedented scale, particularly since 1914. Also

pinpointing this present time are the prophetic words of the apostle Paul as found at 2 Timothy 3:1-5. Who can deny that these conditions prevail today, and to an extent never witnessed before? Certainly no honest, knowledgeable person can do so. As part of his composite "sign" of the end of the system of things, Jesus said the above. This prophecy also has had a remarkable fulfillment, particularly within the last fifty years. It is our privilege and obligation to have a share in preaching this good news of the Kingdom. W 4/15 20-22

Sunday, February 26

O give thanks to Jehovah, you people, for he is good; for his loving-kindness is to time indefinite.—Ps. 107:1.

All the examples of loving-kindness expressed by humans are small indeed when compared to that of the One whose friendship is to be sought after and treasured above that of all others. To that one the psalmist sang the foregoing. What is this "loving-kindness" of Jehovah that is spoken of here? This quality involves love that takes an active interest in others. "Loving-kindness" translates the Hebrew word *hhe'sedh*, which carries the idea of kindness or regard motivated by love. But more is involved. It has been observed that *hhe'sedh* "signifies an attitude of either God or man born out of mutual relationship," and it "denotes 'kindness' or 'help' received from a superior. . . . The principal connotation of [*hhe'sedh*] is 'loyal love.'" Thus one rendering presents Solomon as speaking of God's having "shown great and steadfast love to David my father."—2 Chron. 1:8, RS. W 2/15 3, 4

Monday, February 27

"Lord, if you just want to, you can make me clean." And so, stretching out his hand, he touched him, saying: "I want to. Be made clean." And immediately the leprosy vanished from him.—Luke 5:12, 13.

This reply of Jesus to a leper illustrates that his was indeed a willing service. While single himself, among his closest associates were married men. He had special affection for Lazarus and his sisters Mary and Martha, in whose home he was repeatedly a guest. Jesus also enjoyed the company of children as can be seen from Mark 10:13-16. The example of Jesus Christ reveals that those who would enjoy their singleness must be totally involved in giving wholeheartedly of their time, energies and abilities to help fellow humans. They must have a genuine interest in people, finding pleasure in the company of men, women and children. They should also be able to get wholesome enjoyment from life, and this without practicing extreme self-denial, which is of "no value in combating the satisfying of the flesh."—Col. 2:23. W 5/1 13-15

Wednesday, March 1

Get out of her, my people, if you do not want to share with her in her sins, and if you do not want to receive part of her plagues.—Rev. 18:4.

If you are one of the more than two million who have already fled Babylon the Great before her destruction and if you have become one of Jehovah's clean worshippers, then you are in a position similar to that of Noah's family who entered the ark, like that of Lot and his two daughters who fled Sodom, like that of the Israelites who left Egypt under the command of Moses.

Tuesday, February 28

God gave us not a spirit of cowardice, but that of power and of love and of soundness of mind.—2 Tim. 1:7.

Some who have dedicated their lives to God have had quite a struggle against shyness or timidity, and fear. When God spoke to Moses about sending him back to Egypt to lead the Israelites out of slavery there, Moses was very diffident. Jehovah nevertheless sent Moses to Egypt, providing Aaron as his spokesman. But Moses did not give up, always letting Aaron speak for him. Later, he confidently spoke to the Israelites himself. (Ex. 4:10-17; Deut. 1:1-5) Consider also Paul's counsel to Timothy. Whether Timothy had become somewhat fearful, we cannot say with certainty. However, Paul told him the above. A Christian can cope with problems like the one that confronted Moses. Also, it is possible to dispel shyness or timidity, and fear, by praying earnestly to Jehovah for strength. Lovers of Jehovah can always seek his face in prayer without fear, and they can courageously speak God's truth to others. —1 John 4:17, 18. W 6/15 20-23a

Yes, you are like the first-century Christians who escaped from Jerusalem before its destruction. But finding yourself in such a favorable position at present, how will you face the future? Will you remain in the arklike spiritual paradise into which you have entered? As you look forward to the destruction of Babylon the Great with eager anticipation and confidence, are you doing all you can to warn others still in that world empire of false religion and are you helping them all you can to flee to God's kingdom? W 1/15 29, 30

Thursday, March 2

By means of [Christ] we have . . . the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his undeserved kindness.
—Eph. 1:7.

Think of all the millions of persons on earth who are yet blinded by erroneous religious teachings. Whereas you too might have had no hope and been without God in the world, you now know the truth of God's Word and can serve him. Do you regularly thank God for allowing you to learn the truth and become his friend? Let us make the matter even more personal. When the truth reached those Ephesians many of them probably were like persons in ancient Corinth, 'fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, men kept for unnatural purposes, thieves, greedy persons, drunkards, revilers and extortioners.' (1 Cor. 6:9-11) But mercy could be shown to them because Jehovah God had sent his Son to provide a sacrificial basis for forgiving sins. Thus Paul reminded the Ephesians as above. Was not God's willingness to forgive their sins a marvelous display of undeserved kindness? What of us? Each of us is aware of his own past. W 2/15 10-12

Friday, March 3

Valuable things will be of no benefit on the day of fury, but righteousness itself will deliver from death.
—Prov. 11:4.

Think now, in what do you really trust for security? In "gold" or in God? What a grievous error it would be to look for security in the wrong direction at this late date! In view of the imminent collapse of human systems, and the subsequent vast material loss that could take place, it would be shortsighted indeed not to prepare ourselves

for it mentally. If you love life, and want to keep living, do not become attached to any material thing. "The one trusting in his riches—he himself will fail; but just like foliage the righteous ones will flourish." (Prov. 11:28) Such righteous ones will be ushered into God's new order, there to share in the thrilling work of making the entire earth a Paradise, a lovely home where they will enjoy living forever. Having looked in the right direction, these ones "will actually dwell in security, with no one to make them tremble." What a prospect!—Ezek. 34:28. W 4/1 17, 18

Saturday, March 4

You are my witnesses, . . . even my servant whom I have chosen.—Isa. 43:10.

In their inspired Scriptures, the Israelites had a trustworthy record of God's dealings with them as a people. They knew that Jehovah had delivered them from their enemies time and again. They knew about the promises that he had fulfilled in giving them the land of Canaan as an inheritance. (Psalm 78) The prophecy of Isaiah, in which Jehovah God addressed the Israelites as his witnesses, pointed to the time when the nation would come into Babylonian exile for unfaithfulness and when later the Most High would effect their release through Cyrus. (Isa. 43:14, 15; 44:24-45:2) Thus they would become living witnesses of a new deliverance. But how could they serve as Jehovah's witnesses? They could bear witness by the way that they lived their lives. They could show that they fully relied upon Jehovah God as the Protector and Savior and that their present and future welfare rested solely in him. This is also one of the ways we can witness. W 7/1 2, 3

Sunday, March 5

Seek Jehovah, all you meek ones of the earth . . . Seek righteousness, seek meekness. Probably you may be concealed in the day of Jehovah's anger.—Zeph. 2:3.

By acquiring strong faith and 'fighting the fine fight of faith' we will be able to heed this counsel that today takes on greater urgency than ever before. Why does it say, "Probably you may be concealed in the day of Jehovah's anger"? It is because those words originally applied to the nation of Israel before its destruction in 607 B.C.E., and it was a question of God's showing mercy toward those who conform. These words are a reminder that we cannot presume on God's mercy. Surviving the end of this old system of things, we can look forward to what? To a new order of peace, righteousness and plenty; to seeing the earth made into a paradise, even as foretold at Isaiah 25:6, 8. What a glorious prospect for all who, because of their faith, survive the "great tribulation"! And what a privilege for Jehovah's servants at the present time to tell others about this prospect! W 4/15 20, 21a

Monday, March 6

Not all men make room for the saying, but only those who have the gift.—Matt. 19:11.

How did Jesus' disciples react to his statement about the binding nature of marriage? (Matt. 19:4-9) "If such is the situation of a man with his wife," they said, "it is not advisable to marry." (Matt. 19:10) They felt that it would be better to forgo marriage than to risk getting into an undesirable relationship that could not be terminated at will. Fear of an undesirable marital situation or an un-

willingness to give of oneself unselfishly for a mate, however, are not good reasons for a person's trying to maintain singleness at all costs. The noblest reason for remaining single is a spiritual one. No grander purpose in life could anyone have than to devote oneself to Kingdom work, helping others to seize the marvelous reward of eternal life and to keep fast hold on it. Free from the cares and anxieties involved in having a marriage mate and children, the single person can serve God more fully. How rewarding this can make singleness! W 5/1 3, 4

Tuesday, March 7

They arranged for Paul and Barnabas and some others of them to go up to the apostles and older men in Jerusalem regarding this dispute.
—Acts 15:2.

A problem arose because certain brothers from Judea came to Antioch, insisting that non-Jews who embraced Christianity had to be circumcised. Where could this matter be settled? The most logical place would be Jerusalem, as that was the congregation with which the apostles were associated. Moreover, it was from there that the work of preaching and making disciples had spread out to all the many places where congregations were then located. Hence the elders of the Jerusalem congregation occupied the position of a central body to which other elders could direct their inquiries, for which reason Paul and others were sent there. The central body of elders, including the apostles, thoroughly discussed the matter, reached a decision and wrote it up in a letter that was sent to the various congregations. Today we have a similar governing body functioning. W 6/1 13, 14

Wednesday, March 8

Turn your face to me, and show me favor; for I am solitary and afflicted.

—Ps. 25:16.

For some Christians stress is a notable problem today. Trying, nerve-racking situations can develop in life. Sometimes the stress becomes so intense that considerable mental strain is felt. Yet, "a tight grip on the word of life" aids one to maintain a balance. What may help to calm a person who is experiencing great emotional strain? As in the case of King Saul, soft, calm music can soothe a person and produce a feeling of peace. (1 Sam. 16:14-23) David himself knew stress. More than once, King Saul tried to pin him to the wall with a spear. Saul also outlawed David, forcing him to live as a fugitive. Certainly, David underwent stress then and at later times. For aid he turned to Jehovah in prayer. Well, can Jehovah be relied upon to aid his servants in times of stress? Indeed he can, for he "will become a secure height for anyone crushed, a secure height in times of distress."—Ps. 9:9. W 6/15 9-11a

Thursday, March 9

Without faith it is impossible to please him well, for he that approaches God must believe that he is and that he becomes the rewarder of those earnestly seeking him.

—Heb. 11:6.

Jehovah's servants must keep trusting him with full confidence to bring this wicked system to an end and to replace it with his new order of righteousness. (2 Pet. 3:10-13) We must be confident that Jehovah can and will, precisely at his appointed time, fulfill the promise recorded at Revelation 21:4. In addition, as an encourage-

ment to keep trusting in him, Jehovah asks his servants to keep their eyes focused on his rewards. The hope of the reward was a stimulus to first-century Christians. (1 Cor. 15:58) So our trust in Jehovah should not be diminished even if we should have to face death before God's new order becomes a reality. We can have the same trust that Abraham had when he was asked to sacrifice Isaac. (Heb. 11:19) Can any human agency bring back the dead? No. Only Jehovah can, through the arrangements he provides. —Acts 24:15. W 7/15 16-18a

Friday, March 10

A cedar in Lebanon, pretty in bough, with a woody thicket offering shadow, and high in stature, so that among the clouds its treetop proved to be.—Ezek. 31:3.

This cedar, which in the prophet Ezekiel's day pictured Pharaoh, pictures something larger today. (Ezek. 31:2) It pictures the world system of things in which the political ruling factors govern all the earthly nations. Although it is likened to the cedar that was the envy of all the other trees in the Edenic land of Lebanon, this system of things was not planted by Jehovah God, who planted those evergreen trees in the literal land of Lebanon, which was then like the garden of God. The symbolic political "cedar in Lebanon" had its beginning on earth in the days of the mighty hunter, Nimrod, the founder of the first Babylonian empire, in the second century after the deluge of Noah's day. Just as Nimrod rebelled against the universal sovereignty of Jehovah, so too, the symbolic cedar of Lebanon defies Jehovah's sovereignty. We therefore want to have nothing to do with it. W 5/15 20

Saturday, March 11

[Stand] firm in one spirit, with one soul striving side by side for the faith of the good news.—Phil. 1:27.

The witness concerning the good news about Christ was now being given by the Christian body made up of both natural Jews and Gentiles. These were now the people whom God was using as his witnesses. And the disciples publicly identified themselves as such even as can be seen by their reply to the Sanhedrin when ordered by it not to speak on the basis of Jesus' name. (Acts 5:29-32) Earlier, the apostles Peter and John had given the same judicial body a like answer. (Acts 4:19, 20) Those early disciples of Jesus fully appreciated that they were under obligation to be witnesses of God and of his Son. All were entitled to hear the good news that, by accepting Jesus as the Christ and his sacrifice as having sin-atonement value, they could gain eternal life. Today all likewise need to hear the good news before death or the great tribulation prevents them from seizing the opportunity to become witnesses of God with everlasting life in view. W 7/1 5, 6

Sunday, March 12

I planted, Apollos watered, but God kept making it grow; so that neither is he that plants anything nor is he that waters, but God who makes it grow; . . . each person will receive his own reward according to his own labor. For we are God's fellow workers.

—1 Cor. 3:6-9.

It is our responsibility to proclaim the good news to others and to teach God's Word to interested persons. (1 Cor. 9:16; Matt. 28:19, 20) But, by our ingenuity or methods that we might devise, we cannot

produce or speed up spiritual growth. For this, we must wait upon Jehovah while we patiently do our part, acting in full harmony with his Word. The apostle Paul made this clear when he wrote the above. Jehovah God will not fail to do his part. May we, therefore, prove to be faithful fellow workers of his, thereby showing that we appreciate Jehovah's patience toward us. Then, how happy we will be to see some of what we have planted and watered coming to full Christian growth! Yes, there will be fruitage in the form of genuine disciples of Jesus Christ. W 2/1 19

Monday, March 13

The Most High . . . is kind toward the unthankful and wicked.—Luke 6:35.

While Jehovah's loyal love, or "loving-kindness," is expressed toward those who have come into an approved relationship with him, this certainly does not mean that he is unkind to those outside such a relationship, even as Jesus noted when on earth. Paul could well say to the idol-worshipping people in Lystra that God gave you "rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling your hearts to the full with food and good cheer." (Acts 14:17) All of this is an undeserved kindness on Jehovah God's part, an expression of his great mercy toward all mankind. How easy it is to take what we have for granted. Ask yourself: How would you describe the color of the sky or the beauty of a flower to a person born blind? If a person had never been able to hear, could you explain to him being able to hear the birds, to converse, to listen to pleasant music? The abilities to see and hear, capacities that almost all of us have, are truly a blessing, are they not? W 2/15 7, 8

Tuesday, March 14

I desire the women to adorn themselves in well-arranged dress, with modesty and soundness of mind.

—1 Tim. 2:9.

Some have difficulty in weighing the Scriptural principles involved in the matter of apparel. By considering basic questions and reasoning matters out, their thinking can be adjusted. Is the clothing neat and clean? Is it well arranged and modest, befitting those who reverence God? Is the apparel of the quiet and mild spirit being emphasized or is the extreme physical appearance getting most of the attention? Will others be unpleasantly affected by what one wears? Does it detract from the dignity of the occasion, especially if it is at a place of worship? What is the responsibility of the father or husband who exercises headship? If what is worn raises questions or reflects unfavorably on the congregation, what is the course recommended in the Bible? Is one humble enough to submerge one's own preferences in order to avoid offending sensitive consciences? By considering such questions and the principles involved, a Bible-based decision can be reached. W 3/1 6

Wednesday, March 15

What God has yoked together let no man put apart.

—Matt. 19:6.

In Bible times marriage was primarily a family or a tribal affair. The bridegroom would go to his bride's home and escort her through the streets to his home. Thereby he publicly declared that he was taking her as his wife. The bridegroom's arrival at his home might be followed by a wedding feast. By such means both the bridegroom and the bride openly made known

their entry into a marriage covenant and their acceptance of the responsibility this brought. It seems that in time written records of marriages were kept. But more important than the witness of other humans to their union, the couple would be aware of God's knowledge of the agreement and union into which they had entered. This fact should be by far the primary and most powerful force moving them to stay loyal to each other. It should make them strive to keep their marriage free from defilement, as well as motivating deep respect on their part for the marriages of all others. W 3/15 7-9

Thursday, March 16

You are opening your hand and satisfying the desire of every living thing.—Ps. 145:16.

All normal persons desire security—economic security, a nice place to live, satisfying work, freedom from fear, and peace of mind. God implanted the desire for such proper things when he first created man and woman. And in Jehovah's new order, such security will be the happy lot of mankind. Yes, in God's new order the proper desires of humans will be fully satisfied, even beyond their expectations. But we are not yet in God's new order. We still live in this present wicked system of things. And it is fast approaching its end. Its finish will come shortly when it collides head on with Jehovah at the coming great tribulation. Hence, before God's new order becomes a reality, the old system of political, commercial and religious rule under Satan must be put out of the way. (2 Cor. 4:4; Rev. 19:11-21) That is why there is compelling reason to keep in its proper place the normal desire we may have for material security. W 4/1 1-3a

Friday, March 17

They will be certain to fight against you, but they will not prevail against you, for "I am with you . . . to deliver you."

—Jer. 1:19.

What marvelous words of encouragement! And they contain strong assurance for us today, that no matter what worldly governments or people may scheme against us, God will fight our battles for us, and the victory will be ours. But we must treasure always our close personal relationship with Jehovah, as *his* witnesses, commissioned to proclaim *his* message among the doomed nations. We need, therefore, to keep our loins girded constantly. We need to keep up our study of God's Word, cultivating ever stronger faith, that we may be truly equipped to turn back every weapon that crafty Satan may use against us. (Isa. 54:13, 17) Our girding results in our spiritedly proclaiming the good news of God's kingdom, and this activity leads on to salvation, both for ourselves and for those who listen to us. (1 Tim. 4:16) May we always be girded for this service, and be zealous in making the truth known to others! W 1/1 5, 7a

Saturday, March 18

You will receive power when the holy spirit arrives upon you, and you will be witnesses of me.—Acts 1:8.

With the coming of Jesus to the earth, a new feature of witnessing opened up. Those who became his disciples accepted the responsibility of telling others about what Jehovah God had done in connection with his Son. Thus on the day of Pentecost, 33 C.E., a crowd of Jews and proselytes were astonished at seeing the operation of God's spirit on about 120 disciples

of Christ. Peter told them: "This Jesus God resurrected, of which fact we are all witnesses. Therefore because he was exalted to the right hand of God and received the promised holy spirit from the Father, he has poured out this which you see and hear." (Acts 2:32, 33) Note that Peter was testifying to what Jehovah God had done. At the same time he was also a witness for Jesus, presenting testimony that this one was indeed the Messiah or Christ. Peter was thus acting in harmony with what the Son of God told the disciples prior to his ascension. W 7/1 4

Sunday, March 19

Be transformed by making your mind over, that you may prove to yourselves the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.—Rom. 12:2.

It is only when a person has a right heart condition that the truth of God's Word can strike a responsive chord in his heart. There must be what has been termed "the will to believe" what is true. The person who is determined to doubt cannot be convinced, because he simply does not *want* to believe. Obviously, there are differing degrees of faith. The Bible mentions such a thing as being "weak in faith," and having "little faith." (Rom. 4:19; Matt. 8:26) On the other hand, God's Word speaks also of "so great a faith" and of faith so outstanding as to be "talked about throughout the whole world." (Matt. 8:10; Rom. 1:8) But there can be no faith without knowledge. Therefore, to be strong in faith, one must be diligent to take in knowledge. That means heeding the counsel Paul gave the Roman Christians. Yes, only by feeding on God's Word can you make your mind over. W 4/15 8-10a

Monday, March 20

If anyone stands settled in his heart, having no necessity, but has authority over his own will and has made this decision in his own heart, to keep his own virginity, he will do well.—1 Cor. 7:37.

The person with the gift of singleness should be able to see, on his own, that maintaining singleness for spiritual reasons, in his case, is the better course. It is not a matter of simply suppressing a nagging heart's desire for marriage and family life. No, a person should be fully convinced at heart that maintaining singleness is right for him, and he should be willing to put forth whatever effort is necessary to maintain it in chastity. There should be nothing in his disposition that would be unduly disturbed were he to continue in the single state indefinitely. Of course, the one who can remain single for the Kingdom's sake should not look down on married Christians. From God's standpoint, he is not a superior person by reason of his gift of singleness. He should appreciate that he is what he is by God's undeserved kindness.—Rom. 12:3-8. W 5/1 7, 8

Tuesday, March 21

Their corpses will be on the broad way of the great city which is in a spiritual sense called Sodom and Egypt, where their Lord was also impaled.—Rev. 11:8.

The one called "their Lord" is the Lord Jesus Christ, and the ones whose corpses lay exposed in the city's broad way are the faithful followers of Christ. In what "great city" were these modern-day "witnesses" killed and their corpses left lying exposed to public shame? Certainly Jesus was not impaled down in first-

century Egypt, for we read that the Lord's witnesses were killed and exposed in the same place in which he had been impaled in the year 33 of our Common Era. We are helped to understand this when we note that the "great city" is symbolic and it "is in a spiritual sense called Sodom and Egypt." So this would exclude the literal city of Sodom, which was then out of existence, and also the literal land of Egypt, which was then subject to the Roman Empire. Jesus was impaled outside Jerusalem, which city is like unfaithful Christendom of today. W 5/15 14-16

Wednesday, March 22

Like a child with a father [Timothy] slaved with me in furtherance of the good news.—Phil. 2:22.

From this testimony it is clear that Timothy did not capitalize on his association with Paul and proudly assert his authority. (1 Tim. 4:11-14; 2 Tim. 1:6, 7; 2:1) As in the case of Timothy, humility, a spirit of self-sacrifice and an intense interest in the welfare of others are essential for happy service at Bethel or anywhere else in Jehovah's organization. Wherever one may serve, pride, desire for prominence, and selfishness not only diminish personal happiness but also make life unpleasant for others. Being imperfect, we have to continue to fight against these undesirable traits and we should not allow ourselves to become overly disturbed by the noticeable failings of others in this respect. One's cultivating the right spirit is always worth the effort, for the real reward will come, not from men, but from Jehovah God. Furthermore, one's setting a good example can have a wholesome, upbuilding effect on others. W 6/1 9, 10a

Thursday, March 23 Memorial Date After Sundown

The Son of man came, not to be ministered to, but to minister and to give his soul a ransom in exchange for many.—Matt. 20:28.

Disciples of Jesus Christ are persons who have accepted his teaching and are living in harmony with the example he set while on earth. So if we are going to be his true disciples, we do well to consider his activity on earth in order to determine just what is required of us. Jesus' whole life course centered around service, even as he told his disciples. The fact that he came to serve does not mean that he refused all personal service. This could not be, for we read of women who ministered to him. (Matt. 27:55) However, theirs was strictly a voluntary ministry. Jesus did not come to the earth seeking to be served or to be waited upon by others. He himself did by far most of the serving, which service culminated in his giving his life as a ransom for humankind, the greatest possible service. Today we memorialize his sacrificial course even as he commanded us to do.—1 Cor. 11:23-25. W 7/1 1, 2, 4a

Friday, March 24

Trust in Jehovah with all your heart and do not lean upon your own understanding.—Prov. 3:5.

With the great tribulation coming on apace, now is no time to be overconfident or self-reliant. We must never lean on our own understanding or that of others. The person misplacing his confidence in earthly man and actually making flesh his arm is cursed. (Jer. 17:5) The person whose confidence is

placed in Jehovah puts God's kingdom first in his life, and thus avoids many anxieties. He does not forget that Jesus said that "even when a person has an abundance his life does not result from the things he possesses." (Luke 12:15) How foolish, then, to hoard up material provisions and trust them to see one through the fury of the great tribulation! Faithful Job was careful not to misplace his confidence in material possessions, saying: "If I have put gold as my confidence, or to gold I have said, 'You are my trust!' . . . I should have denied the true God above." (Job 31:24, 28) He set a fine example. W 1/15 20, 21a

Saturday, March 25

The king gave them to me, according to the good hand of my God upon me.—Neh. 2:8.

Persons "keeping a tight grip on the word of life" can find consolation in Scripture. They will note that others who served Jehovah in the past were depressed at times. Depression apparently troubled some early Christians. (1 Thess. 5:14) Paul himself underwent hardships that could have resulted in depression, but he dealt with these in the strength that God gives. (2 Cor. 4:8, 9) Are you depressed because of personal matters? Remember also Nehemiah. He was gloomy in the presence of King Artaxerxes because of the devastated condition of Jerusalem and its walls. When questioned by the Persian ruler, Nehemiah prayed before stating his request. The king responded favorably, granting it. Similarly today, we should pray to Jehovah for aid and direction regarding problems or other matters of concern. Then we can be sure that God will be with us. W 6/15 12-14a

Sunday, March 26

He received them kindly and began to speak to them about the kingdom of God.
—Luke 9:11.

Jesus faithfully fulfilled the purpose of his anointing as stated at Isaiah 61:1. Outstanding was his tender compassion for those whom he served in this way. Even when his privacy was interrupted by crowds, he did not respond in a gruff, irritated or otherwise unpleasant way. Rather, he was moved with pity for them and so "started to teach them many things." (Mark 6:34) Never did Jesus Christ look down upon the poor and afflicted. The manner in which he dealt with oppressed ones fulfilled the words of Isaiah 42:3: "No crushed reed will he break; and as for a dim flaxen wick, he will not extinguish it." (Matt. 12:20) The afflicted were like crushed reeds and like wicks about to go out for lack of oil in the lamps. Recognizing their pitiable state, Jesus did not make it worse for them by treating them harshly. No, he showed them consideration, infusing them with renewed strength and hope. Are we endeavoring to follow his steps closely?
W 7/1 4-6a

Monday, March 27

In you I have put my trust, O Jehovah. I have said: "You are my God."—Ps. 31:14.

Few people today have a deep, abiding trust in Jehovah God. Some do not even believe that he exists. Others may acknowledge God's existence, but they pay little attention to his will. Even those who are devout in this world's religions trust mostly in their religious traditions or in their clergymen, not in Jehovah. They are much like those Jews about whom Paul wrote at Romans 10:2, 3. Re-

garding the future of the human family, in whom do people trust to bring about better conditions? Most of them put their trust in human efforts, not in Jehovah's purpose for mankind. Only a tiny minority of earth's four thousand million inhabitants have carefully examined the evidence of Jehovah's existence, have accepted their responsibilities toward him, and live their lives in obedience to his laws. Being among such persons, we trust Jehovah completely, knowing that he will fulfill his promise regarding a righteous new order for mankind. We feel as did the psalmist David. W 7/15 1, 2

Tuesday, March 28

I have many things yet to say to you, but you are not able to bear them at present.
—John 16:12.

The apostle Paul gave all credit to God for the growth of the Christian congregation and humbly viewed himself as a minister, servant or slave laboring in making disciples, not of himself, but of Christ. Like Paul, we who share in the same work should direct the attention of those being taught away from ourselves and to God and Jesus Christ as the real teachers. (1 Cor. 3:5-7) Furthermore, there is need to watch the content of our teaching. A person might ask himself, Am I truly teaching everything that Christ commanded? In this respect, too, Paul is an example worthy of imitation. Obviously, though, we cannot present "all the counsel of God" at one time. (Acts 20:27) First, hearts have to be prepared to accept truths that may run counter to local prejudices or ingrained habits. Yes, as Jesus told his disciples, we should show like consideration. W 5/1 5-7a

Wednesday, March 29

Stir up like a fire the gift of God which is in you through the laying of my hands upon you.—2 Tim. 1:6.

Young men with Timothy's qualifications are certainly an asset to any congregation. Doubtless the brothers in Lystra very much appreciated Timothy's abilities. He must also have been a real source of encouragement to his mother, especially since his father was an unbeliever. Yet, when the apostle Paul expressed the desire that Timothy accompany him in his travels, the body of elders did not selfishly try to keep the young man in their congregation. No, these elders evidently joined the apostle Paul in laying their hands upon Timothy, thereby setting him apart for special service. (1 Tim. 4:14) So when qualified young men today desire to make themselves available for service at Bethel, it is indeed commendable when elders and believing family members give them wholehearted support. Though service at Bethel brings rich spiritual rewards, it is not easy. But neither was Timothy's assignment an easy one. W 6/1 7, 8a

Thursday, March 30

Maintain your conduct fine among the nations, that, in the thing in which they are speaking against you as evildoers, they may as a result of your fine works of which they are eyewitnesses glorify God in the day for his inspection.—1 Pet. 2:12.

Yes, a Christian's conduct might even help opposers to become glorifiers of God. Think of it, fine conduct may convince outright opposers that the ones whom they are misrepresenting practice true worship and it may move them to become praisers

of God, themselves rendering sacred service to the Most High! So never be discouraged by opposition and indifference toward your efforts to share the good news with others. It may well be that your fine conduct in the face of an unpleasant situation will help sincere persons to appreciate that your worship has real substance. A Christian wife may find that efforts to speak with her unbelieving husband about the good news are unsuccessful. Her fine conduct, though, may provide a more powerful witness than many words.—1 Pet. 3:1, 2. W 7/1 12, 13

Friday, March 31

Broad and spacious is the road leading off into destruction, and many are the ones going in through it; whereas narrow is the gate and cramped the road leading off into life, and few are the ones finding it.—Matt. 7:13, 14.

Should it discourage us who believe and trust in Jehovah God that we are relatively few compared with earth's four thousand million people? No, because numbers have never been a measure of the rightfulness of an issue. The masses of mankind often have been wrong even as Jesus showed. No, trusting the judgment of the masses is not the way through the narrow gate to life in its fullness. History is filled with the wreckage of men's promises. And especially now, with the added experience of having seen this highly scientific modern age, we are better able to examine the results of human accomplishments. We can set them alongside the works of Jehovah God and more clearly see that our trust indeed must be placed in Jehovah; we should do so even though the vast majority disagree. W 7/15 3, 4

Saturday, April 1

What sort of persons ought you to be in holy acts of conduct and deeds of godly devotion, awaiting and keeping close in mind the . . . day of Jehovah.—2 Pet. 3:11, 12.

This is no time to diminish our sacred service. Jesus did not give the assignment of making disciples to the angels. Instead, he gave it to those who show themselves to be his true followers both by their service and by their deeds of godly devotion. Now is the time to be pleasing our heavenly King by regular Kingdom activity, and not by offering a crippled or half-hearted sacrifice of praise by occasional or irregular service. As we fill our lives with sacred service rendered whole-souled, we can have the assurance of being among the happy crowd of Armageddon survivors who will rejoice to continue such service night and day before God's throne after the great tribulation is finished, even as Revelation 7:17 tells us. What a wonderful prospect is before us if we continue to render sacred service to Jehovah in a whole-souled way, ever heeding Peter's words! W 8/1 22, 23

Sunday, April 2

You are my hope, O Sovereign Lord Jehovah, my confidence from my youth.—Ps. 71:5.

This is what the faithful remnant can say today, looking back over the years. One has only to read the history of Jehovah's Witnesses for the past sixty years to see why this remnant and the great crowd have such confidence in Jehovah. It seems that Satan and his demons put every device and obstacle in the way to impede their work. They were made the special target of various political and religious organizations in many

nations around the world. Dictatorships proscribed their work and banned their preaching activity. Even in the so-called "free nations" religious and patriotic zealots 'framed trouble by decree' and resorted to mob action and boycotts, all in an effort to silence God's people. (Ps. 94:20) Evolutionists, critics of the Bible and that "man of lawlessness," the clergy of Christendom, attempted to interfere with the disciple-making work of God's faithful witnesses, but all in vain, even as foretold at Isaiah 54:17. W 1/15 11, 12a

Monday, April 3

Keep peace between one another.—Mark 9:50.

It is always good for members of a working group to be at peace with one another. Disagreements, rivalries, disunity can endanger the common project to which they are committed. A "cold war" carried on between them without lethal weapons can result in defeat for them all. Peace among themselves will result in all coming off winners, gainers, happy in a work well done. Yes, teammates, members of societies, married couples, natural families are certain to benefit from heeding the words of Jesus to his apostles. They were well acquainted with Jesus' teaching on the subject of peace. During the preceding year they had heard his Sermon on the Mount not far from the Sea of Galilee, in which he spoke of certain happinesses. One of such was this: "Happy are the peaceable, since they will be called 'sons of God.'" (Matt. 5:9) Why now say the above to his apostles? Something must have provoked this counsel. It was because they had argued as to who is greater.—Mark 9:34. W 8/15 1, 2, 4, 6

Tuesday, April 4

Keep . . . speaking to yourselves with psalms and praises to God and spiritual songs, singing and accompanying yourselves with music in your hearts to Jehovah.—Eph. 5:18, 19.

Yes, an avenue for giving thanks to Jehovah is that of song. Singing has long been a feature of true worship. At the temple in Jerusalem certain Levites played music while others sang. In this connection, have you ever thought of Jesus and the apostles as singers? They were, and they enjoyed it. Mark 14:26 tells us that on their last night together on earth they sang praises. Christians today, too, have opportunity to express through song their praise and thanks to Jehovah for his loving-kindness. Is that how you view the songs based on Bible themes that you sing at the local meetings of Jehovah's people? Or are your lips saying the words while your mind is on other things? It is easy for this to occur. But how fine if, instead, in keeping with Paul's admonition, we view these Christian songs as a means of giving thanks to Jehovah for his loving-kindness! W 2/15 17-19a

Wednesday, April 5

On the day that Lot came out of Sodom it rained fire and sulphur from heaven and destroyed them all.—Luke 17:29.

When Jehovah brought destruction upon Sodom and Gomorrah for their gross wickedness, how much was left of the homes and possessions in those cities? Nothing! When Lot and his family abandoned Sodom, they could take very little with them. Their home, furniture and most of their possessions also went into destruction. But Lot and his two daughters ap-

preciated that their lives were much more important. They saw the issue. For their faith and obedience to God's instructions, they were spared. But the townspeople were not spared, even as Jesus noted. This, sadly, included Lot's wife. When in flight, she disobeyed and looked back toward the things left behind, and lost her life. Jesus said that as it was in the days of Noah and also of Lot, so it would be at the coming great tribulation. The vast majority of earth's population would be unconcerned about God and his will and so lose their lives. May we not be like Lot's wife!—Luke 17:32. W 4/1 14, 15

Thursday, April 6

I could wish that I myself were separated as the cursed one from the Christ in behalf of my brothers.—Rom. 9:3.

Thus the apostle Paul expressed his willingness to take upon himself the curse that rested upon his unbelieving countrymen for failing to avail themselves of God's means of salvation with heavenly life in view. As disciples of Jesus Christ, we today should have the same kind of concern for unbelievers. We should not allow their opposition or indifference to arouse within us feelings of ill will. Such persons are members of the human family for whom Christ died. (Rom. 5:6-8) And it is Jehovah's will that they continue to be given the opportunity to come to repentance as long as they live or until such time as he destroys all unrighteousness. (2 Pet. 3:9) When we appreciate this from the heart, we will be moved to give careful and prayerful thought as to what we might do to help others spiritually. We will 'continue to love our enemies.'—Matt. 5:44. W 7/1 13, 14a

Friday, April 7

So my word . . . will certainly do that in which I have delighted, and it will have certain success in that for which I have sent it.
—Isa. 55:11.

Thousands of years of history have demonstrated that humans, however well intentioned and scientifically advanced, cannot remedy mankind's huge problems. Only the Creator of the universe, and of life on this earth, can do so. He alone has the wisdom, the power and the will required. A very compelling reason why we should trust Jehovah is that the future of mankind will be decided by him, not by humans. Indeed, the future already has been determined by Jehovah. And we can trust him to fulfill what he has purposed for the future, even as he comfortingly assures us at Isaiah 55:11. In addition, Jehovah shows his loving concern for us by keeping us informed about his purposes. How reassuring it is for God to tell his trusting servants ahead of time what he will do in the future. And as his promises are fulfilled, it builds in us even greater confidence in him. W 7/15 1-3a

Saturday, April 8

Though I am free from all persons, I have made myself the slave to all, that I may gain the most persons.
—1 Cor. 9:19.

There is no limit to the time that we can spend in Kingdom-preaching and disciple-making. All of us surely want to be whole-souled in it. For many, this may mean being able to devote some sixty hours monthly to this work as auxiliary pioneers, or some ninety hours or more as regular pioneers. Have you

entered the open door of pioneer activity or are you planning to do so? As you pioneer let your motive for sharing in this service continue to be love for Jehovah God and your fellow humans. Just as Paul and Barnabas began serving with the Antioch congregation because of the great need there, you may be in a position to move to another location to advance spiritual interests. Humility, self-sacrifice and a keen interest in the welfare of others can be a big help in making needed adjustments to a new environment. This was true of the apostle Paul. W 6/1 11, 12a

Sunday, April 9

Pay constant attention to yourself and to your teaching. Stay by these things, for by doing this you will save both yourself and those who listen to you.—1 Tim. 4:16.

Since lives are involved in teaching others we need to exercise care that we convey "all the counsel of God." Negligence in this could contribute toward serious wrongdoing on the part of the taught one. (Acts 20:26, 27) May all of us who are disciples of Jesus Christ make it our determination to be faithful in the work of declaring the good news and making disciples. In connection with this vital activity, we can apply to ourselves the counsel Paul gave to Timothy. Obedience to Christ's command to 'make disciples, teaching them,' is essential to our salvation and that of others. It leads to grand blessings now in the form of joy and contentment because of our knowing that we are God's fellow workers. Then, too, it holds promise of life everlasting in God's new order. So we have every reason to be zealous in making disciples. W 5/1 18, 19a

Monday, April 10

Who really is the faithful and discreet slave whom his master appointed over his domestics, to give them their food at the proper time? Happy is that slave if his master on arriving finds him doing so. Truly I say to you, He will appoint him over all his belongings.—Matt. 24:45-47.

For over thirty years until 1914, a small group of devoted Christians had been serving as the modern-day faithful and discreet slave in providing spiritual food for fellow servants of the household of God. And now, from 1914, the prophecies that they had pointed to began to be fulfilled in World War I and other pangs of distress and they themselves came to be persecuted by the war-mad nations. Clearly the sign was evident that Christ had arrived to sit down on his glorious heavenly throne and was proceeding to the judgment of the nations. What did the future hold for the "slave" class? The Master judged the "slave" to be worthy of further privileges, in line with his prophetic promise. How wonderfully those words have been fulfilled! W 1/1 9-11

Tuesday, April 11

The angel of Jehovah is camping all around those fearing him, and he rescues them.—Ps. 34:7.

There are invisible angelic creatures, numbering into the myriads. (Heb. 12:22; Jude 14, 15) Recall how King Hezekiah was taunted by the Assyrians. But soon those pagan ridiculers were to learn why faithful King Hezekiah had put his trust and confidence in Jehovah and His angelic forces. (2 Ki. 18:19, 20; 19:35) Well, such a historical account as this should certainly give one fearing Jehovah to-

day great confidence. If a single angel of Jehovah is so powerful that he can wipe out 185,000 men, we should certainly put our complete confidence in this same Jehovah and his angelic forces under the direct command of the Lord Jesus Christ today. And let us remember that this Lord Jesus Christ is no longer 'the babe in the Bethlehem manger.' This is the one who is now the mighty "King of kings and Lord of lords," who is riding at the head of a force composed of no less than one hundred million angels!—Rev. 5:11; 19:14-16. W 1/15 7-9a

Wednesday, April 12

A calm heart is the life of the fleshly organism.—Prov. 14:30.

Patience does indeed bring rich dividends. Jehovah God's exercise of patience has opened up to mankind the grand opportunity of everlasting life as his approved servants. It has provided persons with time to learn about his requirements and to begin conforming to these. Many have done so. As a result, these persons are even now enjoying a meaningful life. On the individual level, too, exercising patience is rewarding. The patient person does not allow himself to get upset quickly and, hence, is less likely to act rashly. Thus he preserves a good conscience and avoids needless quarreling and fighting. There is also a health benefit. Calmness and patience, even in the face of trying circumstances, further the well-being of the entire body. On the other hand, continued upsets and irritations are like a disease that can weaken the human frame. In view of the benefits that come from patience, we should certainly want to display this fine quality. W 2/1 1, 2a

Thursday, April 13

Keep on teaching and admonishing one another with psalms, praises to God, spiritual songs.
—Col. 3:16.

Perhaps you may feel that Jehovah God has not specifically intervened with such marvelous deliverances at this time as he did when delivering the Israelites at the Red Sea. Yet what of the many modern-day instances where true worshipers have been freed from restraints or relieved of persecution? When you hear such reports, do you tend to show only mild interest before you are occupied again with the cares of daily life? For instance, after many years of teaching and meeting "underground" because of government ban, Jehovah's Witnesses are now free to carry on their Bible educational work in Spain, Portugal and Greece. Is this not reason for rejoicing? Is it not evidence of Jehovah's loving-kindness? Do you respond as the Israelites did, thanking and praising Jehovah for such displays of his loving-kindness? Have you specifically mentioned these deliverances to others, as it were, singing praises for God's loving-kindness? W 2/15 17

Friday, April 14

Be obedient to those who are taking the lead among you and be submissive, for they are keeping watch over your souls as those who will render an account; that they may do this with joy and not with sighing, for this would be damaging to you.

—Heb. 13:17.

In all judicial matters good judgment and a sense of righteousness must wisely be balanced with mercy. (Jas. 2:13) All of us have good reasons to be thankful for the arrangement that Jehovah has restored among his people in

these last days. Elders are assigned the responsibility of aiding us to conform to the divine standard of righteousness. We, in turn, have an obligation to show proper respect for those judging with godly qualities. How can we best do so? By our ready response to Scriptural counsel and willing submission to theocratic order. This works for our spiritual protection and welfare now, amid a lawless world. It demonstrates, too, our earnest desire to measure up to what God requires as we seek divine approval and prepare for life in the New Order. W 3/1 17, 18

Saturday, April 15

"You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole strength and with your whole mind," and, "your neighbor as yourself."
—Luke 10:27.

Do you want to be among the survivors of the great tribulation who are depicted at Revelation 7:13-17? You can be. If you desire to be with the great crowd who will be standing before God's throne serving him day and night in the post-Armageddon era, now is the time to prove to Jehovah that your service is, not on and off, but without letup, as illustrated by the continuous day-and-night service of those praisers of Jehovah. This means being whole-souled in your service to God. When we speak of such whole-souled service, it really means giving of ourselves completely, in every way possible. When Jesus spoke of loving Jehovah with our "whole soul" he meant with all our existence as a person, with our mind, our heart, our strength. We need to use each part of our soul in this service to the Most High God. W 8/1 4, 5

Sunday, April 16

You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know.—John 4:22.

For centuries before the time of Jesus' coming, Jehovah dealt exclusively with the Israelites. They alone "were entrusted with the sacred pronouncements of God." (Rom. 3:2) Only natural Israelites or Gentiles associating with them in worship could gain an understanding of Jehovah's revealed purpose. That is why Jesus could say the above to a Samaritan woman. The Samaritans accepted the Pentateuch, or five books of Moses, but rejected the rest of the inspired Hebrew Scriptures. Hence they did not know Jehovah to the extent that he had revealed himself. However, Jews who accepted all the Hebrew Scriptures as inspired of God and who endeavored to worship according to the way outlined in those Scriptures certainly knew the One whom they were venerating. They worshiped according to the divinely designated arrangement centered at Jerusalem's temple. Today it is our privilege also to worship what we know because we are following the example set by Jesus. W 6/1 2

Monday, April 17

Whoever receives me, receives, not me only, but also him that sent me forth.—Mark 9:37.

When we perform a humbling task on the basis of Christ's name, or out of regard for his name, this makes it easier, more pleasant for us to do. The act has a noble incentive. Furthermore, it has a bearing upon our relationship, not only with Jesus Christ, but also with his heavenly Father. This is indicated by Jesus' words above: "And whoever receives me [that is, by receiving "one of such young

children'] receives, not me only, but also him that sent me forth." The Sender of Jesus to the earth to become the Messiah was his own heavenly Father, Jehovah God. Jesus Christ and his heavenly Father are not to be dissociated. They go together, inseparably, inasmuch as they are one in purpose and in activity. So what a person does to the Son, Jehovah God accepts this as also done to him. He shows that he accepts the reception as if given to him by blessing the receptionist. How careful this should make us when we are dealing with children or childlike ones! W 8/15 19

Tuesday, April 18

They took no note until the flood came and swept them all away.—Matt. 24:39.

We can imagine the ridicule that wicked people heaped upon Noah and his family because they spent so much of their time doing Jehovah's will. Of course, they had to work for their daily needs and to maintain a place to live, but they did not center their activities on that. However, the rest of the world did, devoting themselves to "eating and drinking, men marrying and women being given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark." (Matt. 24:38) But if excesses are avoided, is there anything wrong with eating, or with drinking, or with marrying? No, for God himself instituted those things when he created man and woman. What was wrong was that at that time of judgment, when life or death was at issue, those people foolishly centered their lives on such pursuits and did not pay attention to God's will. The same principle will hold true at the approaching great tribulation. W 4/1 12

Wednesday, April 19

Keep strict watch that how you walk is not as unwise but as wise persons, buying out the opportune time for yourselves, because the days are wicked.—Eph. 5:15, 16.

This means that we stop devoting time to worthless pursuits and redeem it for use in a meaningful way. It may mean that we have to take some time away from other things that are not absolutely indispensable, from things that simply may be interesting, enjoyable and perhaps even educational. It may mean spending less time watching TV, less time reading the newspaper or secular periodicals. It may also mean pursuing less avidly some time-consuming hobby. The way to do this is to give Bible matters priority. Take care of them first, and then spend what time is left on less important activities. Otherwise you may find these other things so absorbing that they crowd out the spiritual matters that could strengthen your faith. That is why Jesus counseled: "Keep on, then, seeking first the kingdom [of God] and his [God's] righteousness."—Matt. 6:33. W 4/15 12a

Thursday, April 20

The name of God is being blasphemed on account of you people among the nations.—Rom. 2:24.

In order to reach the hearts of sincere persons, we must live in harmony with what we teach. Mere words, without the backing of a good example in Christian living, are meaningless. Consider: Would you want as a character witness a man who is known for his lying and fraudulent practices? Would not his record of dishonesty call into question the truthfulness of his

statements? In fact, might you not be judged as being like the man who is testifying in your behalf? The reputation of the witness can definitely affect whether his testimony is believed or not. So, then, all who identify themselves as witnesses of Jehovah must lead upright lives. Emphasizing the importance of this, Paul wrote with reference to Jews who knew God's law: "Do you, . . . the one teaching someone else, not teach yourself?" (Rom. 2:21) If our life does not agree with what we proclaim, this brings great reproach upon Jehovah God, even as Paul further noted. W 7/1 8, 9

Friday, April 21

Those knowing your name will trust in you, for you will certainly not leave those looking for you, O Jehovah.—Ps. 9:10.

In comparing the works of God with the works of man, we can ask: Who deserves our complete trust? Surely it is not man, even with all his scientific achievements. The tremendous damage and confusion he already has caused on earth show that he does not have the answers to the problems of life and cannot be trusted to get them. As one encyclopedia observed: "Despite the great advances made in science, scientists still have many unsolved problems." Jehovah God does have all the answers to all such problems. And he certainly has the wisdom and ability to provide solutions to mankind's plaguing problems. Hence, how appropriate is the Bible's warning: "Do not put your trust . . . in the son of an earthly man, to whom no salvation belongs." (Ps. 146:3) Instead, since we love what is right and love life, we want to trust in Jehovah. W 7/15 18, 19

Saturday, April 22

Supply . . . to your self-control endurance, to your endurance godly devotion, to your godly devotion brotherly affection, to your brotherly affection love.—2 Pet. 1:5-7.

Our life prospects depend on endurance. (Luke 21:19) Some have to endure physical abuse, as our brothers in Malawi have done. Others are troubled by indifference to their efforts to share the good news, or by pressures and ridicule from friends and family. As for godly devotion, it "is beneficial for all things." (1 Tim. 4:8) So we need both endurance and godly devotion to continue on faithfully, not becoming inactive or unfruitful. And we are to add to our godly devotion brotherly affection, and to our brotherly affection love. This reaches out, not just to our natural family, but to all persons. Those who show genuine interest in others, and *agape* or principled love, often see a fine response to their efforts to share the truth. We want to show love to all people. We should show concern for them as individuals, including a sincere desire to help them spiritually. W 8/1 19, 20

Sunday, April 23

Make disciples . . . teaching them.—Matt. 28:19, 20.

Though not present in person with his disciples, Jesus Christ is with them in spirit, guiding and directing the work of his congregation. Proof of this is the fact that more true disciples of Jesus Christ have been made in these "last days" than in any other period of history. The Son of God is indeed with the congregation of his disciples, as he promised over nineteen centuries ago. (Matt. 28:20) Just what does it mean to make disciples? It means to teach

others what Jesus Christ taught, helping them to observe all that he commanded. A genuine Christian does not make disciples of himself, having the taught ones look up to him. No, whatever his share in aiding others, he recognizes that his role is that of a servant or slave of God and of Jesus Christ. The example of the apostle Paul well illustrates the attitude that we should have when sharing in the work of disciple-making. He said that neither he nor Apollos were anything, but only "God was the one who makes plants grow."—1 Cor. 3:5-7. W 5/1 3-5a

Monday, April 24

Did you not rather mourn, in order that the man that committed this deed should be taken away from your midst?—1 Cor. 5:2.

In the early centuries of the Christian congregation marriage seems to have continued largely as a family affair. There was no requirement that some religious or civil authority license the marriage or be present to make it a valid and honorable one. Conformity to God's law, nevertheless, was necessary if the marriage was to be viewed as honorable within the Christian congregation. Thus, when Paul heard about a certain situation in the Corinthian congregation he did not hesitate to condemn it as fornication. He also showed that the congregation was to be concerned about the standards of the community where they lived, for he pointed out that even among the nations such a thing was not done. The Christian congregation viewed itself as a family household and so, like a family the congregation would rightly take an interest in the marriages contracted by its members. W 3/15 5-7a

Tuesday, April 25

If anyone wants to be first, he must be last of all and minister of all.—Mark 9:35.

It was not a case of who appreciates the Messiah most and therefore wants to be closest to him in the Kingdom. It was a case of who wants to rank next highest to him. Among imperfect men, how could anything but selfishness enter into such a discussion? No wonder the ambitious apostles kept silent after Jesus put the question: "What were you arguing over on the road?" They felt that their discussion did not merit any commendation. They sensed that they had shown selfishness, self-seeking, self-glorification, in this matter. So not one of them answered Jesus. However, Jesus did not need to have any admission from any of them. Their meaningful silence betrayed embarrassment on their part. It showed that they felt ashamed. But Jesus, who to an extent could make out what people's thoughts were, detected what the basis for their discussion was, the point at issue. He revealed his awareness of this by his enunciating the above principle. W 8/15 9, 10

Wednesday, April 26

Woe to those going down to Egypt for assistance, those . . . who put their trust in war chariots, . . . but who have not looked to the Holy One of Israel and have not searched for Jehovah himself.

—Isa. 31:1.

Once we have got out from under the visible organization of God's great Adversary, we should not again resort to it for aid and protection. It is the course of common sense and of divine wisdom for us to give heed to these inspired words. The worldly system of things is now in its last days.

Like ancient Egypt, which failed those who took shelter under the long branches of that symbolic cedar of Lebanon, it will fail those who keep putting their trust in it and going down to it for help with its military and economic resources. Its dominance of earth's affairs must be chopped down. Jehovah's incoming kingdom will cut it down by means of His kingly Son Jesus Christ. The hope of mankind is in that kingdom of Jehovah God. It is our privilege to make that fact known far and wide. W 5/15 36, 39a

Thursday, April 27

I have learned, in whatever circumstances I am, to be self-sufficient.—Phil. 4:11.

With full trust in Jehovah, Paul was able to bear up under very trying circumstances. Today, serving in another area, or perhaps as a missionary in another part of the world, requires making sacrifices and being willing to slave in behalf of others. These things need to be given prayerful thought beforehand. For example, a person who has always had an automobile available for his service should consider whether he would be willing to walk for miles over rough terrain or with the hot sun beating down upon him, or whether he would be willing to put up with crowded or sporadic public transportation facilities. Likewise, persons who have a hard time adapting to different circumstances and surroundings and to people with varying backgrounds, customs, living standards and habits, should recognize that they must work at it in order to qualify for evangelizing work in a foreign field. With trust in Jehovah they can do so. W 6/1 12, 13a

Friday, April 28

For three years, night and day, I did not quit admonishing each one with tears.
—Acts 20:31.

The love and mutual regard permeating the first-century congregations reflected the inner qualities of the early Christians as individuals. Take Paul as an example. His heart had widened out to encompass affectionately his fellow believers in Corinth. (2 Cor. 6:11-13) Moreover, he had a heart full of love for his spiritual brothers and sisters everywhere. No wonder that daily there rushed in on him "anxiety for all the congregations"! (2 Cor. 11:28) Did Paul arrogantly lord it over other worshipers of Jehovah? Certainly not! For instance, he did not scold and make authoritarian demands when admonishing the Ephesian Christian elders. His appeals to them were based on love. Those overseers knew that he spoke the truth when he said the above. What a sincere and humble elder! And that is the spirit Jesus expected him to display, for he had said that "whoever wants to be first among you must be your slave."—Matt. 20:27. W 6/15 11, 12

Saturday, April 29

Keep on, then, seeking first the kingdom and his righteousness.—Matt. 6:33.

Once when Jesus was tired, hungry and thirsty he seated himself at Jacob's fountain near the Samaritan city of Sychar. Yet when a Samaritan woman approached to draw water, he seized the opportunity to do good. He forgot about his tiredness and hunger, and found joy and strength in doing his Father's work, helping this woman to learn about acceptable worship. Yes, for Jesus, the doing

of his Father's will was like food. (John 4:34) It sustained him. His chief objective in life was to help others spiritually. His own material needs were secondary. Jesus lived in full harmony with the admonition he gave others. He healed the sick, the crippled and the deformed, restored sight to the blind, opened the mouths of the speechless and the ears of the deaf, and freed many from demon control. To responsive ones, his proclaiming God's truth brought comfort, spiritual healing and release from spiritual captivity. What a fine example he set of seeking first God's kingdom! W 7/1 3, 4a

Sunday, April 30

Not only has the word of Jehovah sounded forth from you in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith toward God has spread abroad.

—1 Thess. 1:8.

A crowning happiness to a life being lived according to the Bible is the joy of helping others. (Acts 20:35) Those who have dedicated their lives to helping their fellowman in secular fields have found a measure of satisfaction and joy. But these joys do not equal that of helping others come to a knowledge of God. This is because a knowledge of God's ways and his instructions help in more than a temporary way—throughout this life and with a hope of future life. Learning the truth, people come to know, with God's help, how to cope with their problems. They can, in turn, help others to learn the way to life that the Bible provides. All of this adds more to the joy of the teacher of the good news, for he sees the fruitage of his work in the expansion of the good news over an area vaster than he could cover himself. W 8/1 10a

Monday, May 1

The best thing that I myself have seen, which is pretty, is that one should eat and drink and see good for all his hard work.—Eccl. 5:18.

The Most High God Jehovah is supremely happy, taking delight in his perfection and in his works. (1 Tim. 1:11) Moreover, he desires that his intelligent creatures, especially his faithful servants, share in that happiness. Why, our very senses are designed to perceive a tremendous variety of sights, sounds, smells, tastes and textures. What pleasure there can be in seeing brilliant sunsets, star-studded skies, winding rivers, placid lakes! How delightful can be the taste of fresh fruits or well-prepared, nourishing meals! There is enjoyment when we feel the touch or embrace of those whom we love. Then, too, is it not pleasurable to hear the singing of birds and the laughter of happy children? And what delight can be had in the scent of sweet-smelling blossoms! It is definitely God's purpose that we find joy in what he has provided so generously for all mankind. This is the conclusion Solomon reached. W 9/1 1-3

Tuesday, May 2

Your craving will be for your husband, and he will dominate you.—Gen. 3:16.

One sore point among many of womankind is the dominance accorded to the man in the marriage arrangement. To some women it is "male chauvinism," that is, a vain-glorious or exaggerated view that the man has toward his position as head over the woman. But such chauvinism is not a product of the teachings of God's Word. While Genesis 3:16 does tell us that the woman would have a crav-

ing toward her husband and that he would dominate her, the Bible clearly shows that God did not purpose that the woman should be in slavish bondage to the man. Rather, he was to be in position as head, or the one charged with oversight of his wife and the family that they might produce. In the days of the ancient Hebrews, about whose history the Bible has so much to say, godly women of spirit and ability, while subject to their husbandly heads, had much latitude and freedom of action and were happy in their place and were blessed in being used by Jehovah God to perform special services for Him. W 9/15 4

Wednesday, May 3

If anyone wants to be first, he must be last of all and minister of all.—Mark 9:35.

As seen from Philipians 2:5-8, Jesus did not make himself an exception to the rule he stated to his apostles. He provided his own self as the perfect example for all who are to be joined with him in the heavenly kingdom to imitate. Even all those who will become earthly subjects of his kingdom will have to imitate him in his humility and serviceability. Who, then, ranks first as to real worth and importance? Is it not the one that is humble enough to accept all forms of service and that seeks to be of service to others? If anyone sought to be first in a selfish way, he would not stoop to render any and all forms of service to all others in the organization. To be willing to render even the most menial service to anyone else, he would have to view himself as being the "last of all" in the organization. But this does not lower his intrinsic value. By serving *all*, he becomes the most valuable member. W 8/15 13

Thursday, May 4

Happy is the one who has the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in Jehovah his God.—Ps. 146:5.

While individuals among the Lord's people may be killed between now and the "great tribulation" (and the Scriptures indicate that some will be [Matt. 10:21; 24:9]), yet Jehovah's people as a class will survive the "great tribulation." Even if you personally should prove to be one who suffers great hardships and calamities, yet, in spite of what occurs, you should never suffer the loss of your faith and confidence in Jehovah. Never doubt the promises of your God. Never grow fearful and run in a cowardly way for cover; never deny your God or compromise your integrity. And never allow your vision to become dim as regards angelic backing of those holding to their dedication to Jehovah. In view of the above words, rejoice in Jehovah and in the help, guidance, protection and spiritual prosperity that he has granted and is bestowing upon his faithful witnesses in this time of the end!—Luke 21:28; 2 Tim. 1:7. W 1/15 23, 24a

Friday, May 5

With lowliness of mind [consider] that the others are superior to you.—Phil. 2:3.

Helpful in cultivating patience is taking into consideration that people and circumstances vary. Some may be slow to grasp things that others comprehend very quickly. Yet, this does not make inferior persons of those who are slow! They may well excel in other areas of life—kindness, friendliness and generosity. So we do well to look at persons as a whole. The apostle Paul's

counsel to the Philippians is most appropriate. No imperfect human has all the desirable qualities. If he is humble, he will readily see that others excel in areas wherein he is weak and that he, too, may try their patience at times. Jesus Christ certainly demonstrated just what it means to have the right attitude toward others. He patiently put up with his apostles—their petty rivalries and their slowness to comprehend. Never did he lose his temper in dealing with them. How fine it would be for us to imitate his perfect example!—Mark 9:33-37; John 13:5-17. W 2/1 12, 13a

Saturday, May 6

You in your loving-kindness have led the people whom you have recovered.—Ex. 15:13.

Jehovah's worshippers have long recognized manifestations of God's loyal love in his dealings with them. By examining some of the Biblical instances of this, we likely will be aided to discern additional reasons that we have for thanking him. Thus Jehovah led his people from Egyptian bondage to the western shore of the Red Sea. Then he miraculously parted the waters so that the millions of Israelites and their associates could cross safely. When the Egyptians tried to thwart Jehovah's deliverance, he used the same waters to destroy them all, including powerful Pharaoh. How would you have reacted had you been with God's people? Safe on the other shore, Moses and the sons of Israel thanked Jehovah in song. (Ex. 15:1-21) God's leading and delivering them instilled in them confidence. And his act was a display, not merely of his power, but also of his loving-kindness, for which they thanked and praised him. Do you respond in a similar way? W 2/15 14-17

Sunday, May 7

In his days the righteous one will sprout, and the abundance of peace until the moon is no more.—Ps. 72:7.

God's new order will be a place of total security. Earth wide the prophecy of Micah 4:4 will see major fulfillment. While we today enjoy a measure of spiritual security, total security will be realized only in that new order of God's making. What a wonderful time that will be when Jehovah, by means of his heavenly kingdom, provides such abundant material blessings and such lasting security that daily life will be an "exquisite delight"! (Ps. 37:11) No more will there be problems of displaced persons, due to their fleeing from the territories controlled by cruel dictatorial governments. Nor will there be any fear of young or old being torn apart in hideous wars. Peace will be the rule because all mankind will be blessed by the great Deliverer, of whose rule the above was written. Nor will poverty, hunger or want mar that security. What a privilege is ours to make this good news known to others!—Ps. 72:4-8, 16. W 4/1 1-3

Monday, May 8

Let the older men who preside in a fine way be reckoned worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard in speaking and teaching.—1 Tim. 5:17.

In what way do elders do this? Not with the same authority as fathers preside over their households. Family heads are at times called upon to make final decisions on various matters that influence and govern their wives and children. However, individual elders do not wield such authority. They do not exercise headship, either individually

or as a body, over the congregation. The position of headship as far as the congregation is concerned belongs to Jesus Christ. (Col. 1:18) He is also referred to at 1 Corinthians 11:3 as the "head of every man." So there is a difference between presiding over a congregation of God's people and exercising headship within the family. To preside means to lead, conduct, direct, to care for others. How fittingly this applies to elders whom we view as taking the lead among us both at meetings and in the field service. W 3/1 3, 4a

Tuesday, May 9

Know this, that in the last days critical times hard to deal with will be here. For men will be . . . lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God.—2 Tim. 3:1, 2, 4.

Jesus Christ set the perfect example in the enjoyment of material things. By no means was he an ascetic. His very first miracle—turning water into the best of wine—contributed to the enjoyment of a wedding feast. Some, however, failed to recognize that Jesus was making proper use of his Father's bountiful provisions, while he was at the same time always giving spiritual matters first place. (Matt. 11:19; 6:24-34) While we therefore rightly find pleasure in food and drink, as well as in various forms of recreation, there are traps to be avoided. According to Bible prophecy, it is among professed Christians that the above prophecy applies. These persons keep living for pleasure, putting the pursuit of amusements first in their lives. Faced with their strong influence, we must be on guard that this does not begin to affect our thinking. W 9/1 4, 5

Wednesday, May 10

The head of every man is the Christ; in turn the head of a woman is the man.—1 Cor. 11:3.

Where might lack of proper headship give rise to problems that can cause unhappiness in marriage? It may be that both husband and wife are dedicated, baptized servants of Jehovah. Do you as a husband make it a point to share time not only with your own relatives, but also with those of your wife? Or do you make things miserable when your wife's relatives are coming for a visit, or when you are visiting them? Do you share equally with your wife's side of the family as you want your wife to share equally with your side of the family, to the extent possible in your circumstances? What about times of relaxation together? Is it always what you want to do that is done by the family? Do you consult with your wife as to what she might like to do, rather than making arbitrary decisions? Think of how pleasant it would be for the husband and wife to sit down together and plan on where they might spend a few days of vacation. W 9/15 8, 9

Thursday, May 11

Truly I say to you that this generation will by no means pass away until all these things occur.—Matt. 24:34.

The time for God to end wickedness on earth must be soon, for if present worsening conditions were not called to a halt by the Creator, selfish men would bring an end to humankind on the earth, either through their pollution of it or by nuclear warfare. According to ecologists, the rapid spreading of pollution in the earth, in the air and par-

ticularly in the oceans, presents a clear threat to the survival of the human family. In line with the words of Jesus Christ, the present wicked system of things is a house divided against itself; hence, it cannot keep standing much longer. And according to another Scriptural illustration, the nations have sown the wind and so will reap the whirlwind of destruction. (Matt. 12:25, 26; Hos. 8:7) Particularly does fulfillment of Jesus' great prophecy make it certain that we are living at the conclusion of this wicked system of things.—Matt. 24:25; Mark 13; Luke 21. W 4/15 19, 20

Friday, May 12

Do you, . . . the one teaching someone else, not teach yourself?—Rom. 2:21.

If the taught one is going to live in harmony with God's moral requirements, he needs to know what the key terms used in the Bible mean. From the way the student answers questions posed by you, you will be able to determine whether he has a grasp of the subject or not. If you see that his understanding is incomplete in some respect, you will be in a better position to provide clarifying information that is suited to his needs. Besides continuing to learn, a disciple of the Son of God is one who aids others to become Christians. This should not be lost sight of when one is conducting home Bible studies. Students need to be assisted progressively to become qualified to teach others. By questions we can aid students to begin thinking in terms of using the material studied to aid others. At the same time, make it clear to the student that the one who teaches others must live in harmony with the Bible, as noted by the apostle Paul. W 5/1 10-12a

Saturday, May 13

I have exhibited to you in all things that by thus laboring you must assist those who are weak, and must bear in mind the words of the Lord Jesus, when he himself said, "There is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving."—Acts 20:35.

Since all in the congregation are imperfect, we must be willing to put up with one another's faults in love and to forgive one another freely from the heart. (Col. 3:13; Matt. 18:35) Our helping one another in these ways will certainly strengthen the bonds of love. It is through self-sacrificing love that we prove ourselves to be Christ's disciples. (John 13:34, 35) This means expending our strength, time, material resources and, yes, our very being in efforts to promote the spiritual welfare of others. By thus giving of ourselves we do not become impoverished. Rather, our happiness continues to increase, even as Jesus Christ himself noted. May we, therefore, continue to deepen our joy by imitating him to a greater degree, always proving ourselves to be devoted disciples of his. W 7/1 19, 20a

Sunday, May 14

The heavens are declaring the glory of God; and of the work of his hands the expanse is telling.—Ps. 19:1.

The immensity of the universe, its order, and the precise laws governing the movements of heavenly bodies, have astonished some scientists. As *Science News* observes: "Contemplation of these things disturbs cosmologists because it seems as if such particular and precise conditions could hardly have arisen at random." Of course, the universe did not just arise "at random." The wis-

dom, power, order and law manifest in the universe all stem from the grand Creator, Jehovah God. So far-reaching is his ability that he does with ease what men find impossible, even to "counting the number of the stars; all of them he calls by their names." (Ps. 147:4) Humble persons will acknowledge what many scientists and others do not, that Jehovah is indeed "the Creator of the heavens." (Isa. 42:5) This glorious Creator, who demonstrates such ability and wisdom, surely is worthy of our trust, even as the twenty-four elders acknowledged.—Rev. 4:11. W 7/15 15, 17

Monday, May 15

Woe to those . . . who are lingering till late in the evening darkness so that wine itself inflames them! . . . The activity of Jehovah they do not look at.—Isa. 5:11, 12.

Persons who live solely for pleasure are in grave danger. This is forcefully emphasized in connection with certain Israelites in Isaiah's time. Wine flowed freely at their feasts. As the night progressed the revelers would become loud and boisterous to the accompaniment of sensual music designed to arouse their passions. Rightly, woe or calamity would befall these pleasure seekers. Their sole objective was to satisfy their fleshly desires right from the start of the day. They gave no thought to pleasing Jehovah; neither do their counterparts of today. How could they reflect on Jehovah's grand activities to the sound of sensual music while at the same time eating and drinking to excess? They act as if there were no evidence testifying to God's existence and activities. So, just as in Isaiah's time, they stand disapproved before God. W 9/1 13, 14

Tuesday, May 16

You ought to know positively the appearance of your flock.
—Prov. 27:23.

Paul showed concern for the spirit of the Corinthian congregation. Similarly, the glorified Jesus Christ was concerned about the spirit manifested by the seven congregations addressed in Revelation, chapters 2 and 3. Therefore, Christian elders of today should be deeply interested in the spirit shown by the congregations with which they serve. As a man appointed by holy spirit to "shepherd the flock of God," an overseer should know the appearance of the flock. He might well ask himself: Are the brothers and sisters in the congregation truly happy? Do their faces indicate that they are serving Jehovah with "joy of heart"? (Deut. 28:47) Are they attending Christian meetings regularly? Do they study the Bible privately at home? Are these fellow believers really "healthy in faith"? (Titus 2:2) Do they keenly appreciate spiritual things? Is it evident that they cherish their relationship with Jehovah God and truly desire to praise him? W 6/15 21, 22

Wednesday, May 17

By your contributing in response all earnest effort, supply to your faith virtue.
—2 Pet. 1:5.

All of those demonstrating true godly devotion by making an effort to share the truth of God's Word with others want to be sure that they have Jehovah's favor and that what they do will be successful. This is what Peter is discussing. Peter mentions a number of other qualities that are essential in preventing us from becoming "either inactive or unfruitful regarding the accurate knowledge of"

Christ. (2 Pet. 1:8) In fact, if someone is having spiritual problems, he can generally go through this list and find what is lacking that causes the spiritual sickness or the inactivity. On the other hand, if we apply these things, we will be both active and fruitful in our service to Jehovah. Among the qualities Peter mentions is earnest effort. It is clear that it takes effort to accomplish anything—effort to study to get understanding and to establish our faith, effort to apply what we learn or to share it with others. W 8/1 13, 14

Thursday, May 18

Whoever receives one of such young children on the basis of my name, receives me; and whoever receives me, receives, not me only, but also him that sent me forth.—Mark 9:37.

Our being considerate of others, regardless of how inferior they may be outwardly, plays an important role in the matter of getting along together well. To impress this point, Jesus went on to illustrate. There are cases on record to show that Jesus loved young children. As the eldest son of his own earthly family, he doubtless had to do a lot in caring for his younger half brothers and his two or more half sisters, there in Nazareth of Galilee. (Matt. 13:53-56) He did not despise these because of their imperfections and shortcomings. He gave them no cause for stumbling over him because of any failure to share in supporting the family, but worked diligently as a skilled carpenter. He learned how to appreciate the innocent qualities of children and also the childlike qualities of full-grown persons, thus setting a fine example for us. W 8/15 15, 16

Friday, May 19

God is not unrighteous so as to forget your work and the love you showed for his name, in that you have ministered to the holy ones and continue ministering. But we desire each one of you to show the same industriousness so as to have the full assurance of the hope down to the end.

—Heb. 6:10, 11.

The opportunities that are open to us are not positions of prestige and esteem in the eyes of men. All are opportunities that call for the unselfish, wholehearted exertion of effort, demanding work. This is only reasonable, for Jehovah and his Son have set the perfect example as workers that we are called upon to imitate. Jesus Christ said: "My Father has kept working until now, and I keep working." (John 5:17) May this also be true of all of us, as we make ourselves available to be used to the greatest possible extent of our God-given abilities. If we do, our life will be filled with joy and satisfaction as we confidently look forward to receiving Jehovah's blessing. The apostle Paul's words to the Hebrews are most encouraging. W 6/1 18a

Saturday, May 20

Happy are those conscious of their spiritual need . . . Happy are the mild-tempered . . . Happy are the pure in heart.

—Matt. 5:3, 5, 8.

Jehovah, the happy God, has outlined in his Word what it takes to be happy and how genuine happiness can be the lot of true Christians. Jehovah's people, taken from all walks of life, have one thing in common, their faith in Jehovah. This gives them a joyful hope for the future. Like a united family, all of us are and should

be working together exhibiting true fellow feeling and love for one another. After all, Jesus said that people would know that we are his disciples if we have love among ourselves. (John 13:35) This is the identifying mark of true Christianity. Whether married or single, living in divided homes or even in broken homes, by our course of action in day-to-day living, and by putting ourselves in line with the right conduct and discipline outlined in God's Word, we can be living witnesses to the truth of God's Word that Jehovah's servants are happy. W 9/15 18, 19b

Sunday, May 21

All the people . . . shouted with a loud shout in praising Jehovah over the laying of the foundation of the house of Jehovah.—Ezra 3:11.

Thus the returned Israelites responded at the laying of the foundation of the temple in Jerusalem. Now, what about today? Your congregation may formerly have rented a place in which to meet but now has built a Kingdom Hall. Or maybe your congregation has recently expanded your Kingdom Hall. Or your meeting attendances may be building up, with newly interested persons appearing at your hall. Or many in the congregation may have been stirred to share in the auxiliary pioneer service. Do you realize that such accomplishments are displays of Jehovah's abundant loving-kindness? Does it move you to rejoice also? Unquestionably, we have numerous reasons to praise Jehovah for his loving-kindness: For the expressions of it in connection with his declared purpose that benefit all humans. For the displays of it that involve us individually and collectively. W 2/15 21-23

Monday, May 22

Hold a good conscience, so that in the particular in which you are spoken against they may get ashamed who are speaking slightly of your good conduct in connection with Christ.—1 Pet. 3:16.

To be living witnesses for Jehovah, we must stand out as exemplary husbands and fathers, wives and mothers, sons and daughters. Married couples should be striving to cope with problems that arise in their marriage by applying the Bible's counsel instead of imitating the world by seeking a way out of an unpleasant situation through separation or divorce. Though we may be disliked and misrepresented on account of our faith in Jehovah God and his Son, we should at all times be heeding the advice of the apostle Peter. That means that we should guard against wrongdoing so that we do not get a bad conscience, one that will condemn us. Fine conduct may lead opposers to recognize that they have been wrong in their conclusions about us. These opposers may come to recognize that their speaking slightly of us has no foundation. W 7/1 10, 11

Tuesday, May 23

Whoever stumbles one of these little ones that believe, it would be finer for him if a millstone . . . were put around his neck and he were actually pitched into the sea.

—Mark 9:42.

Was the man stumbled by the words and actions of the apostles toward him when they tried to prevent him from doing a fine work not disapproved by their Teacher? (Mark 9:38) This is something really serious, for Jesus went on to say the above. The person being stumbled to a fall

might be a little one, but that would not minimize the seriousness for the one causing the stumbling. Why not? Because it involved "one of these little ones that believe." This would designate a believer in Jesus as the Messianic Son of God. The belief of such "little ones" puts them in the way to everlasting life. So, if anyone willfully or inconsiderately caused such a little one on the way to eternal life to take offense and stumble out of the living way to destruction, it would be tantamount to committing murder. What a lack of love that would show! W 8/15 9, 10a

Wednesday, May 24

Whatever you are doing, work at it whole-souled as to Jehovah, and not to men, for you know that it is from Jehovah you will receive the due reward of the inheritance. Slave for the Master, Christ.—Col. 3:23, 24.

Sacred service means more than talking about God's Word to others. True, that is a part of the example that Jesus set for us, but sacred service also includes doing good to others, sharing things—how we live our lives each day. This would include every facet of our lives—our witnessing to others, at home, at work—it all reflects on how we respond to Jehovah's direction. For example, both men and women have certain God-given responsibilities and assignments to perform within the family circle. Those who recognize Jehovah's direction in their lives see the applying and the carrying out of such heavenly instruction as part of their sacred service in the sight of Jehovah God. These obligations are spelled out for us at Colossians 3:18-22. W 8/1 6, 7

Thursday, May 25

Pay attention to yourselves that your hearts never become weighed down with overeating and heavy drinking.

—Luke 21:34.

It is noteworthy that Jesus Christ alerted his disciples to the grave danger of becoming pleasure seekers. Overindulgence in food and drink may crowd out any desire for spiritual things. As a result, a person may become spiritually drowsy, blind to the responsibilities that come with being a disciple of Jesus Christ. Were he to continue in that state, the coming of the Son of God in the capacity of executioner of divine vengeance would overtake him as a "snare," even as Jesus warned at Luke 21:35, 36. Certainly, the last days are no time for anyone to ignore these words and slip into worldly practices at social gatherings. How can we prevent social affairs from becoming worldly and, hence, spiritually damaging and divinely disapproved? Consideration must be given that those invited will not bring in an unwholesome influence. Not all in a Christian congregation are necessarily desirable members.—2 Tim. 2:20-22. W 9/1 15, 16

Friday, May 26

Each one will carry his own load of responsibility.—Gal. 6:5, 1950 edition.

A point to which all husbands should give serious consideration is that of taking the headship that God has given them. Many times wives will complain that their husbands just refuse to make decisions and leave everything up to them. But, Christian husbands, that is shirking your God-given responsibility before Jehovah! A Christian husband is required by God's Word to take the lead as the

one appointed in the theocratic arrangement of things. When a husband lets everything slide, does not come to grips with making decisions, and his wife has to take over that responsibility, unhappiness results. First of all, though some women because of losing their husbands have to guide the family in place of the man, the woman is far better equipped for giving wifely support than for taking on the role of family head. That is how God made her. She was created in the beginning as a complement to the man, a partner to him, and this is the happier role for her. W 9/15 11, 12

Saturday, May 27

Any weapon whatever that will be formed against you will have no success, and any tongue at all that will rise up against you in the judgment you will condemn. This is the hereditary possession of the servants of Jehovah, and their righteousness is from me.—Isa. 54:17.

Over the intervening years since the preaching of the Kingdom good news began in 1919 a great crowd of persons out of all nations and tribes and peoples have responded. They are the ones described as coming out of the great tribulation. (Rev. 7:9, 10, 14) The experiences Jehovah's Christian witnesses have had over the past sixty years have impressed upon them the truthfulness of Isaiah's prophecy. Look, too, at the worldwide growth and the spiritual prosperity enjoyed by God's people in spite of all the demon-inspired opposition! Certainly the tremendous expansion of this preaching work could not have been accomplished except by Jehovah's protection, blessing and spirit upon his people. W 1/15 10, 12, 13a

Sunday, May 28

I planted, Apollos watered, but God kept making it grow.
—1 Cor. 3:6.

Yes, a person's growth as a disciple of Jesus Christ depends upon Jehovah God. So it is of the utmost importance to aid Bible students to make their relationship with Jehovah God a personal one. How might this be done? Bible students should be encouraged to read the Bible, to meditate on what it says and to apply it in their lives. Keep stressing the importance of prayer. When a person is specific in his prayers he becomes more keenly aware of God's answering his petitions. This draws him closer to his heavenly Father and contributes greatly toward his spiritual growth. Just one discussion on the value of Bible reading, meditation and prayer is, of course, not enough to help others to become spiritual persons. These are things that need to be mentioned whenever appropriate. They can be brought into the discussion during the course of Bible study. The benefits might be highlighted with the use of illustrations, experiences and by the use of the Bible. W 5/1 14, 15a

Monday, May 29

Brothers, take as a pattern of the suffering of evil and the exercising of patience the prophets, who spoke in the name of Jehovah.—Jas. 5:10.

The time is fast approaching for Jehovah God to bring to a close the present day of opportunity for those now living to come into an approved relationship with him. Bible prophecy and Bible chronology point to the time since 1914 with its increasing crime and violence, wars, food shortages, earthquakes, fear and unrest, as the "last days" for

this ungodly world. As long as this system continues in its last days, we must keep on exercising patience, confidently looking to Jehovah God to bring relief through his Son Jesus Christ. This is because these "last days" will continue to be "critical times hard to deal with." (2 Tim. 3:1) Now especially, therefore, we need to draw encouragement from the example of patience that ancient servants of God set. Often they found that their fellow Israelites refused to listen to them, insisting on continuing in their own lawless ways.—2 Ki. 17:13, 14. W 2/1 7-9

Tuesday, May 30

Whoever wants to be first among you must be your slave.
—Matt. 20:27.

Ministering to fellow believers in the capacity of servants or elders is a door of opportunity that is open to men in the Christian congregation. The qualifications set forth in God's Word make it clear that those thus serving must be spiritual persons, fine examples of Christian living, yes, men who have the respect and confidence of the congregation as a whole. Because elders have teaching responsibilities, they should also be men who are careful students of God's Word. A man who rarely reads the Bible could hardly be considered qualified to teach it to fellow believers. According to the Scriptures, congregational servants and elders are not a titled class but are the slaves of their brothers, even as Jesus Christ showed. Hence, basic to a man's qualifying as a servant in the congregation or as an elder is his desire to slave for his brothers, sacrificing of his time and energies in their behalf.—Compare 1 Timothy 1:6, 7; James 3:1. W 6/1 14, 15a

Wednesday, May 31

A young man I used to be, I have also grown old, and yet I have not seen anyone righteous left entirely, nor his offspring looking for bread.
—Ps. 37:25.

Jesus Christ showed that worrying and engaging in an anxious pursuit of what we need is unnecessary. (Matt. 6:25) He knew what he was talking about, for he had been his Father's agent in creating mankind at the beginning. He had observed God's care for those who served Him and he could agree with David's declaration. Jesus knew that his

Thursday, June 1

When you spread a feast, invite poor people, crippled, lame, blind; and you will be happy . . . For you will be repaid in the resurrection of the righteous ones.
—Luke 14:13, 14.

If a congregation enjoys a picnic together, elders should use their influence for good. Of course, if some are invited from beyond the congregation, elders might find it difficult, if not impossible, to exercise healthful control. We should also keep in mind the need of not always inviting just a certain select few. There may be others who would appreciate and benefit from wholesome association—for example, the aged and widows. Furthermore, it could hardly be in harmony with Jesus' recommendation to arrange such lavish affairs as to require those invited to pay a fee to defray expenses and that may even result in profit for the host. Too large an affair can focus attention on the one arranging it, and this would be contrary to the spirit of Jesus' counsel found at Matthew 6:3. *W 9/1 18, 19*

Father was able and willing to use his superior power to provide for those serving him. This does not mean that he will feed and clothe us without effort on our part. As servants of God we must have a balanced view, working for the necessary things, but not making this our exclusive pursuit. We must seek what God wants us to do by looking into his Word. We must actually come to make the spiritual part of our lives the primary thing. Then Jehovah God will do his part, empowering us to obtain the things we need.
W 8/1 4, 6a

Friday, June 2

Better to live alone in the desert than with a nagging and ill-tempered wife.—Prov. 21:19, New English Bible.

What the wise man wrote can also be said for living with a nagging and ill-tempered husband. The dictionary defines the word "nagging": "To annoy by faultfinding; to irritate by persistent scolding." This form of irritation certainly has no place in the Christian household. Both parties in a marriage must guard against it. Good advice for all of us is to be found at Colossians 4:6: "Let your utterance be always with graciousness, seasoned with salt, so as to know how you ought to give an answer to each one." Making that kind of reply to one's marriage partner will certainly be to the blessing of both parties. As Christians we want to watch that our kindness may not be less than the kindness sometimes shown by worldlings, by persons who do not claim to be servants of Jehovah God. How sad it would be if, in our Christian family circle, we failed to show consideration. *W 9/15 1, 2a*

Saturday, June 3

Quit being fashioned after this system of things, but be transformed by making your mind over, that you may prove to yourselves the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.—Rom. 12:2.

True Christianity is not a matter of outward appearance. In fact, in Christianity's early days it was called "The Way," because it was more than formal worship. (Acts 19:9, 23) It was a WAY OF LIFE permeated by the worship of God, guided by his spirit. Throughout God's Word we find strong expressions that allow for no halfhearted service to Jehovah God. The person wishing to be a real Christian is told: "Make your mind over," "be made new in the force actuating your mind" and "put on the new personality." (Eph. 4:22-24) Along with zealous witnessing, good conduct is continually emphasized. Accordingly, true Christianity reaches every aspect of our lives. We must love and serve Jehovah God with our whole heart and whole soul and whole mind and whole strength. This leaves out no part of our body, our life or our personality. *W 10/15 2, 3*

Sunday, June 4

Seek Jehovah, all you meek ones of the earth, who have practiced His own judicial decision. Seek righteousness, seek meekness. Probably you may be concealed in the day of Jehovah's anger.
—Zeph. 2:3.

Great as the coming catastrophe will be, the Bible assures us that there will be survivors. On what basis will these survive? On the basis of their faith. Thus those who in times past exercised faith, which meant, not only believing in God's existence, but

trusting his promises and acting upon their conviction, survived. The earliest example is that of Noah and his family. (Heb. 11:7) Notable also was the survival of Lot and his two daughters when Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed. Many centuries later the prophet Jeremiah and the Ethiopian slave Ebed-melech, who was instrumental in saving Jeremiah's life, survived the destruction of Jerusalem because of their faith, even as the early Christians survived Jerusalem's second destruction for the same reason. *W 4/15 1, 3, 4a*

Monday, June 5

Brothers, . . . have regard for those who are working hard among you and presiding over you in the Lord and admonishing you; and . . . give them more than extraordinary consideration in love.
—1 Thess. 5:12, 13.

How thankful we are for elders in Jehovah's congregation earth wide who preside in a fine way! Mankind gropes for a way out of its problems, its rulers lording it over them. (Matt. 20:25-27) Among us we have spiritually mature men who are examples to the flock, and we have regard for them as they preside over us. Not any one man in the congregation, city, country or section of the world does this, but all elders, within their assigned sphere, have the responsibility to preside. With the loving help and direction provided by this multitude of counselors, the work of Kingdom-preaching and disciplining moves forward to a successful completion. The congregation is unified in its efforts under elders who preside in a fine way. We are thus brought into closer alignment with Jesus Christ's headship, all to the glory of Jehovah God. *W 3/1 19a*

Tuesday, June 6

Come here, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife.
—Rev. 21:9.

Many of Israel's marriage features are used beautifully to illustrate and symbolize the union established between God's Son and those who become his Kingdom associates. As regards this "bride" class, formed of Jesus' anointed footstep followers, it is God who selects such a class for his Son, who bought them with a price of great value. (Eph. 5:25-27) While on earth, they view themselves as engaged and seek to maintain themselves like a "chaste virgin." (2 Cor. 11:2) They clothe themselves with a new personality that reflects the beautiful qualities of their heavenly Bridegroom, and by their righteous acts they maintain a clean identification. (Rev. 19:7, 8) God has thus seen fit to represent things of highest importance through these marriage features. This supplies another strong reason for us to give due honor to marriage. To fail to do so would, in effect, dishonor the relationship between Christ Jesus and his anointed followers. W 3/15 10, 12

Wednesday, June 7

No one can slave for two masters . . . You cannot slave for God and for Riches.
—Matt. 6:24.

In order to provide for their own, those with family responsibilities usually have to work to make enough money for food, clothing and shelter. (1 Tim. 5:8) But if a person is consumed by the cares of the day, he may feel that he has no time or energy left to search for God, learn His requirements, and do His will. So he must decide who will be his God: Jehovah or material things. The person who

is too concerned about material things is usually too involved working and caring for them. That is why persons with wealth often have great difficulty in doing God's will. They are too busy making and keeping their wealth, even as Jesus observed. (Mark 10:23) Sooner or later, whether it is in the time you spend, the attitude you develop, or your heart appreciation, one or the other—God or material things—will win out and become the center of your life. What becomes the center will determine your future, as it did for Lot and his wife. —Luke 17:28-32. W 4/1 4-6a.

Thursday, June 8

Hand such a man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, in order that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.—1 Cor. 5:5.

Where a congregation has a fine spirit, such a fine spirit should be maintained. The importance of preserving a congregation's spirit was emphasized in ancient Corinth. Paul learned that among the Corinthian Christians sexual immorality was being tolerated. The congregation's overseers had not expelled the immoral person, but Paul urged them to do so. They were to put him out of the Christian congregation into the world ruled by Satan and where destruction awaits, and that for the reason given above. This man had to be disfellowshipped if the spirit, or spirituality of the congregation, based on God's Word, was to be saved. Otherwise, 'a little leaven would ferment the whole lump,' that is, a spiritually corrupting influence would permeate the congregation and Jehovah would cut off that congregation. Today it is also vital to save the congregation's spirit. W 6/15 6-8

Friday, June 9

Teacher, we saw a certain man expelling demons by the use of your name and we tried to prevent him, because he was not accompanying us.
—Mark 9:38.

When the apostles tried to prevent that "certain man" from further expelling demons by his use of Jesus' name, was their speech seasoned with salt or in good taste? We have reason to doubt it. In view of Jesus' commission to them, they evidently viewed themselves as an exclusive, title-holding team of healers. But that "certain man" was not against them and drawing attention away from their witness work. Logically, since he was not against them, he must have been for them, although not accompanying them. It could hardly have been expected that, at one moment he was doing miracles in Jesus' name, but at the next moment he was speaking evil of Jesus. It would be inconsistent, unreasonable, for us to expect that, by a powerful miracle, the man would bring honor on the name and afterward privately speak evil of the name and work against the bearer and his apostles. W 8/15 4, 7, 9a

Saturday, June 10

Because your loving-kindness is better than life, my own lips will commend you.—Ps. 63:3.

What could be more precious than life? Without it we could not enjoy or benefit from any possessions. With this in mind, note that David was saying that he would rather lose his life than lose Jehovah's favor. All that David might possess or enjoy in the everlasting future depended on God. Also, David knew of the many instances when Jehovah had shown him compassion and loyal support.

This was all evidence of God's loving-kindness. So to David that loving-kindness was more important than present temporal life as a human. Is this how it is also with us? Is not the loving-kindness, or loyal love, of the One who can give us eternal life more precious than mortal life that is here today and gone tomorrow? David, though, did not merely sense the value of Jehovah's loving-kindness. His deep gratitude for it moved him to utter praise and thanks to God. Thanking and praising God should also be an integral part of our lives. W 2/15 1-3a

Sunday, June 11

I said, even I, in my heart: "Do come now, let me try you out with rejoicing. Also, see good." And, look! that too was vanity.—Eccl. 2:1.

If we allow ourselves to be guided by the facts uncovered by Solomon's investigation, surely we will not permit pleasures to overshadow or crowd out our spiritual activities. This calls for being moderate in the number of social gatherings we attend and the amount of time we devote to them. If we were repeatedly to spend a good part of the night at social affairs, how could we possibly be alert the next day for spiritual opportunities, such as congregation meetings or public witnessing? If keeping late hours because of recreation resulted in our being too tired for spiritual activities, is not the pursuit of amusements getting out of control? While we may rightly enjoy wholesome, uplifting social gatherings and other forms of relaxation, these should not become the big things in our lives. Our greatest satisfaction should be found in a life that centers around faithful service to Jehovah God. W 9/1 8

Monday, June 12

Husbands ought to be loving their wives as their own bodies.—Eph. 5:28.

Thus holy spirit counsels husbands in dealing with their wives over whom they have headship. It sounds very simple. The great problem is that due to imperfection and inborn selfishness there are times when the husband, while wanting to be the head of the family, fails to show the necessary love and consideration for his wife. Often the wife will say of her husband that she does not feel loved by him, that his only concern is his own pleasure and satisfaction. Within the Christian congregation, then, a husband must take stock of himself and face up to realities. Ask yourself, Do I love my wife as I do myself? Do I assign her honor as to a weaker vessel, the feminine one? Or, have I been interested only in my own satisfaction? Do I take into consideration her needs and desires? When it comes to decisions, do I give her a listening ear, or do I make all the decisions, irrespective of any desires that she might have? W 9/15 7

Tuesday, June 13

Exert yourselves vigorously to get in through the narrow door.—Luke 13:24.

The narrowness of "The Way" is a narrowness in the sense that it restricts one as to harmful things. True freedom is not license to do just anything a person desires, because this would infringe on the freedom of others. It would soon become no freedom, for it would lead to strife, hatred, even murder. The laws of world governments, for example, if not obeyed at all, would result in anarchy and such terrible conditions that no one

would have any real freedom or happiness. We have, just as do all others, many imperfections and faults. When we try to correct these, the imperfections of the flesh make us feel miserable because of the fight we have to put up against them. It takes exertion, not because the "way" to life is in itself disagreeable, but because the world and our own imperfect personalities exert pressures against us. The standards of "The Way" are high, but meeting them gives the greatest satisfaction, joy and freedom. W 10/15 2, 3a

Wednesday, June 14

Cursed is the able-bodied man who puts his trust in earthly man and actually makes flesh his arm, and whose heart turns away from Jehovah himself.—Jer. 17:5.

Has science helped to stem the worldwide rampage of crime? No, for crime has increased just as God's prophetic Word said it would in these "last days." (Matt. 24:12; 2 Tim. 3:1-5) Too, while medical science has helped to fight some illnesses, others have raged out of control. Heart disease and cancer have become major killers. Health problems have been made worse due to man's pollution of the air, land and water, and his chemical treatment of foods. And science is completely helpless before the ravages of old age and death. Mankind's condition remains just as God's Word says at Romans 5:12. We know from actual experience what this scientific age has brought forth. Yes, now we can see clearly what has happened to the human family because of putting trust in man. It is just as foretold. May we never be guilty of that folly but always put our trust in Jehovah God. W 7/15 9-11

Thursday, June 15

As for the one sown upon the fine soil, this is the one hearing the word and getting the sense of it, who really does bear fruit and produces, this one a hundredfold, that one sixty, the other thirty.

—Matt. 13:23.

The amount of time persons can spend in preaching and teaching will vary, depending on age, health, family responsibilities, and so forth. But the question is, What about our desire? Are we whole-souled in our worship of Jehovah, so that we take advantage of our opportunities and the strength we have to bear witness to the truth? From Matthew 13:23 we can see that if we do what we can in a whole-souled way, whether little or much, then we can be content, for all three types described were part of the "fine soil," each producing according to individual circumstances. Some, like the full-time servant Paul, have not only the desire to do as much as possible in Kingdom service, but also the mental and physical stamina and can adjust their circumstances to take hold of this fine opportunity.—1 Cor. 15:10, 11. W 8/1 9-11

Friday, June 16

I heard, and my belly began to be agitated; at the sound my lips quivered . . . Yet, as for me, I will exult in Jehovah himself; I will be joyful in the God of my salvation.

—Hab. 3:16, 18.

Even when facing trials at the hand of the Devil, we should have confidence in Jehovah's willingness and ability to bring us through completely victorious. (Rom. 8:37) The "great tribulation," however, is a tribulation from God that will befall the Devil's entire crowd in vindication of Jehovah and all those on God's

side, just as it is written at 2 Thessalonians 1:6. For these reasons God's people have a deeper love and appreciation for Jehovah, and this, in turn, gives them a confidence free from any weakening or morbid fear. Awesome as the "great tribulation" will be, we are looking forward to being eyewitnesses at that grand execution of divine judgment. And so we continually pray for God's kingdom to come and for his will and purpose to be accomplished—a prayer we offer in full confidence through faith.—1 John 5:14. W 1/15 17-19a

Saturday, June 17

Really, woe is me if I did not declare the good news! —1 Cor. 9:16.

We do well to think about what the good news has meant to us individually. Ours is certainly the very best way of life. We are spared from using our energies in vain efforts. We are safeguarded against becoming involved in the world's immorality and lawlessness. Therefore, we do not experience the pain that comes from violating God's commands. (Col. 3:5-10, 12-14) Besides present benefits, we have the grand hope of life everlasting under righteous conditions. How fine it would be if more people could be aided to have that hope as disciples of Jesus Christ! People need the good news today. Tomorrow could be too late. Because of not knowing the good news, a person may ruin his life by one act of immorality or a violent outburst of anger. Besides, we do not know the day and hour for God to act against the ungodly world. So we want to use the remaining time wisely in efforts to help others gain salvation. We should feel as did the apostle Paul. W 7/1 15, 16a

Sunday, June 18

O let people give thanks to Jehovah for his loving-kindness and for his wonderful works to the sons of men.—Ps. 107:21.

Do you find that you daily reflect the sentiment of these words? Do you often speak about Jehovah, spontaneously praising him for what he is and for what he does? Or may a whole day go by without your thinking of God and bringing him up in conversation? Unquestionably, one way in which to thank Jehovah for his loving-kindness is by speaking to others who are not yet worshipping him. The message of the good news can be lifesaving for them. Rightly, then, we are pleased to preach the good news widely. True Christians know that what most persons have learned about God and the Bible consists of false doctrines and corruptions of the Bible's teachings. Hence, we could unwittingly allow our witnessing to be dominated by negatives, dwelling on what the Bible *does not teach*. But we should take care that we do not talk about almost nothing but negatives. Our witnessing ought to include many positive things about Jehovah. W 2/15 3-6a

Monday, June 19

Keep this mental attitude in you that was also in Christ Jesus, who . . . emptied himself and took a slave's form and came to be in the likeness of men.—Phil. 2:5-7.

Jesus' kingdom was to be different from the kingdoms of this world, in which selfish ambition, together with the inclination to be served rather than to serve others in office, motivates a politician. This type of action betrays a feeling of self-importance, a lack of humility. Jesus himself did not show such a disposition. Disciples who were to be asso-

ciated with him in his kingdom had to manifest the same mental attitude that he had. That is why the apostle Paul wrote the above. On Jesus' part, was this not a making of himself "last of all and minister of all"? (Mark 9:35) What finer example could there be of humility on the part of any creature? And yet, by taking such a lowly position and a ministry that cost him his earthly life, he was rewarded with the first position in all creation. Truly, Jesus did set a fine example of humility for all of us. W 8/15 11, 12

Tuesday, June 20

As in the daytime let us walk decently, not in revelries and drunken bouts, not in illicit intercourse and loose conduct.—Rom. 13:13.

In this there is a vital lesson for us today. It is fine when Christians can come together and enjoy fellowship as well as food and drink in moderation. But worldliness must be kept out of these gatherings if they are to be spiritually upbuilding. What is a gathering where alcoholic beverages flow very freely, where music continues to blare out into the wee hours of the morning and where people share in questionable dancing? It is a worldly party, a carouse, regardless of what name of respectability some may try to attach to it. As true Christians we have had our fill of such unrestrained merrymaking during the time that we were ignorant of God's will. We want no part of an occasion marked by heavy drinking, disorder and sensuality or a gathering that includes any of these or that even borders on them. Now that we have been enlightened, let us take to heart Paul's counsel. W 9/1 11, 12

Wednesday, June 21

Train up a boy according to the way for him; even when he grows old he will not turn aside from it.—Prov. 22:6.

It is wise to remember that in training our children and raising them in the mental-regulating of Jehovah more is involved than just studying the Bible with them. Practical application of Bible principles is vital. If you have children, then as a wise parent you should set a fine example for them in industriousness. Christian parents, make efforts to be up with your children in the mornings, getting them ready for school, providing a proper breakfast for them and seeing that they are adequately clothed. Be interested in how your children are doing in their school studies and that their conduct is always that of well-trained, well-mannered servants of Jehovah. Inculcate in your children respect for older persons and high regard for the property of others. All of such will help your children to be, not a vexation to you, but a praise to their Creator, and a satisfaction to you who have reared them.—Prov. 17:21, 25. W 9/15 9a

Thursday, June 22

All Scripture is inspired of God and beneficial for teaching, for reproving, for setting things straight, for disciplining in righteousness, that the man of God may be fully competent, completely equipped for every good work.—2 Tim. 3:16, 17.

Appreciating the need for God's guidance in order to follow his righteous principles, we will make Bible study a regular part of our lives. Yes, the entire Word of God is wholly true and inspired by God as a guide for us

in all our ways. Viewing the Bible in this way, we study the Christian Greek Scriptures, which contain many direct commands and laws, and also the Hebrew Scriptures, which set forth many principles, illustrations, prophecies and a record of actual historical events that reveal God's attitude on matters of life. Throughout the entire Bible there are many incidents that demonstrate God's way of dealing with various situations. All these things acquaint us with God's personality and help us to have the mind of Christ, who knows God more intimately than anyone else does. W 10/15 7-9

Friday, June 23

Supply . . . to your virtue knowledge, to your knowledge self-control.—2 Pet. 1:5, 6.

It is easy to see how a fine, accurate knowledge of the Bible will help us to be effective and fruitful in convincing people of its importance. This knowledge will help us to be ready always to make, not just a defense, but an effective defense of the good news. Not only that, but it helps us to know what Jehovah requires of us so that we will have his favor. As we get this knowledge we can see more clearly the value of doing all things his way, with completeness of heart and mind. This leads us to self-control. How can our life be one of whole-souled devotion if we do not control our body and its passions—or what we do with our hands, where our feet lead us, what our mouth says? How can we progress spiritually if we do not have enough self-control to turn off the television when it is time to study? Which do we devote the most time to—watching television or some other recreation, or to spiritual matters? W 8/1 17, 18

Saturday, June 24

It is good to give thanks to Jehovah and to make melody to your name, O Most High; to tell in the morning about your loving-kindness and about your faithfulness during the nights.

—Ps. 92:1, 2.

Talking about Jehovah and his loving-kindness is not just for occasions when we are trying to teach persons Bible truths. What about our daily conversation? Jesus said: "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks." (Matt. 12:34) If we truly appreciate God's loving-kindness, it ought to show up in our daily speech. This was so with the psalmist. You may have noticed that most persons, even churchgoers, who claim to worship God, are particularly reluctant to express any personal involvement with God. In part, this tendency may be due to the fact that they are, indeed, not personally involved with God. Yet, in view of how widespread this disinclination is, we can ask ourselves, 'Have I been influenced by the world's reluctance to speak about being involved with God or to show in conversation that he is part of my life and thinking?' W 2/15 8, 9a

Sunday, June 25

The heavens are my throne, and the earth is my footstool . . . and I shall glorify the very place of my feet.

—Isa. 66:1; 60:13.

Under his Kingdom rule God will see to it that his footstool, the earth, will again become ecologically balanced, erasing the effects of about 6,000 years of man's misguided efforts and misuse. Earth and its weather, its vegetation, its animal life, and man, will be coordinated for enjoyable living—all reflecting credit and praise to the Creator. The Kingdom will accomplish

these marvelous results because its kings will also constitute a heavenly priesthood who will be imitators of their great, merciful High Priest. As people progress in a spiritual way, applying right principles in their lives, they will be lifted up to perfection. Thereafter, no more will a man have to say, "the good that I wish I do not do, but the bad that I do not wish is what I practice." (Rom. 7:19) Each man, in perfection, will have full control of all his powers and faculties. What a blessing that will be! W 10/1 7-9

Monday, June 26

Let your loins be girded and your lamps be burning, and you yourselves be like men waiting for their master . . . so that at his arriving and knocking they may at once open to him.—Luke 12:35, 36.

What does it mean for the slave to have his loins girded? In ancient times warriors used to bind themselves around the waist or hips with a leather belt. This provided them with a firm support as they went forth to battle. In like manner, Christians today need to be girded, in preparation for activity. The apostle Paul tells us that in order to stand firm against the crafty acts of Satan, we need to put on "the complete suit of armor from God." (Eph. 6:11-14) This requires the girding of our loins with truth. Our continued study of and deep appreciation for the truth of God's Word will help us to stand firm against the wicked one. Our girding is like that of the prophet Jeremiah, who served Jehovah without letup for forty years and longer. When Jehovah first commissioned Jeremiah, he commanded him to 'gird up his hips.'—Jer. 1:17-19. W 1/1 4, 6a

Tuesday, June 27

If any man is reaching out for an office of overseer, he is desirous of a fine work.

—1 Tim. 3:1.

If you desire greater responsibility, you should first examine whether your life as a Christian could come under closer scrutiny by other members of the congregation without raising questions as to the kind of example you are setting. You might ask yourself: Do I really want to serve my brothers? Do I have the godly wisdom and insight to judge matters involving people's lives? Could I give sound Scriptural counsel that would help others with their personal and family problems? Do others really view me as an "older man" by reason of my experience in Christian living? Such sober self-examination may calm any tendency toward impatience. It may impress upon you the importance of waiting patiently until such time as you really can serve your brothers well. It may also help you to consider the weighty responsibility that falls upon elders who make recommendations for brothers to serve as overseers.—1 Tim. 5:22. W 2/1 15, 16a

Wednesday, June 28

I went bringing [them] the message that they should repent and turn to God by doing works that befit repentance.—Acts 26:20.

In hearing pleas for reinstatement, elders need to be balanced. There must be a Scriptural basis for restoring a person who had gone wrong and brought reproach upon Jehovah's name and the congregation. So before making any decision the elders must determine whether the wrongdoer is truly repentant. Has he produced works that befit repentance? Obviously,

this means more than words. Deeds must be in evidence. How has he been conducting himself? For how long? What does his heart attitude show? Has he been diligently studying God's Word and endeavoring to apply it in correcting his way of life? Does he really appreciate that his wrong was against Jehovah? Has he made appreciable changes for the better, showing that he has been moved by godly sorrow and not just regret for having been found out? These questions elders must have in mind when talking with a dis-fellowshipped person wanting to be reinstated. W 3/1 16

Thursday, June 29

Store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes, and where thieves do not break in and steal.—Matt. 6:20.

It takes money to buy the necessities of life. But many people want a big bank account, feeling that this will give them security. Yet, recent history shows this not to be so. In the Great Depression thousands of banks closed all over the world, with severe loss to depositors. Also, the value of money has been eaten away by inflation. Truly, the history of money is summed up in one word: insecurity. Not money, but God will decide who will and what will be preserved through the coming time of trouble. (Ps. 49:9, 11) In God's new order, the earth will not be divided up according to the whim of any wealthy and powerful humans. Jehovah, by means of his Kingdom government, will regulate economic affairs so that all of his people will benefit from the bounties of the earth. How practical and lifesaving, therefore, is the counsel of Jesus. A good account with God in heaven is what matters. W 4/1 13, 15a

Friday, June 30

I pummel my body and lead it as a slave, that, after I have preached to others, I myself should not become disapproved somehow.
—1 Cor. 9:27.

What about your life as a Witness? How do you feel about the way you conducted your affairs before you had an accurate knowledge of the truth? Possibly you are one of those described by Peter at 1 Peter 4:3. Surely there is never a proper time for anyone to engage in such corrupt practices. Christians should have had enough of these

Saturday, July 1

Present your bodies a sacrifice living, holy, acceptable to God.—Rom. 12:1.

The kidneys' being covered with a heavy layer of fat made a specially precious part of the animal sacrifices that Jehovah's people anciently offered to him. For instance, regarding the first animal sacrifices reported as being offered to God, the ones offered by Abel, it is stated that he "brought some firstlings of his flock, even their fatty pieces." (Gen. 4:4) These would include the kidneys. Also, regarding the sacrifices to be offered to Jehovah God by the Israelites, we read repeatedly of "the two kidneys and the fat that is upon them," as being assigned to Jehovah. (Lev. 3:4) Kidney fat burned well and produced a pleasing odor. So kidneys were no insignificant part of sacrifices to God. The apostle Paul tells Christians, who were objects of God's tender compassions, to offer sacrifices that would include the kidneys as well as the heart. This would be whole-souled service. *W 11/1 5, 6a*

things when they were in ignorance and, therefore, should never want to return to them. Now that you are living for God's will, are you eager to help others to share your happiness? (1 Pet. 4:2) Is your heart so filled with appreciation for the good news that you seize and make opportunities to bear witness about Jehovah God and Jesus Christ? Is your conduct such that it adds force to what you tell others about God's Word? Only by both declaring and living the truth can we be faithful witnesses and hope to gain life even as the apostle Paul shows. *W 7/1 17, 18*

Sunday, July 2

Those who are hoping in Jehovah will regain power. They will mount up with wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not tire out.—Isa. 40:31.

It is very encouraging to read accounts such as 2 Samuel 23:8-22, and, while reading, to realize that, although the men named there were doubtless strong, active men, it was their faith in God that gave them their miraculous energy and enduring power. We have the same powerful backing today. (Matt. 28:20; Rev. 14:6) So we should not become weary in well-doing or shrink back through fear, but remember the promise given above. As we declare the good news we do not have to face instant death every hour as often those fighters back there did. And we have a peaceful message that appeals to the hearts of those who really listen. So our joy can be even greater, for our weapons of righteousness bring spiritual healing. The joy that our spiritual warfare brings to those who believe increases our joy. *W 8/1 17, 18a*

Monday, July 3

As a father shows mercy to his sons, Jehovah has shown mercy to those fearing him.
—Ps. 103:13.

How very vital genuine repentance is! Really, because of being imperfect, we daily fail in some way to reflect the image of Jehovah God perfectly. This is something we should rightly regret. But it should not cause us to torment ourselves over every minor fault or slip. Nevertheless, the realization that we often err in word and in deed should keep us humble and help us to be merciful when others sin against us. Then, when we pray to God for forgiveness of our trespasses, we can be confident that he will be pleased with our prayers. Thus we will enjoy a clean conscience as we continue seeking to do his will. Yes, we will be truly happy, knowing that God has forgiven our sins and that he views us as his clean servants who have before them the prospect of everlasting life. Truly, "happy is the one whose revolt is pardoned, whose sin is covered. Happy is the man to whose account Jehovah does not put error."—Ps. 32:1, 2. *W 11/15 21a*

Tuesday, July 4

Whoever receives one of such young children on the basis of my name, receives me.
—Mark 9:37.

When we are deeply occupied with work, we may not want to be bothered with children. Persons who feel self-important or who sense the weight and dignity of their responsible position may consider themselves above paying attention to simple-minded children, or to childlike grown-ups. But what if such childlike persons are Christians or intelligent persons who want to become Christians? Shall

we who are already disciples of Christ make ourselves approachable to them and attentive to their needs? If we refused aid to the childlike ones, we would lose a great privilege and blessing. If mature Christians like Jesus' apostles refused to receive a newly baptized Christian who is figuratively like the young child about whom Jesus put his arms and used as an illustration, they would not be receiving Jesus himself. This means that Jesus looks upon the receiving of such a one as if he himself were being received as the Messiah or Christ. *W 8/15 17, 18*

Wednesday, July 5

He that sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Let each one do just as he has resolved in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.
—2 Cor. 9:6, 7.

Much in the way of Christian giving can be done on an individual basis, in line with the words of Paul. However, in some cases, the local congregation may have to draw on its contributed funds to provide financial aid for certain ones associated. The elders would be the ones to determine who might be entitled to monetary assistance, and to what extent. As is evident from 2 Thessalonians 3:10 and 1 Timothy 5:9, 10, congregational aid should be for those needy persons who are fine examples in Christian living. Of course, there are times when extensive relief measures may have to be undertaken in behalf of fellow believers in other congregations, perhaps even in other parts of the world. An examination of large-scale relief work in the first century reveals just how this should be handled.—Acts 11:27-29; 1 Cor. 16:3. *W 9/1 9, 10a*

Thursday, July 6

In her the heart of her owner has put trust, and there is no gain lacking.—Prov. 31:11.

Thus Proverbs describes the "capable wife." As such do you strive to keep within your financial means? If your husband entrusts you with the finances for running the home, do you work to keep within your budget, not expecting that you can be a spendthrift because he will come up with further money if needed? Again, it goes without saying that a husband should try to provide sufficient funds for the family budget. And where there must be some economizing, both parties in the marriage relationship should work together for the common interests of the family. Keeping open the lines of communication with your husband is also important. You can strive to involve him in conversation about his work during the day, and you can tell him about your day at home with the children, or about your activity in witnessing about the Kingdom. It is this interest in each other's lives that works to be a blessing and brings happiness in the family circle. *W 9/15 16, 17*

Friday, July 7

No temptation has taken you except what is common to men. But God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear, but along with the temptation he will also make the way out in order for you to be able to endure it.

—1 Cor. 10:13.

Seeking first the Kingdom and God's righteousness is the satisfying, happy way of life now. Yes, those whose hearts lean toward what is right, and who really desire life in peace with their fellowmen, Jehovah God has not left

without help. He has kindly provided sufficient assistance from fellow Christians to aid such persons to follow the way of life that is pleasing to Him. And he has provided help from our High Priest. (Heb. 4:14-16) What a marvelous arrangement God has made for us to approach him, gain his favor and walk in the way of obedience! And while those who choose to obey him are walking in the way of life, he kindly provides help to give them strength beyond what is normal, so that one sincerely following the way of obedience can be sure to walk in "The Way" successfully. *W 10/15 13, 15, 16a*

Saturday, July 8

Godly devotion is beneficial for all things, as it holds promise of the life now and that which is to come.

—1 Tim. 4:8.

A factor to keep in mind is that teaching what Jesus commanded involves much more than refuting false doctrines. The texts, for example, that can be used to refute the Trinity doctrine were not recorded for that purpose. So a student should be helped to see just what those particular passages of Scripture teach regarding Jehovah and Christ. Clearly, a person cannot build faith on merely knowing what Jesus did not teach. Rather, he must know all that the Son of God did teach and command. Similarly, it is not enough for the one being taught to know that God condemns the works of the flesh. He also must be shown the benefits that come from adhering to the Bible's guidelines. He should be helped to appreciate that the commands contained in the Scriptures prove that Jehovah God deeply cares for us. *W 5/1 8, 9a*

Sunday, July 9

Come to be blameless and innocent, children of God without a blemish in among a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you are shining as illuminators in the world.—Phil. 2:15.

Certainly we have many reasons to appreciate God's Word. Among other things, applied counsel from the Scriptures enables us to cope with illness and stress. In God's Word we find consolation when depressed. The Bible also aids us to endure grief, to deal successfully with timidity and fear, and to avoid immoral conduct. Furthermore, it enables us to remain "blameless and innocent" regarding the misdeeds of the world. In it, we shine as illuminators. Relying upon Jehovah, we will continue reflecting spiritual light. With divine aid we will go on manifesting the proper motivation or spirit, one that befits persons worshipping Jehovah God. We will seek to cultivate and display the fruits of God's spirit and wisely will bear in mind the fine qualities of the early Christians and others who served Jehovah faithfully down through the centuries. *W 6/15 26-28a*

Monday, July 10

Those slain by Jehovah will certainly come to be in that day from one end of the earth clear to the other end of the earth. They will not be . . . gathered up or be buried.

—Jer. 25:33.

In times past many persons lost their lives because of disregarding warnings given. This is a strong reason why today it is important to heed the warning God gives, as found in his Word. Yes, this is of the greatest urgency. Why? Because today all mankind are faced with a threat

to their survival. By this is meant, not the threat of nuclear warfare between nations; rather, the threat is the great catastrophe foretold in God's Word. It is the catastrophe that will be brought on by Jehovah God himself. But some may ask us, How can we be so certain that God will interfere in the affairs of earth and man? We can assure such persons that because so many Bible prophecies have been fulfilled in the past, we can be certain that those foretelling this worldwide catastrophe will also be fulfilled. *W 4/15 6-8*

Tuesday, July 11

None of us, in fact, lives with regard to himself only.

—Rom. 14:7.

Wrongdoing is always, inevitably, harmful. If ever we should become involved in some serious wrongdoing, we might well meditate on such things as these: Do we feel hurt at heart upon realizing that we have been unlike the loving, upright God that we serve, acting in a selfish way, not showing consideration for the interests of others? (1 Thess. 4:3-6) Could we really think that wrongdoing, such as immorality, could ever contribute to the true happiness of others? How much concern have we shown for their lasting good and their hope of life in God's favor? Our actions might not have directly touched others, but we still affect people by our example and influence. Are we so self-centered that we will please ourselves even though we know we are setting a bad example, acting as a weakening influence? If we truly love and admire Jehovah God and Jesus Christ we will feel shame and sorrow at acting so differently from them, betraying their trust in us. *W 11/15 10, 11a*

Wednesday, July 12

The things proceeding out of the mouth come out of the heart, and those things defile a man. For example, out of the heart come wicked reasonings, murders, adulteries, fornications, thieveries, false testimonies, blasphemies.

—Matt. 15:18, 19.

A fully charged heart moves its possessor to speak: "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks." (Matt. 12:34) Though the heart of itself does not think, it can incite thought. This was the import of Jesus' words to men who were sticklers for ceremonial washings. Certainly false testimonies and blasphemies come out of the mouth, and the wicked reasonings of the mind that express themselves through the mouth are stimulated by the bad inclination of the heart. Yes, the heart inclines the thoughts, for it likes them to be inclined in a particular way. (Gen. 6:5) Thought has heart cooperation. The heart develops a love, a fondness, an affection toward an object. So it comes to prize a person or thing. From this standpoint the heart represents a sense of appreciation. W 11/1 17-19

Thursday, July 13

Their corpses will be on the broad way of the great city which is in a spiritual sense called Sodom and Egypt, where their Lord was also impaled.—Rev. 11:8.

In the fulfillment, the city is Christendom. But this text also throws light on the meaning of Ezekiel 31:2, 3. A city is a political organization, and a great city would be a great political organization, a great system of government. Ancient Sodom was once a political organization, and ancient Egypt was

a land with a mighty political system that made it for centuries the First World Power of Bible prophecy. Consequently, what is called Egypt in a spiritual sense must be the worldwide system of political rulership, the political structure of man rule by man-made governments. In the midst of such a "great city" the Lord Jesus Christ was impaled back in 33 C.E., outside the city of Jerusalem. The world of mankind is part and parcel of this system of things. So where Jesus Christ was impaled was in this world that upholds this system of things. W 5/15 15, 16

Friday, July 14

Is anything too extraordinary for Jehovah?—Gen. 18:14.

Jehovah's trustworthiness was demonstrated in the days of Abraham. Jehovah had informed Abraham and his wife Sarah that they would have a child. However, Sarah was well past the age of child-bearing. When she heard the news, she laughed. Noting this, Jehovah assured Abraham that "next year at this time . . . Sarah will have a son." Exactly at Jehovah's appointed time, Sarah had her son, Isaac. Jehovah had miraculously rekindled the procreative powers of Sarah in line with his purpose to bring forth the Messiah through Abraham's line of descent. (Gen. 18:9-14; 21:2) In the days of Moses, God's servants were severely oppressed by the brutal world power of that time, Egypt. But Jehovah promised to deliver the Israelites and bring them "to a land flowing with milk and honey." Ultimately several million Israelites came to this land. Jehovah's promises to them were fulfilled in every detail.—Josh. 21:43-45. W 7/15 7, 8a

Saturday, July 15

These, therefore, went their way . . . rejoicing because they had been counted worthy to be dishonored in behalf of his name.—Acts 5:41.

Time and again Jehovah God miraculously intervened to make it evident that he was backing up the work of declaring the good news. (Acts 5:12-40; 12:1-11) He backs it up no less today, as Christ and his angels oversee the work. In modern times we have experienced marvelous deliverances. We have seen the work of proclaiming the good news open up in areas hitherto impossible to reach. Jehovah God, by his spirit, has drawn to the truth persons who were formerly bitter opposers, reminding us of the conversion of Saul, who became the apostle Paul. The modern-day examples are not so obviously miraculous as those in the early congregation. Nevertheless, we can see the almighty power of Jehovah God behind these instances. With this mighty power behind us, as we keep on truly serving Jehovah we are not paralyzed by fear, or discouraged because of the indifference of the people to whom we speak. W 8/1 14, 15a

Sunday, July 16

Salt is fine . . . Have salt in yourselves, and keep peace between one another.—Mark 9:50.

Why did Jesus tell his apostles to "have salt in yourselves"? It was because, in the argumentation among themselves on the way back to Capernaum, they had betrayed a lack of this fine figurative salt within themselves. Salt of such a kind pictured that quality of one's personality that makes one act in good taste in one's treatment of others. It makes

what one says more palatable to others and easier to swallow, more digestible to another's thinking. Thus it makes one more agreeable to have around, yes, more desirable. Eating salt together, as in the case of a host and his guest, creates good feelings, fine relationships between the eaters. That our having the figurative salt as a trait of our personality is a good and valuable thing, the apostle Paul emphasized when he wrote: "Let your utterance be always with graciousness, seasoned with salt, so as to know how you ought to give an answer to each one."—Col. 4:6. W 8/15 23-25a

Monday, July 17

Store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes, and where thieves do not break in and steal.—Matt. 6:20.

A needy widow observed by Jesus donated a mere two *lepta* at the temple in Jerusalem. This, made in expression of her love for the true God worshiped at the temple, was most acceptable. In fact, compared with her means, her gift was greater than that of the wealthy who contributed much out of their surplus. Truly, then, we want to prove ourselves to be friends of God and Christ by using our "unrighteous riches" to help those in need and to further spiritual interests. If we continue to use our "unrighteous riches" properly, we demonstrate that we are faithful in what is least. Therefore, Jehovah God and his Son can continue to use us as fine stewards to dispense the far more valuable spiritual riches to others. Our record of fine works will be as treasures deposited in heaven, yielding rich dividends in the form of divine approval now and life eternal in the New Order. W 9/1 18, 19a

Tuesday, July 18

Throw your burden upon Jehovah himself, and he himself will sustain you. Never will he allow the righteous one to totter.—Ps. 55:22.

If you are a woman faced with the problem of loneliness there may be older women in the congregation who need companionship, someone to study with them, or in some way to look after them. That can be one way to spend extra hours profitably. Why not look around in the congregation and see where you might be able to render that kind of loving assistance to others? There is much happiness to be found in this kind of giving. (Acts 20:35) Or there may be other women in the congregation in circumstances similar to yours and you can have profitable companionship in certain features of Kingdom service, building one another up spiritually by your association together. There is no doubt that there are difficulties in facing these problems of loneliness and anxiety and depression. But if you heed the advice of the psalmist you will be able to meet successfully even these challenges of life. *W 9/15 15, 16b*

Wednesday, July 19

I am writing you to quit mixing in company with anyone called a brother that is a fornicator or a greedy person or an idolater or a reviler or a drunkard or an extortioner, not even eating with such a man.—1 Cor. 5:11.

In harmony with God's viewpoint and the standards that he has set forth in his written Word, in order to maintain God's favor our congregations must keep themselves free from accusation of wrongdoing. They must be clean in the sight of Jehovah God. Therefore the con-

gregations require that their members maintain the Christian way or manner of life. Those who insist on violating the Bible principles of truth, morality and honesty, as well as persons involving themselves in spiritistic practices, must be expelled or disfellowshipped from the congregations. Thus, the corruption and deterioration that have ruined the religious denominations of Christendom do not gain a foothold in the truly Christian congregation. It is a real pleasure to associate with spiritually clean people in the clean, pure worship of Jehovah God. *W 10/15 12a*

Thursday, July 20

I, Jehovah, am searching the heart, examining the kidneys, even to give to each one according to his ways, according to the fruitage of his dealings.—Jer. 17:10.

In the Scriptures the heart and the kidneys are regularly associated together. Jehovah God makes an examination of these, not as a medical doctor would, but in a judicial way, for he looks at the moral and spiritual state as connected with those organs. This is the sense conveyed in Psalm 7:9, where we read: "God as righteous is testing out heart and kidneys." As our physical life depends to a large extent on the condition of our kidneys, so our eternal life in God's incoming realm of righteousness, peace and perfect bodily health depends upon what Jehovah God as Judge determines us to be, as disclosed by heart and kidneys. According to our ways of life, what will he give to each one of us? What will he find the fruitage of our dealings to be, for his guidance in giving us what is appropriate, deserved? *W 11/17, 9a*

Friday, July 21

Preach the word, be at it urgently in favorable season, in troublesome season, reprove, reprimand, exhort, with all long-suffering and art of teaching.—2 Tim. 4:2.

There are times when elders need to reprove individuals or, in a general sense, the congregation collectively respecting certain attitudes or actions. Unwholesome trends may be developing. Some may have lost 'the love they had at first' and be seriously neglectful of their spiritual responsibilities. (Rev. 2:4) Perhaps worldliness is creeping into their social gatherings. Certain ones may be engaging in hurtful gossip or in other ways be failing to control their tongues. Parents may be lax in training their children. There may be those who are immoderate in drinking alcoholic beverages or who take liberties in their association with the opposite sex. When conditions of this kind exist in the congregation, it would be good for the elders to discuss together just what might be done to help individuals, and the brothers as a whole, in keeping with Paul's counsel. *W 11/15 6*

Saturday, July 22

In all the nations the good news has to be preached first.—Mark 13:10.

As the end draws near, we can expect troubles to increase in the earth. Our faith may be sorely tried. But we should keep the above words of Jesus well in mind. Jesus also declared: "It is Jehovah your God you must worship, and it is to him alone you must render sacred service." (Luke 4:8) In this, Jesus himself set the outstanding example. (Luke 8:1; 10:1) When we follow that example and keep busy in proclaiming God's

kingdom, time passes quickly. This makes us joyful, as we hasten onward to the end. The apostle Paul served under a variety of difficult circumstances, but always his attitude was: "Really, woe is me if I did not declare the good news!" (1 Cor. 9:16) It would be woe for us, too, individually, if we should slow down in Jehovah's service at this climax of the last days. (2 Tim. 3:1, 14) After many years of trials, Paul was still determined to keep serving with all his might, even as can be seen from his words at Philipians 3:13, 14. *W 1/1 17, 18a*

Sunday, July 23

Now because we have the same spirit of faith as that of which it is written: "I exercised faith, therefore I spoke," we too exercise faith and therefore we speak.—2 Cor. 4:13.

Even as it was in Jesus' time, the world today is bitterly opposed to true Christians who live by righteous principles. Jesus' words still hold true about his followers' being no part of the world, and about their being hated by it. He conquered the world by his faith. (John 16:33; 1 John 5:4) Such faith will keep us from deviating from Bible teachings, will make us impervious to the allures of false knowledge and the world's wisdom. It will also protect us from this world's materialism, its love of money, even as it has enabled us to obey the divine command to sever connections with Babylon the Great, the world empire of false religion. (Rev. 18:4) Fighting the fine fight of faith includes telling others what we have learned about the basis for faith and the prospect for survival, even as the apostle Paul so well expressed it. *W 4/15 18, 19a*

Monday, July 24

All things, therefore, that you want men to do to you, you also must likewise do to them; this, in fact, is what the Law and the Prophets mean.

—Matt. 7:12.

There is a good reason why we should consider being patient an obligation. What is that? Because of the principle stated by Jesus. Now, do we not want men to be patient with us? We appreciate it when others listen to us patiently regarding important matters. There is pleasure in associating with those who patiently explain things that we do not understand. It is much easier for us to deal with people who are willing to overlook our minor shortcomings, who are patient with us despite our repeated failings. So, then, are these not also areas in which we should want to exercise patience? Of course, for us Christians, the strongest reason for wanting to be patient should be to please Jehovah God. The Bible urges us: "Become imitators of God, as beloved children." (Eph. 5:1) Since God is patient, to become imitators of him we also must exercise patience. *W 2/1 3, 4a*

Tuesday, July 25

O Jehovah, I have called upon you. Do make haste to me. . . . Do not incline my heart to anything bad.

—Ps. 141:1, 4.

In the face of what the Scriptures say about the heart do we need to consult the finest heart specialist of all times? Yes, indeed! From his written Word, which contains valuable prescriptions, we learn that we have inherited the heart inclination that is toward badness, even since the deluge of Noah's day. (Gen. 8:21) It is therefore the course of wisdom for us to learn the healthful, life-

giving prescriptions of God's Word and sincerely pray as did the psalmist David. The course that our loving Creator wants us to take as his earthly creatures is the wise one. He says: "My son, do give your heart to me, and may those eyes of yours take pleasure in my own ways." (Prov. 23:26) He wants us to give him the appreciation he merits, that thus we may take pleasure in him and in his perfect qualities and ways. Then we will be moved to copy his ways and to walk in the ways that his Word recommends for us. *W 11/1 23, 24*

Wednesday, July 26

The wisdom from above is first of all chaste, then peaceable.—Jas. 3:17.

As a seasoner, literal salt is generally fine. "Will tasteless things be eaten without salt?" asks Job. (6:6) Salt can certainly make eatables more palatable. So the having of figurative "salt" in ourselves and the seasoning of our utterance with it will help us to do what Jesus said when closing his discussion with his twelve apostles: "Keep peace between one another." (Mark 9:50) Our being tactful, considerate, wholesome and pacifying in utterance and conduct will certainly promote peaceful relationships with one another as Christ's disciples. It will make evident that God's spirit is within us, for "the fruitage of the spirit is love, joy, peace." (Gal. 5:22) And as James shows, it displays a high degree of wisdom when we obey Jesus' admonition about peace. It is a mark of true Christian discipleship in the midst of a competitive, disunited, disintegrating world. It holds us together as God's organized people under Christ. *W 8/15 23, 26a*

Thursday, July 27

Although he was a Son, he learned obedience from the things he suffered.—Heb. 5:8.

The course that Jesus Christ took, according to God's will, magnifies God's justice and thoroughness and guarantees an unshakable government for the earth. For in order to qualify as heavenly King and High Priest, Jesus had to undergo the severest, most searching test. Jesus maintained his integrity in a perfect way. His 'crying out' (Heb. 5:7) was to avoid, not his death, but death due to God's displeasure for any unfaithfulness or failure on his own part. He wanted his course to be crowned with success. He "learned obedience." He had been obedient in heaven under entirely favorable conditions. But on earth obedience to God brought persecution and suffering, even crushing circumstances. Jesus was perfect and righteous, without flaw from birth, but at the end of his course he was perfected in a greatly magnified way as the fully qualified, tried and true King-Priest. Truly, his course provides a firm basis for our faith. *W 10/1 14, 15*

Friday, July 28

I find, then, this law in my case: that when I wish to do what is right, what is bad is present with me. I really delight in the law of God according to the man I am within.—Rom. 7:21, 22.

Jesus exhibited moderation in everything. He enjoyed life and the work that he did of helping others to know about God. He did not constantly make comparisons between his righteousness and the mistakes of others. He was compassionate. However, he condemned wrongdoing and exposed hypocrisy. In these

things Jesus set the pattern for us. Of course, we recognize that, unlike Jesus, we are not perfect, but we strive earnestly to follow his pattern. We try to avoid wrongdoing but realize that what righteousness we have is due to the mercy of God and is a result of following the Bible. It is not something to be credited to ourselves. We recognize, as did the psalmist: "If errors were what you watch, O Jah, O Jehovah, who could stand?" (Ps. 130:3) We know that we are sinners and at times do wrong things, even as Paul himself did. *W 10/15 10, 11*

Saturday, July 29

Happy are you when people reproach you and persecute you . . . for in that way they persecuted the prophets prior to you.—Matt. 5:11, 12.

Why is it possible for those serving God to look forward to the great tribulation without fear and trepidation? We must keep in mind that there is a vast difference between the great tribulation that Jehovah God himself will bring upon Satan's organization and all those clinging to it, and the tribulation that Satan now brings upon Jehovah's faithful witnesses in the form of persecution, bans, mob action and similar overt acts of violence. This latter type of trouble originates with Satan and cannot be escaped if we serve Jehovah. (2 Tim. 3:12) Now such personal suffering at the hands of misinformed and deluded persons certainly is not a pleasant experience that is longed for and enjoyed when it comes. However, when the persecution is over and we have endured it, we can rejoice because we have proved faithful like Job and other godly men of old when under trial. *W 1/15 14-16a*

Sunday, July 30

Become imitators of me, even as I am of Christ.
—1 Cor. 11:1.

Can imperfect humans imitate the perfect example of Jesus Christ? It definitely is possible. Paul did so, and so did many others of Jesus' devoted disciples. Like Jesus Christ, Paul had genuine concern and love for people. He was especially pained by the unbelief of his countrymen, even as can be seen from his words at Romans 9:1-3. In view of what Paul was preaching, his countrymen regarded him as an apostate, as one who had no love for them. Yet nothing could have been farther from the truth. His conscience, enlightened by holy spirit, bore witness to his great love for them. He was willing to do anything that he possibly could to help his countrymen gain salvation. This is most remarkable when we consider that they were responsible for much of the suffering Paul experienced. His words reveal the depth of his unselfish love. He earnestly desired to aid the Jews. Surely he set a fine example for us to imitate! W 7/1 10-13a

Tuesday, August 1

I desire the women to adorn themselves . . . in the way that befits women professing to reverence God, namely, through good works.
—1 Tim. 2:9, 10.

Matters of conscience can be discussed, and research done to obtain the Bible's view. Arguments toward the Scriptural position may be brought to bear on a subject. Elders and others who are mature can help. But then the individual must act on what he conscientiously feels is acceptable to God. Today

Monday, July 31

Make friends for yourselves by means of the unrighteous riches, so that, when such fail, they may receive you into the everlasting dwelling places.
—Luke 16:9.

The objective of Jesus' true disciples should be to use their "unrighteous riches" to make friends with the possessors of the "everlasting dwelling places." Since no dwelling place on earth can be spoken of as being everlasting, manifestly the "everlasting dwelling places" must be heavenly. These are in the possession of the eternal God Jehovah and his Son. By reason of his Creatorship, Jehovah God owns everything, and his firstborn Son, as heir of all things, shares in that ownership. This means that there is nothing in a material way that we humans can give to them. Hence, to make friends with the Most High God and his Son by means of "unrighteous riches" would simply mean to use these riches in a way that brings their approval. This includes one's having the right attitude in using material things for the benefit of others, heeding the counsel found at Matthew 6:3, 4. W 9/1 5, 6a

there are many circumstances in which there is no specific instruction from the Bible. These are sometimes called "gray areas." Such areas exist in the fields of food, clothing, and others. The Bible gives principles to guide us in all these areas. What it definitely states, all should follow. For example, the Bible counsels women as to how they should adorn themselves. Respect for our brothers' feelings and for the congregation and its good reputation in the community should be maintained. W 12/1 18, 19

Wednesday, August 2

I shall bless Jehovah, who has given me advice. Really, during the nights my kidneys have corrected me.
—Ps. 16:7.

To grow to Christian maturity we must feed on God's Word as a whole, not limiting ourselves to the primary Bible teachings. We must feed upon its advanced teachings, its counsels, admonitions, instructions for full-grown Christians. This will benefit us to the very depth of our Christian being. King David referred to such divine advices when he wrote the above. We note that the psalmist David bypasses the heart and mentions what is farther down in David's being as a worshiper of Jehovah. Being taken in so far down within him, the advice was there to stay. Being embedded and rooted so deeply inside him, it was there to be a part of David. It could not be eradicated, taken away from him by other humans. Because it had settled so deeply within, the "advice" was identified with the kidneys. Viewed from this standpoint, the kidneys could correct David, reprove him, show him the better way or give him the right answer. W 11/1 14-16a

Thursday, August 3

Let the husband render to his wife her due; but let the wife also do likewise to her husband. Do not be depriving each other of it, except by mutual consent for an appointed time.
—1 Cor. 7:3, 5.

In this corrupt system of things where Christians have to live and conduct themselves within the bounds of Christian teaching, we must avoid developing the thinking and viewpoint of those who advocate wrong conduct. Yes,

in order to promote family unity, both husband and wife must act within the bounds of godly thinking, based on the principles of God's Word. This can result in lasting happiness in the family circle. It is also to be noted that the intimacy of the marriage bond is not to be used as a weapon against one's marriage partner for some selfish gain, or just in one's own interests. Each mate should consider the needs of the other in the marriage bond, even as Paul wrote. W 9/15 15-18a

Friday, August 4

You should gird up your hips, and you must rise up and speak to them everything that I myself command you.
—Jer. 1:17.

The Christian organization of Jehovah's Witnesses has recognized its obligation to herald to all mankind what Jehovah has declared in his Word. This resembles the responsibility that was laid upon Jeremiah, to whom God said the above. They publish and circulate Bibles and Bible literature that explains Jehovah's written Word in its entirety, that is to say, "everything that I myself command you." Jesus Christ, as a prophet greater than Jeremiah, outlined the main work for his disciples as recorded at Matthew 24:14 and 28:19, 20. Such work has been pushed clear around the globe. Men who oppose this divinely ordained work make themselves in actuality fighters against God. In doing so they are waging a losing battle. Desperately they think they will prevail against the small anointed Jeremiah class and their loyal companions. But we have Jehovah's Word for it that they never will prevail! W 12/15 21-25

Saturday, August 5

Let your utterance be always with graciousness, seasoned with salt, so as to know how you ought to give an answer to each one.—Col. 4:6.

Salts of an organic sort are very vital to our bodily health. There is a "salt" that is very vital to our spiritual health. In agreement with this are Paul's words. This makes us wonder how much of such "salt" seasoned the speech of Jesus' apostles when they tried to prevent a certain man from casting out demons, because he was not accompanying them, even as John reported. (Mark 9:38) This sounds as if John was expecting a word of commendation from Jesus. He may have felt he was protecting Jesus' right to authorize others to expel demons. From John's viewpoint, a person not thus authorized by Jesus had no right to use his powerful name in exorcising demons. But a selfish element comes to view in that John said they tried to prevent the man "because he was not accompanying us." He had not just Jesus but all twelve apostles in mind. In selfishly objecting, their speech was not seasoned with salt. W 8/15 1-4a

Sunday, August 6

What is Jehovah asking back from you but to exercise justice and to love kindness and to be modest in walking with your God?—Mic. 6:8.

What is really difficult about this requirement? Actually, God is pleased if we live as we were created naturally to live—as we *ought* to live—that is all. It is true that following this course in a world that has deviated from God's standards will bring opposition and difficulty. But the fact is that one who does so is freer in conscience,

has greater peace of mind and, in addition, possesses a purpose in life and a hope. In view of our imperfection, it may seem difficult for us to follow Bible principles and to produce their good fruitage. True, imperfect persons make many mistakes, some serious, but Christ's propitiatory sacrifice was given for this very reason. It allows the repentant Christian to approach God to receive forgiveness, and God's spirit helps the Christian to make over his personality—to change his ways to conform to Jehovah God's ways.—1 John 2:1, 2. W 10/15 5, 6

Monday, August 7

An answer, when mild, turns away rage, but a word causing pain makes anger to come up.—Prov. 15:1.

Jesus, though a perfect man and with inspired counsel, was "mild-tempered and lowly in heart." (Matt. 11:29) We do well to copy him. True, it is difficult to reason with those whose tempers are hot. Jesus used illustrations, and today these may be used to outflank emotions and help one to see matters objectively. Feelings are important. The one counseling should be aware of his own feelings as well as those of the one to whom he is talking. If he is motivated by a feeling of self-righteousness, he may be unnecessarily quick to lecture others for minor slips. These feelings will be sensed and resented by the one being talked to, and if he shows a bad attitude, it may be the fault of the counselor more than the counsel itself. Brotherly love and compassion are also felt when these are exercised. The pain of correction can be lessened by one's showing empathy and understanding. Such action lets others retain their dignity and self-respect. W 12/1 5-9a

Tuesday, August 8

Now in a large house there are vessels not only . . . for an honorable purpose but others for a purpose lacking honor. If, therefore, anyone keeps clear of the latter ones, he will be a vessel for an honorable purpose.—2 Tim. 2:20, 21.

Accordingly, we have the responsibility to keep clear of those whose conduct is open to serious question. We certainly are under no obligation to invite to our social gatherings persons who are given to excesses of one kind or another. Instead of being encouraged to make needed changes, they might well conclude that their unhealthful words and actions are acceptable to the Christian congregation. At any time that we enjoy companionship with one another, we should ask ourselves the question, Is the occasion really bringing praise to Jehovah God? (1 Cor. 10:31) Usually upbuilding association can be enjoyed by all when social gatherings are kept to a reasonable size, when care is exercised regarding who is invited and the Christian host conscientiously assumes full responsibility for what takes place. W 9/1 17, 18

Wednesday, August 9

You yourself produced my kidneys . . . I shall laud you because in a fear-inspiring way I am wonderfully made.—Ps. 139:13, 14.

Well, now, why did King David specially mention the kidneys? It was in order to make his point. He was magnifying the depth of penetration on the part of God's spirit and visual powers, reaching as far down as into Sheol, the common grave of mankind. God can also peer down deep into the human body, as far down as the

kidneys, these being below the heart and the diaphragm and toward the base of the spine. And when God created the embryo and kept it screened off in the belly of David's mother, he could see down to the location for those deep-seated organs. Nothing blocked his visual powers or the range of his creative spirit. Indicating the deep location of these sensitive organs, the greatly afflicted Job said: "My kidneys have failed deep within me." (Job 19:27) Thus very anciently the kidneys were associated with our well-being, not only physically but also spiritually. W 11/1 2, 4a

Thursday, August 10

He that presides, let him do it in real earnest.—Rom. 12:8.

Yes, this is the attitude that each one that presides should cultivate so as to fulfill properly his responsibility of instructing, enlightening, encouraging or helping his brothers. To be earnest means not only to be sincere but to be *intent* about what one is doing. For example, the one caring for the Theocratic School must take an interest in each student, giving attention to that one's particular needs. Why? Because he wants the students to progress. Some are slow or timid; others lack education or good reading ability, or they have other problems. By doing his work in real earnest he will see advancement in the students as they respond to counsel and direction, both in their comments at meetings and in more effective field service. Of course, this principle applies to each one that presides, be it a ministerial servant conducting a book study or a father conducting a family study. W 3/1 5, 6a

Friday, August 11

You husbands, . . . [assign] them honor as to a weaker vessel, the feminine one, . . . in order for your prayers not to be hindered.—1 Pet. 3:7.

God describes a man's wife as his partner in the marriage covenant. Christian husbands cannot honor the marriage arrangement without honoring their marriage partner, even as the apostle Peter counsels. Not only by tender dealings will the Christian husband honor such feminine partner, but he will do so especially in loyalty to the marital union they share. He should seek always to preserve it as a sacred responsibility. If failing to show his wife due gentleness and empathy would hinder his prayers, how much more so would his indulging in some degree of disloyalty to his mate, showing undue interest in someone outside the union. Not showing proper honor to his wife means dishonoring the marriage arrangement and its Maker. But the husband honoring the arrangement will love his wife as his own body, being willing even to give his life on her behalf.—Eph. 5:25, 28-33. W 3/15 5

Saturday, August 12

See, I have commissioned you this day to be over the nations and over the kingdoms, in order to uproot and to pull down and to destroy and to tear down.—Jer. 1:10.

The Jeremiah class of our time are peaceful, orderly, law-abiding citizens. In what sense, then, are they "over the nations and over the kingdoms"? Well, they are given a position that comes from a source higher than the worldly nations and kingdoms. For this reason they are authorized to make pronouncements world wide. With au-

thority from the Most High God and in the language of his Bible, they merely declare that these nations and kingdoms will be uprooted from their entrenched places, pulled down, torn down and destroyed at God's due time and by his chosen means. It is as if the Jeremiah class were doing the uprooting, pulling down, tearing down and destroying, for what God's Word tells this class to declare He himself will fulfill. In that way God shows himself to be "King of the nations." (Jer. 10:7) Of course, the "great crowd" of "other sheep" have a share in this work. W 12/15 17-19a

Sunday, August 13

Why is it that you make me see what is hurtful, and you keep looking upon mere trouble? . . . Therefore law grows numb, and justice never goes forth.—Hab. 1:3, 4.

Though Jeremiah suffered much evil at the hands of his countrymen, he did not become embittered toward them. Thus, after King Zedekiah had turned him over to the princes who were seeking his life, the prophet showed concern for Zedekiah by pleading with him. (Jer. 38:20) Yes, what patience, what love, he displayed toward his people! Moreover, he and the other faithful prophets keenly sensed the terrible injustices and oppression that were being carried on in the land. They longed for relief, as can be seen from what Habakkuk was moved to exclaim. Nevertheless, the faithful prophets did not allow their personal desires for relief to cause them to become impatient with Jehovah or to stop proclaiming his message. As long as God was exercising patience they were willing to bear reproach as they proclaimed his message. W 2/1 12-14

Monday, August 14

On account of [Christ] I have taken the loss of all things and I consider them as a lot of refuse.—Phil. 3:8.

The wisdom of this attitude of Paul can be seen by the sadness, disappointment and aggravation that come to those who become too attached to material things, and who lose them. You may have a beautiful home today, but what assurance is there that you will have it tomorrow? You may not even live that long. (Luke 12:16-21) Even now, many who have gone heavily in debt for a home find that in economic hard times they cannot meet the payments and are forced to give up the house. Also, each year thousands of homes are destroyed or damaged by fire, by floods or by storms. And what about the emotional cost to those who center their lives on these possessions? Too, in many parts of the world there have been wars and other acts of violence that have destroyed homes without hope of compensation. A person who keeps his wants to a reasonable minimum, and who is willing to settle for less materially, does not have much to lose. W 4/1 8-10a

Tuesday, August 15

Out of the heart's abundance [the] mouth speaks.—Luke 6:45.

In teaching, we should want to reach the heart of the learner. If his heart is reached he will be moved to take action. Yes, when a person's heart is reached with the good news, he will be stirred to tell others about it. But will he be able to show them what he has learned from God's Word? He will be if he has been taught how to use the Scriptures. A fine opportunity to teach a Bible student to

do this is when you are reviewing with him what he has learned. For example, you may ask him to show you from the Bible what it says about a certain point and have him explain it. Something similar may be done at the congregation book study, further helping interested ones and providing a fine example for all when they are conducting home Bible studies. Once the individual becomes a baptized disciple of Jesus Christ, your responsibility toward him has not ended. He still is a spiritual babe and needs assistance to grow to maturity. W 5/1 16, 17a

Wednesday, August 16

You, fathers, do not be irritating your children, but go on bringing them up in the discipline and mental-regulating of Jehovah.—Eph. 6:4.

Consider how headship applies in the raising of children in the family. Do you as a husband leave all the disciplining of your children to your wife? When the children do well, are they *your* children, and when they do not do so well, are they *her* children? If it is a united effort that is being put forth in the rearing of the children, how much more this adds to true happiness and joy in the family arrangement! The apostle Paul wrote this to the Ephesians: "Children, be obedient to your parents in union with the Lord, for this is righteous." (Eph. 6:1) You will note here that the command is to obey parents, not just one of the parents. And the above advice to the Ephesians in *The New Testament in Modern English* reads: "Fathers, don't overcorrect your children or make it difficult for them to obey the commandment." W 9/15 10

Thursday, August 17

When you catch sight of the disgusting thing that causes desolation . . . standing in a holy place, . . . then let those in Judea begin fleeing to the mountains.—Matt. 24:15, 16.

Faith no less than that of first-century Christians is shown today by those having implicit confidence in God's Word. We have seen how the churches of Christendom hailed the League of Nations as "the political expression of the Kingdom of God on earth," and now we see the United Nations being idolized as man's 'last hope of peace.' We see radical elements of the U.N. teaming up in readiness to invade Christendom's realm of operation and supposed rights, her "holy place." There it is, the United Nations, acting in defiance of earth's rightful Ruler, the Lord Jesus Christ, and poised also to stand in the place that Christendom considers "holy"! Yes, indeed, the U.N. is the modern-day "disgusting thing that causes desolation" to Christendom in the coming great tribulation. Having confidence in Jehovah, we have acted on Jesus' words. *W 1/15 27*

Friday, August 18

You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole mind and with your whole strength.—Mark 12:30.

Adam suffered for his willful sin against God. To all his offspring, he bequeathed the bad heart inclination. All of us have it today. (Gen. 8:21) This explains why the inclination of the heart of mankind is bad from their youth up. There is a clear distinction between the heart and mind even as is seen from Jesus' words. The mind

is, of course, that faculty of the brain with which we gather information, sort it out, sum it up and reach a conclusion. As for the heart, it is that muscular organ of the body that pumps the blood entering it and keeps the blood circulating through the whole body, including the brain. It is affected not merely by the physical condition of the body but also by sensations and emotions. In view of its propulsive, moving power, it is appropriately viewed as the seat of motivation.—Ex. 35:21, 26. *W 11/1 13, 15-17*

Saturday, August 19

Jehovah the God of their forefathers kept sending against them by means of his messengers, sending again and again . . . But they were . . . despising his words . . . until there was no healing.—2 Chron. 36:15, 16.

Because Jehovah has kept awake during all these decades during the time of the end, he has continued sending forth the Jeremiah class, who are now assisted by the "great crowd" of "other sheep," to serve notice upon the nations and kingdoms even as he sent his prophets to the nation of Israel in ancient times. As the time for Jehovah's executing of judgment upon the nations and kingdoms gets ever closer, the situation becomes ever more urgent for him to see that such warning notice is served world wide, especially for the benefit of individuals who must take a personal stand. Keeping in mind that Jehovah is as awake as ever and will be ready on time we should also keep awake to the increasing urgency of our message. We should keep ourselves awake by steady activity in widely proclaiming it. *W 12/15 5b*

Sunday, August 20

Happy is the one that stays awake and keeps his outer garments, that he may not walk naked and people look upon his shamefulness.—Rev. 16:15.

With Jehovah's blessing, the work of his self-sacrificing Witnesses has borne marvelous fruitage, and the organization has expanded accordingly. There are those who have expended themselves in pioneering difficult territories, in carrying the Kingdom message into new cities and lands, and in serving underground for decades in countries where Jehovah's Witnesses are banned. As all of us continue to serve with zeal, we can be confident that fine fruitage will be produced right through to the time when Jehovah's day brings destruction on this wicked world. The slave class will continue to encourage all lovers of truth to put on, and keep on, garments that identify them as those who serve God with zeal and in true righteousness and loyalty. Such zealous, loyal service will keep us in the place of spiritual security now, and result in our being saved from destruction at Har-Magedon. *W 1/1 20, 21*

Monday, August 21

They are no part of the world, just as I am no part of the world.—John 17:16.

The hope of mankind is in the kingdom of God, for it will bring in a new and righteous system of things that will really be "pretty." It will reestablish the garden of God, a literal Edenic paradise, on the earth and robe the whole earth with its glory and beauty. Partnership with this doomed world of ungodly people and its system of things is not the thing for us to hold on to in this des-

perate state of world affairs. If we desire to share in the everlasting blessings that the King Jesus Christ has to bestow on his subjects, we must be just as he said that he and his apostles were. Being thus apart from it, we shall not share the destruction of this "world of ungodly people." (2 Pet. 2:5; 3:6) We shall be preserved for enjoying an everlasting dwelling beneath the righteous new system of things, in which, not Pharaoh and his crowd, but Jesus Christ and his joint heirs will serve as kings and priests of God for mankind's blessing. *W 5/15 39, 40a*

Tuesday, August 22

Do not meddle with these men, but let them alone; . . . otherwise, you may perhaps be found fighters actually against God.—Acts 5:38, 39.

To fighters against God it doubtless seems presumptuous for a small organization on earth to consider itself the organization over which Jehovah God has put his special protection in order to deliver it from fighters against Him. But to what conclusions should actual experiences of that organization lead it? The evidence of a hundred years ought to lead it to the right conclusion as to the identity of the organization that God has chosen and strengthened to withstand worldwide attacks till now. This small organization of dedicated persons stepped onto the stage of modern affairs in God's name. All the evidence to date indicates that Jehovah God has chosen to recognize and accept this organization and that he has not cast it off. The test of time has furnished proof to this fact. To their own chagrin these fighters against God are losing their battle, even as Gamaliel pointed out. *W 12/15 1, 2*

Wednesday, August 23

Indeed, everything that is not out of faith is sin.

—Rom. 14:23.

It is not an easy thing to make right decisions on all questions that we face in life. "We all stumble many times," for which reason, James says, "not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, knowing that we shall receive heavier judgment." (Jas. 3:1, 2) If we expand our giving of advice to others, we multiply our responsibility for the outcome. Even if we try to counsel altogether according to the Bible, we must be sure that we have the right understanding, not mere conjecture. To have faith on a matter, which includes making a personal decision, we have to gain accurate knowledge from the Bible and have firm evidence based on facts. If we do not have accurate knowledge of God's will, we could lead another into a bad course. Some Christians, due to a lack of knowledge on a certain problem or question in life, do have weaknesses in their faith. James counsels Christians to get the required wisdom by praying to God. —Jas. 1:2, 5. W 12/1 1-4

Thursday, August 24

The works of the flesh [include] . . . practice of spiritism . . . As to these things I am forewarning you, . . . that those who practice such things will not inherit God's kingdom.—Gal. 5:19-21.

Today there is much perplexity, and people, not knowing which way to turn, are attracted to many sources such as spiritism, fortune-telling, and the like that claim to give guidance. Will looking to such give one spiritual guidance? No, rather, the Bible classes spiritism among the "works of the

flesh" because it gratifies, not spiritual, but fleshly desires. Since spiritism is condemned by God, it becomes obvious that a person appealing to spiritism for knowledge or help is not appealing to God. (Deut. 18:9-12) He is looking to a source opposed to God, and the Bible identifies that source for us as "the table of demons." (1 Cor. 10:21) So, when anyone bypasses God's Word and looks to these things rather than to God to guide him in a problem of life, he is disavowing God and is falling into the hands of God's worst enemies. —Eph. 6:11, 12. W 10/15 8-10a

Friday, August 25

If any man is reaching out for an office of overseer, he is desirous of a fine work.

—1 Tim. 3:1.

Those who are ministerial servants and elders in the true sense of the word are thought of by their brothers as humble slaves who are willing and eager to give of themselves wholeheartedly in helping them. (Acts 20:25-35) It is because they are working hard in the advancement of spiritual interests that the congregation has high regard, appreciation and love for such servants and elders. (1 Thess. 5:12, 13) They are men who are living up to the trust conferred upon them by reason of their appointment. Especially should this be true of traveling elders. The congregations rightly expect them to be spiritual men of outstanding humility. (Luke 12:48) Obviously, men who want prominence and position, rather than to do the work of a slave, are not qualified to be servants or elders. They are not seeking the "fine work" associated with being an overseer. W 6/1 16, 17a

Saturday, August 26

Happy are the merciful . . . Happy are the peaceable.

—Matt. 5:7, 9.

Is the pursuit of material things the way to find lasting happiness, as many think? If not, how can happiness be found? These questions are not difficult to answer when we realize that abiding happiness is not primarily dependent upon physical circumstances. In Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, his happinesses did not even mention material possessions. Elusive as some believe happiness to be, it is not far away, because it is to be found closely associated with the pure worship of the Creator, Jehovah God. He is called the "happy God" and, since he created man in his image, it follows that he wants us to be happy as well. (1 Tim. 1:11; Gen. 1:27) He makes it easily possible to find out what his purpose is for us, and what we should do. The apostle Paul told a group of Athenian philosophers that God created man and that he desires that men "grope for him and really find him, although, in fact, he is not far off from each one of us."—Acts 17:26, 27. W 8/1 1-3a

Sunday, August 27

Blessed is the able-bodied man who puts his trust in Jehovah, and whose confidence Jehovah has become.—Jer. 17:7.

As human experience has shown, it is folly to trust man to solve the huge problems of the human family. It is Jehovah God alone, the Almighty Creator, who has the remedy. So when it comes to such a vital matter as looking to someone for guidance during these critical times, it is to Jehovah that we need to turn. Would you trust the scribbles of an infant as a map for a dan-

gerous journey? Or would you depend upon the directions of an expert thoroughly familiar with the route? For our journey through these dangerous last days and in our quest for eternal life in God's new order, human wisdom is totally unreliable as a guide. That is why the Bible says the above. Jehovah's works, backed up by his wisdom and power, inspire in us confidence. When we see what he already has done and is capable of doing, our appreciation of his ability to direct our lives and to fashion a righteous new order is enhanced. W 7/15 12, 13

Monday, August 28

Distress and grief I kept finding.—Ps. 116:3.

At one time or another, humans experience grief. Many are its causes, one of which is the death of a loved one. Abraham wept due to the death of his beloved wife Sarah. (Gen. 23:2) However, "a tight grip on the word of life" helps the bereaved one to endure grief. Naturally, if a person thinks longingly on past joys shared with the deceased, grief may increase. So, how much better it is to think of the future! We know that billions of human dead will be raised to life. (Acts 24:15) Of course, God determines who is to be resurrected, and a faithful Christian who gains life in the future earthly paradise can entertain the hope of seeing again another loyal servant of Jehovah who died. Yes, just think how happy inhabitants of God's new order will be when they welcome back the resurrected dead! Above all, at the time of bereavement, Christians need to draw close to Jehovah in prayer, for he is "the . . . God of all comfort."—2 Cor. 1:3. W 6/15 16-19a

Tuesday, August 29

Every first day of the week let each of you at his own house set something aside in store as he may be prospering.

—1 Cor. 16:2.

Use of "unrighteous riches" for the advancement of spiritual interests and to help needy persons is basic to one's being a Christian. (Luke 16:9) Whether having much or little, all have the privilege of contributing something. Note, for example, what the apostle Paul recommended to the Corinthians. In harmony with this inspired admonition, a person may wish to set something aside early in the week that he could contribute. The amount, of course, will vary considerably with individuals, but this is not the all-important thing. The truly vital aspect is the willingness, the eagerness, to make a contribution. Paul put it this way: "If the readiness is there first, it is especially acceptable according to what a person has, not according to what a person does not have." (2 Cor. 8:12) This readiness to give according to one's means is what counts with Jehovah God and with his Son.—Mark 12:42-44. W 9/1 17, 18a

Wednesday, August 30

My son, if your heart has become wise, my heart will rejoice, even mine. And my kidneys will exult when your lips speak uprightness.

—Prov. 23:15, 16.

What does Jehovah's probing of our "kidneys" reveal to him today? A spiritually healthy state, we hope, as regards what we truly are as personalities. Then we shall prove that we have been acting wisely, winning God's approval. On our account Jehovah will feel pleasure deep within himself. Speaking of himself as a father who has

kidneys, God says the above to us. Ah, then, with a view to making our heavenly Father exult, we will put our hearts and our kidneys into our sacred service to Him. In being his worshipers we will be genuine down to the very depths of ourselves. Then we shall have no secret sins to hide from him. (Ps. 19:13, 14) We shall not dread his final examination of us. On such a faultless basis, we shall pass Jehovah's examination of our kidneys with everlasting credits to ourselves. Exultingly he will issue to us a "clean bill of health." W 11/1 27, 28a

Thursday, August 31

Happy is that slave, if his master on arriving finds him doing so! I tell you truthfully, He will appoint him over all his belongings.

—Luke 12:43, 44.

This "slave" was prefigured by ancient Jeremiah. This slave, however, could not be an individual Christian man, for, in such a case, he would have to be more than nineteen hundred years old by now. The "slave" must be the entire Christian congregation made up of the 144,000 disciples who have been begotten by God's spirit to become joint heirs with Jesus Christ in his heavenly kingdom. This "slave" class had its start on the festival day of Pentecost in the year 33 C.E. The original part of the "slave" class came into existence when the glorified Jesus Christ was used to pour out the holy spirit upon the waiting disciples (about 120 of them) assembled in Jerusalem. Right after that, three thousand truth-hungry Jews and proselytes were fed with spiritual food at that proper time and became baptized, spirit-begotten Christians, domestics of the Master Jesus Christ. W 12/15 9, 11, 12

Friday, September 1

Do not severely criticize an older man. To the contrary, entreat him as a father, younger men as brothers.

—1 Tim. 5:1.

Corporations pay thousands of dollars to send their executives to discussion groups for training on how to counsel others and cope with confrontations. Yet the really worthwhile techniques were long ago outlined in the Bible, and cost nothing. In the above, Paul said entreat, not browbeat. The purpose is to restore a brother, not drive him away. Giving advice that has been asked for is a delicate business; giving it without invitation requires even more sensitivity. Advice unrequested tends to come across as criticism, and no one likes to be criticized. One's first reaction is self-defense, even if one suspects that the criticism is deserved. To counsel without giving offense requires patience and the ability to teach. Christ Jesus, the Wonderful Counselor, exemplified counseling gently when the apostles argued about which one was the greatest. He made his point by illustration and contrast. W 12/1 2-5a

Saturday, September 2

As newborn infants, form a longing for the unadulterated milk belonging to the word, that through it you may grow to salvation, provided you have tasted that the Lord is kind.—1 Pet. 2:2, 3.

We can share the "word" with those who are like "newborn infants," that they may grow to salvation and hold onto it as mature Christians. Consequently, those who show themselves accessible, willing to receive one of such young children on the basis of Christ's name, show that they themselves are childlike. Their

being so is essential to their having any part in the Kingdom. Just as in a natural family, when the members of a congregation are humble in mind and attitude like young children, the relationship of each one to the other takes on a peaceful quality. If we are willing and ready to serve in even the lowliest of tasks, just so we can serve and comfort others, it makes for the upbuilding of the entire congregation and moves it to positive works of goodness. Thus keeping peace between one another results in brotherly unity. W 8/15 20-22

Sunday, September 3

Bless Jehovah, O my soul, and do not forget all his doings, him who is forgiving all your error, who is healing all your maladies, who is reclaiming your life from the very pit.

—Ps. 103:2-4.

Likely we know of many sins that we committed for which we needed forgiveness, not to mention numerous sins that we do not recall. It should touch our heart to think: Jehovah God in his mercy and love is willing to forgive us. That is a display of his kindness toward us as a result of our accepting Christ's sacrifice and exercising faith. How should we feel in response to Jehovah's forgiving us the sins that stained us in the past—a marvelous display of God's undeserved kindness? Even as the psalmist David expressed in the above words. There is no question but that we have reason to thank and praise Jehovah God for such undeserved kindness. However, since we have become part of his people, his Christian worshipers, there are many ways that he has demonstrated loyalty to us, coming to our aid with his marvelous loving-kindness. W 2/15 12, 13

Monday, September 4

This rebuke given by the majority is sufficient for such a man, so that, on the contrary now, you should kindly forgive and comfort him.

—2 Cor. 2:6, 7.

Elders are not 'father confessors' who have been authorized to forgive all the sins that members of the congregation may commit. It is Jehovah who forgives the sins of repentant ones, doing so on the basis of Christ's sacrifice. Therefore, a person's being forgiven by Jehovah is not dependent upon his confessing his sins to the elders. However, by serious transgression, a person can also sin against the congregation, because gross wrongdoing can bring reproach and trouble upon the congregation with which the wayward one is associated. Hence, elders representing the congregation should make sure that the individual is genuinely repentant before extending forgiveness to him. That the congregation can forgive or withhold forgiveness in certain cases is evident from what Paul said about accepting a repentant disfellowshipped man back into their midst. W 11/15 1, 2a

Tuesday, September 5

You must inculcate them in your son and speak of them when you sit in your house and when you walk on the road and when you lie down and when you get up.

—Deut. 6:7.

It is true that some young ones do not respond from the heart to the truth of God's Word. As was the case with Cain, Esau and others, some children refuse to respond to the truth. There are times when parents truly have done everything possible to train up their children in the ways of righteousness,

and still these become rebellious and refuse to be obedient children of God. In such circumstances the words of Proverbs 17:21 and 25 are significant: "The father of a senseless child does not rejoice. A stupid son is a vexation to his father and a bitterness to her that gave him birth." How vital, therefore, that parents do everything in their power to give their children the good start in life that they deserve! This they can do by following the Bible's counsel above on rearing their offspring. It is an integral part of working together for family unity. W 9/15 8a

Wednesday, September 6

Let marriage be honorable among all, and the marriage bed be without defilement.

—Heb. 13:4.

Repayment to Caesar for the advantages his legal recognition provides as to marriage does not mean that the Christian loses sight of the fact that Caesar's authority in marriage is only relative. God is not bound by Caesar's decisions and may disapprove where Caesar approves, or accept where Caesar rejects. (Matt. 22:21) The Christian should rightly give conscientious consideration to Caesar's marriage and divorce provisions but will always give the greatest consideration to the Supreme Authority, Jehovah God. (Acts 4:19) This will assure God's approval and blessing. Thus the Christian appreciates that, even though Caesar's rulings of themselves are not what finally determine the validity of his marriage in God's eyes, this does not thereby exempt him from the Scriptural injunction above. He is obligated to do conscientiously whatever he can to have his marriage honored by all. W 3/15 21, 22a

Thursday, September 7

Do not be misled: God is not one to be mocked. For whatever a man is sowing, this he will also reap.—Gal. 6:7.

A farmer cannot sow seeds from plants that are weeds and hope to reap a crop of wheat. Thus, if we sow trust in the material benefits that this system now offers, we will reap disappointment when it goes off into destruction. If we sow trust in God, we will reap the rewards he gives, both now and in his new order. The course of practical wisdom today is to have the attitude that Paul expressed at Philippians 3:8, 10, 11. Even if doing the will of God had meant the loss of everything, including his life, Paul would not have drawn back. He had the sure hope of the resurrection. In fact, he looked forward to the "earlier resurrection from the dead." What really mattered to Paul was not the wealth or position he formerly had. He was willing to let go of these things for what really counted—doing Jehovah God's will and gaining his favor and blessing. Do you have the same mental attitude that Paul had about these things? W 4/1 6, 7a

Friday, September 8

During all their distress it was distressing to him.—Isa. 63:9.

Jehovah God is a God of justice. (Deut. 32:4) Not only does he himself act justly at all times, but he is concerned with justice holding sway throughout his dominions. Certainly he is not less interested in the lot of those suffering injustices than was Job, who said of himself: "I would rescue the afflicted one crying for help, and the fatherless boy and anyone that had no helper." (Job 29:12) God will not for all time tol-

erate injustices. Moreover, do we not read of Jehovah that "God is love"? (1 John 4:8; see also John 3:16.) Great as Jehovah God is, he has empathy; he is able to put himself in the shoes, as it were, of his lowly, weak earthly creatures. Bearing this out are the words of the prophet Isaiah. God's justice and love assure us that he will act in behalf of the oppressed of humankind. And he has the means to do it, even as can be seen from the infinite power and wisdom he displayed in creating the vast universe. W 4/15 12-14

Saturday, September 9

God is a God, not of disorder, but of peace.—1 Cor. 14:33.

The command of Jesus Christ for his followers to preach and to make disciples is still vitally urgent. This is clear from his assurance at Matthew 28:20. Hence, many grand opportunities for service are still to be enjoyed today as this good news of the Kingdom continues to be preached vigorously from door to door. Also, due to the growth of the congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses world wide, there is a great need for capable and willing workers to build up fellow believers and to render other vital services for the advancement of spiritual interests. Additionally, people everywhere need to hear the good news so that they can take a stand for it or against it before the execution of God's righteous judgment upon the present ungodly world. To accomplish all that is necessary in an orderly way, obviously there must be some centralized, coordinated direction. Even as there was such in the first century, so we find the same is true today. W 6/1 1, 2a

Sunday, September 10

Do not be afraid because of their faces, for "I am with you to deliver you."—Jer. 1:8.

It takes courage for those of the Jeremiah class, with whom the "great crowd" is associated, to fulfill this commission, for their message is unpopular world wide. Like Jeremiah they have to declare the destruction of all worldly nations. (Jer. 25:15-30) So they cannot imbibe the nationalistic spirit of modern times. Kings and rulers of today consider the message of the Jeremiah class to be seditious, disloyal, damaging to the morale of their subjects and weakening to the defense forces of their lands. So they threaten these proclaimers of Jehovah's prophetic message to the modern world. In many cases they back up their threats with suppression of the Jeremiah class, and with various forms of punishment try to deter this class. So it becomes necessary to imitate Jeremiah and obey Jehovah as "King of the nations" rather than men. (Jer. 10:7) That is what Christ's apostles of the first century did.—Acts 4:19; 5:29. *W 12/15 20a*

Monday, September 11

What God has yoked together let no man put apart.
—Matt. 19:6.

Since God united the first man and woman in marriage, the majority of the human family have chosen to marry rather than to remain single. Among God's servants of ancient times, too, it was the exception to remain single. When, in fulfillment of her father's vow, Jephthah's daughter had to forfeit the right to marry, this initially resulted in sadness. (Judg. 11:38) Yes, not singleness, but marriage and parenthood were

viewed as the superior blessings. Not until some 4,000 years after the first marriage was singleness pointed to as something better for certain men and women. At that time a new era, the Christian era, had its start. The changes that this brought about also affected the view of singleness and marriage that had long existed. Jesus made it clear that, among his disciples, God's original standard for marriage would be restored. Polygamy, and divorce on grounds other than marital unfaithfulness, would be a thing of the past. *W 5/1 1, 2*

Tuesday, September 12

My own possession has proved agreeable to me. I shall bless Jehovah, who has given me advice. Really, during the nights my kidneys have corrected me.—Ps. 16:6, 7.

During the nights when the psalmist David had wakeful hours upon his bed, the correction by his kidneys could take place, for he was all alone with his thoughts, and God's spirit could stir up the "advice" that Jehovah had given him during the day. In this way David got a good look at himself, for just what he was. Thus, just as the heart represents the seat of motivation and appreciation, the kidneys represent the seat of something personal. Of what? Of one's genuine personality. One's underlying personality affects one's motivation. Peering at that seat of personality, God sees what a person really is in his basic reactions. So the kidneys do affect the heart, even figuratively speaking. By taking the advice of Jehovah to ourselves and sincerely applying it to ourselves as personalities, we benefit our spiritual health. We are purified to be the real thing. *W 11/1 16, 17a*

Wednesday, September 13

"If you men have judged me to be faithful to Jehovah, enter into my house and stay." And she just made us come.
—Acts 16:15.

The fine spirit displayed by many of those associated with the early Christian congregation furnishes an excellent example for us today. For instance, among the first persons to embrace Christianity in Europe were Lydia and her household, residents of Philippi. Lydia accepted the good news preached by Paul, was baptized, and immediately displayed hospitable qualities. Yes, 'the Lord was with the spirit shown' by those Philipians, even as we can see from Philippians 1:3-5. The Jew Aquila and his wife Priscilla also had a fine spirit. Banished from Rome by the decree of Emperor Claudius against the Jews (50 C.E.), they became residents of Corinth. Some months later, Paul arrived there and was received into their home. In fact, all three worked together making tents. Undoubtedly, Aquila and Priscilla also helped Paul to build up the new congregation in Corinth.—Acts 18:1-11. *W 6/15 14, 15*

Thursday, September 14

Wives, be in subjection to your own husbands, in order that, if any are not obedient to the word, they may be won without a word through the [chaste] conduct of their wives.—1 Pet. 3:1, 2.

An unbelieving husband should be able to see that his wife is cooperative in all matters that do not infringe on her worship. From the fine way in which she conducts herself, he should be able to see that her faith is a strong force for good. Her disposition, words and actions should give no basis for valid criticism.

Through having before him a living example of praiseworthy conduct, an unbelieving husband may in time become a believer. A wife's thus winning her husband without a word, of course, does not imply that she would never speak to him about spiritual matters. However, she should avoid arguments and persistent nagging discussions about true worship. Similarly, young persons going to school can, by means of good conduct, make the good news more attractive to teachers as well as to other students.—Titus 2:6-8. *W 7/1 14, 15*

Friday, September 15

All creation keeps on groaning together and being in pain together until now.
—Rom. 8:22.

From mankind's very beginning Jehovah demonstrated the trustworthiness of his promises and that his warnings are to be heeded. An example is what happened to our first parents, Adam and Eve. They misused the fine gift of free will that God had given them. In fact, Eve believed that independence from God's rule would actually improve matters, enabling her to "be like God." (Gen. 3:5) But was that the case? No, for Jehovah already had warned that turning away from his rule would be certain to result in misery and death. Jehovah knew that humans were not created with the ability to be successful, independent of their Creator. His words to our first parents certainly proved true. (Rom. 5:12) When they moved out from under God's direction they also lost contact with the sustaining Source of life. Paul's words describe the sad result of not trusting God's word. May we ever have confidence in it. *W 7/15 4, 5a*

Saturday, September 16

They will accumulate teachers for themselves to have their ears tickled.—2 Tim. 4:3.

We should take counsel that is supported by God's Word. When David was rebuked by the prophet Nathan, he responded: "I have sinned against Jehovah." (2 Sam. 12:13) The congregation at Corinth took Paul's counsel and cleared themselves of all blame. Those who counsel should exercise patience, allowing time for the one reproved to evaluate and absorb the admonitions. And when he complies, even if belatedly, he should be commended. However, sometimes people have decided to pursue a certain course of action and will go from one counselor to another until they find someone who agrees with them. In ancient Israel King Rehoboam went to older men for advice, but it did not suit him. He went to younger men, who told him what he wanted to hear. The results were disastrous: Ten tribes revolted from him and formed their own kingdom. (1 Ki. 12:1-20) Paul spoke of a time when people would search until they found counselors who would say just what they wanted to hear. W 12/1 32, 33a

Sunday, September 17

They will be certain to fight against you, but they will not prevail against you, for "I am with you," is the utterance of Jehovah, "to deliver you."—Jer. 1:19.

Jeremiah had to point out that God was justified in pouring out national calamity upon the Israelites for breaking their holy covenant with him. God knew that what he began commanding Jeremiah in 647 B.C.E. to speak to the inhabitants of the land of Judah would not please

the majority. So he warned Jeremiah by frankly telling him that the kings of the land, the princes, the priests and the people of Judah would fight against him. His very life would be threatened. So, what if Jehovah had not promised the young prophet that all these foes would not prevail against him? Would he have had the heart to carry on doggedly for forty years as Jehovah's "prophet to the nations" (Jer. 1:5) and finally see his vicious enemies go down in defeat? It is hard to think so! Jehovah's promise to Jeremiah applies to the Jeremiah class of today, with whom the "great crowd" is associated. W 12/15 12b

Monday, September 18

On this side of the river and on that side there were trees of life producing twelve crops of fruit, yielding their fruits each month. And the leaves of the trees were for the curing of the nations.—Rev. 22:2.

The rendering of sacred service to the Creator of all mankind is the greatest privilege anyone could possibly have. It not only brings happiness now, but opens up wonderful future prospects as well. The Bible speaks of a future heavenly scene, where 144,000 are rendering sacred service as kings and priests. (Rev. 14: 1, 3; 22:3-5) But what about others of mankind, those not called to the heavenly calling but who also render Jehovah God sacred service? Are they also referred to in this prophetic picture? Yes, they are, even as noted above. So persons showing faith in Jehovah God now, people of the "nations" who pass through the great tribulation, will have this prospect of enjoying the benefits of this river of water of life and the fruits of the trees of life that will bring healing. W 8/1 1-3

Tuesday, September 19

They kept silent, for on the road they had argued among themselves who is greater.

—Mark 9:34.

Evidently, on the road, the apostles had trailed behind their Leader, Jesus. Yet, in some way, he discerned that an argument had arisen among them, with some heated expression of that fact. They believed Jesus to be the Messiah, the prospective King of Israel. Along with their hopes of an early establishment of the Messianic kingdom, they had reason to think about their respective official positions with their Leader in that kingdom. In such a connection, the natural tendency of a person politically minded would be to aggrandize himself rather than his rival candidates. Similarly, the apostles began to compare themselves with one another. The discussion revolved around, not just who is best suited for this or that position, but who qualifies for the greatest position next to the Messiah himself. Jesus' counsel to keep peace among themselves is something to keep in mind at all times. —Mark 9:50. W 8/15 7, 8

Wednesday, September 20

I said to laughter: "Insanity!" and to rejoicing: "What is this doing?"—Eccl. 2:2.

Just what is King Solomon here drawing to our attention? His words make it clear that the avid pursuit of amusements cannot bring genuine and lasting happiness. He found that rejoicing or merriment just for its own sake was vanity, emptiness. This is so because in itself such "rejoicing" cannot produce anything truly worth while. Granted, amusements and laughter can aid a person to forget his problems temporar-

ily. But the problems will not go away but must still be faced after the period of amusement is over. Furthermore, when a person simply dismisses very serious matters with thoughtless laughter, he is not using good sense and may well irritate others. That is why his laughter can be called "insanity." As to the merriment that might be associated with the habitual joker, it does not really amount to anything of worth. As Solomon put it: "What is this doing?" Yes, what tangible and meaningful results does such merriment produce? W 9/1 7

Thursday, September 21

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.

—2 Pet. 3:9.

Jesus' perfect obedience to God proved and settled the issue of integrity forever. Some may count Jehovah God slow and uncaring. But Peter refutes this thought. From the apostle's words we see that God cares. His allowing time gives all of us opportunity to hear the truth. True, millions are born each month, and many have died. So Peter's words point out that God knows what is best, not just for the generation now alive, but for all, the living and those to be resurrected. And he knows the exact time to intervene in human affairs and to bring the present system of things to a conclusion to make way for the thousand-year reign of Christ, during which the entire world will be judged "in righteousness." (Acts 17:31) Thus actually *all* who want to do right can be saved to everlasting life. W 10/1 13-15a

Friday, September 22

He who searches the hearts knows what the meaning of the spirit is.—Rom. 8:27.

From the start to the finish God's Word has much to say about the heart, speaking about it more than eight hundred times. Seeing that the Creator has specialized on the heart to such an extent, we can be sure that he knows his subject. Better than any human medical specialist of today, He can advise us as to just what is needed to bring our hearts to the condition where they will serve us for life eternal. King David applied to him for needed examinations. That is why David could say to him: "You have examined my heart, you have made inspection." (Ps. 17:3) We can come to this finest of heart specialists with the assurance that he thoroughly understands our case even though we may not be able to describe it accurately in our own words, even as noted above. Yes, Jehovah gets the sense of what we want to express to him verbally when we come to him for examination and inspection. If we have been leading a clean life we have nothing to fear.—Ps. 139:23. *W 11/1 7, 8*

Saturday, September 23

I have made you today a fortified city and an iron pillar and copper walls against all the land.—Jer. 1:18.

All the work of the Jeremiah class is not yet over. Those of this class must keep their hips girded and stay active on their feet until their commissioned work is completed. All the "great crowd" of Christians who actively support the Jeremiah class must keep working with them. The Jeremiah class still needs to stand immovable like an

"iron pillar" and a "fortified city" with "copper walls." This is what Jeremiah of old did. Jesus Christ was not one whit behind Jeremiah in declaring the impending destruction of the Jerusalem of his day, which destruction came 676 years after the Jerusalem of Jeremiah's day perished. As anointed followers of Jesus Christ the Jeremiah class of today must do the same thing, until they witness the destruction of the antitypical unfaithful Jerusalem and Judah of our times. Like Jesus they must declare not only the "acceptable time," but also the "day of vengeance of our God."—Isa. 61:1, 2; 2 Cor. 6:2. *W 12/15 15, 16b*

Sunday, September 24

About loving-kindness and judgment I will sing. To you, O Jehovah, I will make melody.—Ps. 101:1.

What if someone gave you a dish of sand with some tiny iron particles mixed in? It would be hard to pick out the iron specks. But you could easily collect them with a magnet. A heart that is full of gratitude to Jehovah is like that magnet. With such a heart, every day we can easily pick out numerous examples of God's kindness and generosity, more valuable than iron, more precious even than gold. Being alert to evidences of God's goodness will make it easy and natural to praise him and express thanks for these. Jehovah's creation that we see daily is full of things that can remind us of his kind provisions for mankind in general. As to delightful scents, do you recall the fragrance of certain flowers or the aroma of freshly cut hay or clover? When enjoying such things, is it not appropriate to utter thanks to Jehovah for such wonderful things to enjoy? *W 2/15 14, 15a*

Monday, September 25

Sadness in a godly way makes for repentance to salvation that is not to be regretted; but the sadness of the world produces death.—2 Cor. 7:10.

A wrongdoer should, of course, have feelings of sadness, remorse and regret as regards his sinful course. However, elders should keep in mind that not all sadness, remorse or regret is necessarily proof of genuine repentance, even as Paul shows. Hence, elders properly should seek insight as to what motivates the wrongdoer's sadness. Worldly sadness may stem simply from concern over the loss of esteem or of certain benefits, or from the prospect of undergoing discipline or shame. This is a sadness over the undesirable and hurtful results of the wrongdoing, or over the fact that the wrongdoing came to light. Though normal in themselves, if these feelings are the sole reasons for sadness, then the individual does not truly regret having committed the sin but is distressed about having been exposed. He is not really concerned about the reproach that his transgression has brought upon Jehovah God. *W 11/15 4, 5a*

Tuesday, September 26

Let fornication and uncleanness of every sort or greediness not even be mentioned among you, just as it befits holy people; neither shameful conduct.—Eph. 5:3, 4.

Moral uprightness and cleanness are indispensable to the way of the Christian. However, many people today say that the "new morality" is liberating people for a fuller life. But what is the fruitage of the "new morality"? Heartaches, broken families, diseases and death. Immorality cannot enter into

the way of life of any person without damaging his happiness. The apostle Paul at Romans 1:21-28 describes the effects of immorality, and the situation we have today is glaring proof of the truthfulness of what he said. Then the apostle went on to name the many crimes and degrading practices that we see prevalent all over the world today. (Rom. 1:29-32) In his letter to the Ephesians he counseled as above. Those who have followed his counsel to the best of their ability, seeking help from God, have found a far happier life by avoiding immorality and all other bad things. *W 10/15 6, 7a*

Wednesday, September 27

When there is no skillful direction, the people fall; but there is salvation in the multitude of counselors.—Prov. 11:14.

People who unite for some noble purpose or work usually have someone preside over their affairs. When this is done in a fine way, proper direction can be given to them, resulting in progress and getting things done. Otherwise, they will flounder and fall, even as noted in the proverb. As an organized people with a divine purpose and work, Jehovah's Witnesses appreciate receiving direction and counsel from faithful elders who preside over them. There are now over 40,000 congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses world wide. While each congregation has an appointed "presiding overseer," does he have the sole prerogative to preside? What about the other elders who make up the body of elders? All of them should recognize what Jehovah God's Word at 1 Timothy 5:17 enjoins upon them. *W 3/1 1, 2a*

Thursday, September 28

They received the word with the greatest eagerness of mind, carefully examining the Scriptures daily as to whether these things were so. Therefore many of them became believers.—Acts 17:11, 12.

The Pharisees used the tyranny of authority when officers sent out to arrest Jesus returned without him because they were so impressed with his teaching. (John 7:45-49) They did not use reason, but declared that only ignorant ones listened to him. When we advise others we should use reason and scriptures, not demanding compliance because of a position we might have. We should be like Paul, who did not use his position as an apostle to pressure people. Instead, he commended them for checking to see whether his teaching was based on the Bible. The Devil used Scripture when he tempted Jesus, and Jesus used scriptures to refute him. Both used scriptures. Satan misapplied them, but Jesus used them properly. We should never twist texts to serve our purpose, as Satan did. Make sure we are saying what God is saying! W 12/1 22-24a

Friday, September 29

The one whom people put in charge of much, they will demand more than usual of him.—Luke 12:48.

Often the matter of being willing to wait for what is desirable to take place puts our patience to a test. The question is: Will we be willing to wait patiently until the appropriate time? Perhaps you are a brother. Because of not being a ministerial servant, do you find it difficult to wait until such time as you have truly been "tested as to fitness"?

(1 Tim. 3:10) If you have been a ministerial servant for perhaps a year or so, do you feel that it is about time that consideration be given to recommending you as an elder? Or, are you willing to wait, using your time well in getting a deeper and better understanding of God's Word and proving yourself to be cooperative, dependable, considerate and fully devoted to Jehovah's service? Of course, it is commendable when brothers reach out for greater responsibility. (1 Tim. 3:1) Nevertheless, with responsibility comes greater accountability. W 2/1 14, 15a

Saturday, September 30

Examine me, O Jehovah, and put me to the test; refine my kidneys and my heart. For . . . I have walked in your truth.—Ps. 26:2, 3.

In David's case, walking in personal integrity and walking in God's truth went hand in hand. In our own case today, God's truth is also needed for us to walk on in integrity toward Him. Along with being examined and tested, David wanted his kidneys to be refined. He wanted Jehovah God to make a proof of him as a person with a fiery procedure such as a metal refiner would make when refining gold and silver. David was sure that, despite such a searching of him through and through, Jehovah would find no "dross" in him, no uncleanness, no spiritually diseased condition. Similarly, we honest integrity-keepers of today can ask God to probe us through and through. Why so? Because we are confident that, under such a thoroughgoing probing, no sinful "dross" would come to the surface to prove that deep within us we are adulterated, contaminated, worldly, lacking in Christian integrity. W 11/1 25, 26a

Sunday, October 1

To all those to whom I shall send you, you should go; and everything that I shall command you, you should speak.—Jer. 1:7.

The year 1919, the year of the Versailles Peace Treaty following World War I, marked a turning point for the anointed Jeremiah class. In no uncertain Bible terms they took up Jehovah's message of destruction for this system of things during God's approaching war of Har-Magedon. Certainly now, since more than fifty-eight years have passed since 1919, there is no time to lose, even as Jeremiah had only a limited time—forty years—in which to declare Jerusalem's impending destruction. There is, therefore, every reason for the Jeremiah class and their companions, the "great crowd" of "other sheep," to keep awake. Now, so many years after Jehovah commissioned the Jeremiah class, He is still awake to his purpose with special regard to this time of the end in which the nations find themselves. Yes, he is awake as to what he has purposed to do when this time of the end terminates.—Jer. 1:11, 12. W 12/15 1, 2b

Monday, October 2

As newborn infants, form a longing for the unadulterated milk belonging to the word, that through it you may grow to salvation.—1 Pet. 2:2.

What does Jehovah God find our moral, spiritual condition to be deep down inside us, as it were, at the kidneys? Is it bad, or does it favor our gaining eternal life? This figurative seat of what we really are—we want to keep it functioning healthily. To do so, we need to watch what we eat and drink. Such a thing is true with respect to

the literal kidneys. It also applies in a spiritual way. At 1 Corinthians 12:13 we read that "we were all made to drink one spirit." That "one spirit" is God's spirit. We are encouraged to pray for it to be given to us in needed measure. (Luke 11:13) When all members of the Christian congregation drink of this one spirit, it preserves the harmony and unity of the congregational body under Christ's headship. It refreshes us like a drink. Of course, later, growing children start eating solid food. For eternal salvation we must grow to Christian maturity. W 11/1 11-14a

Tuesday, October 3

This is what I continue praying, . . . that you may be flawless and not be stumbling others.—Phil. 1:9, 10.

Unintentionally, without our being aware of it, we may offend others—which is serious enough—and we hope that this may not result in an irretrievable fall away from Christian belief. When learned of, such an offense should be given due attention, and amends would have to be made for it. But when a person shows indifference and no concern for the spiritual welfare of a fellow believer and argues that each individual has rights of conscience and is free to take full advantage of his rights, he displays selfish, unloving disregard for the everlasting life of another, also for that one's relationship with God. He underestimates the value of that believer for whom Christ died. What if a professed Christian does not mind stumbling another and thus betrays how cheaply he views the eternal life of that one? Then Christ does not think much of the life of that one. W 8/15 11, 12a

Wednesday, October 4

He that presides, let him do it in real earnest.—Rom. 12:8.

Whether a person presides at the Watchtower study, the congregation book study or a family Bible study he should have these words of the apostle Paul well in mind. All such are not merely conductors in the sense that they just ask questions and call on those in the audience for answers. Their presiding in a meaningful way calls for keeping the study interesting and alive, emphasizing key scriptures, seeing that proper application of Bible texts is made and aiding everyone to see the practical value of important points covered. If some are hesitant about participating, a personal word of encouragement may be sufficient to start them commenting at meetings. Those who preside should strive to become more effective teachers, aiming to reach hearts, thus motivating the brothers to walk in Jehovah's ways and providing Scriptural direction to that end. Presiding in this way they will be able to do the greatest possible good.—Ps. 25:4, 5; Prov. 16:9; 1 Tim. 4:16. W 3/1 7a

Thursday, October 5

Pay back, therefore, Caesar's things to Caesar, but God's things to God.—Matt. 22:21.

Do these words mean that we must take Caesar's view of a marriage or a divorce as the final, decisive, binding factor as to its validity and morality? No, for the issue here was that of taxation. Caesar, however, is not the source of the right to marry. This actually comes from God, the Originator of marriage. Hence, Caesar's position in this field is not as the final arbiter as to what is morally right and wrong in marriage

(or divorce). What Caesar can provide is legal recognition and accompanying protection of marital rights in his court systems. The Christian who wants his marriage to be "honorable among all" rightly desires such provisions to protect the rights and interests of his family. To obtain such recognition and rights he should properly pay back to Caesar for these by complying with Caesar's regulations for receiving them. This may include such things as license fees, the conforming to certain medical examinations, or similar requirements. W 3/15 19, 20a

Friday, October 6

Rest [your] hope, not on uncertain riches, but on God.—1 Tim. 6:17.

The material good things of life must never be allowed to get the mastery over us. So, when we think of the "great tribulation" that is fast approaching, we will not be like Lot's wife. We will not grieve at the thought of losing our possessions, because such negative thinking can unbalance us to the point where we endanger our very lives. Instead, we will rejoice at the approaching end of this wicked system. We know that it will mean the vindication of Jehovah's name, and also the salvation of those who bear that name and who uphold it in their daily lives. For their loyalty to Jehovah, they will be ushered into a new order where they will have the delightful task of making this earth a Paradise, free from the influence of Satan and his wicked system of things, free from the enslavement to sin and death. With such a grand future just ahead, all who want to keep living will want to heed the good advice that Paul instructed Timothy to give. W 4/1 18, 19a

Saturday, October 7

Come into his gates with thanksgiving, into his courts with praise.—Ps. 100:4.

We do not mention God only because a listener might be helped. We speak of God and his deeds because it is in our hearts and thus on our tongues. If we mention God often in conversing with unbelievers, how understandable it is that we do so frequently when talking to those who serve God. We feel greater ease in speaking with such ones about our plans, impressions, and so on. Accordingly in such conversations should we not be inclined to mention God and his dealings, as Psalm 92:1, 2 says? Perhaps work is being done on the Kingdom Hall. You could express appreciation for God's blessing on the congregation. We receive a new Bible study aid. If you sincerely view it as evidence of Jehovah's loving-kindness, why not mention that in conversation. What about the interesting new explanations in it? Happily speak of these with your brothers, doing so with modesty. Interspersing spiritual matters in your conversation will be upbuilding to all. W 2/15 12, 13a

Sunday, October 8

No one has love greater than this, that someone should surrender his soul in behalf of his friends. You are my friends if you do what I am commanding you.—John 15:13, 14.

Though Lord or Master, Jesus did not assume a superior attitude toward those whom he served. He handled himself in such a way that his perfection did not cause others to feel low or inferior, making them uncomfortable in his presence. Jesus was completely different from persons with

outstanding abilities but who are often quick to be upset and impatient with those having limitations. Though his disciples were at times heedless and forgetful, Jesus was never overly severe with them. Because he was lowly in heart, he condescended to teach persons who were looked down upon as ignorant. (Matt. 11:28-30; John 7:47-49) Truly, Jesus set a perfect example of what it means to serve in behalf of others. What warmth, what kindness, what love he displayed! Finally, in a superlative expression of his love he surrendered his soul or life as a ransom for sinful mankind. W 7/1 7, 9a

Monday, October 9

Let us . . . not [be] forsaking the gathering of ourselves together, as some have the custom, but [be] encouraging one another, and all the more so as you behold the day drawing near.—Heb. 10:24, 25.

To grow strong in faith we must understand and appreciate the importance of what we read. We need to have accurate knowledge. Many Jews in apostolic times had a degree of knowledge, but since they did not have accurate knowledge their zeal was in vain. (Rom. 10:1-4) We need help to acquire accurate knowledge, and along with it, understanding. Jesus, after his resurrection, encouraged his mourning disciples by pointing out to them what God's Word had to say about his needing to suffer and die. (Luke 24:15-47) Similarly, it was necessary for Philip to enlighten an Ethiopian court official. (Acts 8:27-39) For this reason we are counseled as above. At our meetings we can get help from shepherds who count it a privilege to aid others to come to an accurate knowledge of God's truth. W 4/15 13, 14a

Tuesday, October 10

You will not need to be afraid of any sudden dreadful thing, nor of the storm upon the wicked ones, because it is coming. For Jehovah himself will prove to be, in effect, your confidence.

—Prov. 3:25, 26.

Stock markets and prices may fall and heads of governments may topple, but these are not barometers that determine or measure the closeness of the storm of the "great tribulation." Keep in mind that when world powers of the past were destroyed by Jehovah, they did not collapse because of internal weakness. They were going concerns when God deposed them by external forces. So, as Jehovah's publicity agents, let us be fearless and bold, and keep on warning people of the day of God's vengeance. (Ezek. 3:17) Let us keep on praying for God's kingdom to come in all its fury against Satan's wicked system, that it may be smashed to pieces and ground to powder. (Matt. 6:9, 10; Dan. 2:44) As Jehovah's Witnesses face the destruction of the Devil's entire organization, oh, how encouraging do they find God's promise stated above! W 1/15 22, 25a

Wednesday, October 11

Take Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministering.

—2 Tim. 4:11.

At times the answers to questions sent to the Watch Tower Society would be of great benefit to all the congregations throughout the earth. When that is the case, as in the first century C.E., written material is prepared. Furthermore, the central body of elders, through its committees, supervises the preparation and publication of information designed to provide spiritual in-

struction for persons both inside and outside the Christian congregation world wide. Manifestly a sizable staff is needed at Brooklyn to care for all the vital work of providing help and direction in furthering spiritual interests throughout the earth, including relief measures whenever necessary. While some are directly involved in preparing Biblical information, others render important services that make it possible for this material to reach the ends of the earth. Many of those serving at Bethel, therefore, occupy a position comparable to that of Timothy, Mark and others. W 6/1 4, 5a

Thursday, October 12

Beloved one, you are doing a faithful work in whatever you do for the brothers, and strangers at that.

—3 John 5.

Toward the end of the first century C.E. the aged apostle John addressed his third divinely inspired letter to a fellow believer named Gaius. John had love for this fine Christian man who was "walking in the truth," and others had 'borne witness to his love before the congregation.' John knew Gaius to be a hospitable and loving man. But what a contrast between Gaius and a certain Diotrephes! (3 John 9, 10) Certainly the Lord was not with the spirit Diotrephes showed. Here and there, a person like him might appear on the scene. But the congregations of that time were comprised of many faithful, spiritually strong Christians. Yes, there were loving, hospitable individuals like Lydia and Gaius. There were persons like Aquila and Priscilla, who had fine spiritual comprehension and were willing to open their homes for congregation meetings. W 6/15 18-20

Friday, October 13

Let house servants be in subjection to their owners with all due fear, not only to the good and reasonable, but also to those hard to please.

—1 Pet. 2:18.

Yes, a Christian secularly employed should perform his work cheerfully and quietly even if unreasonable demands are made upon him. (Titus 2: 9, 10) He should be respectful, not argumentative, in dealing with his employer. Others should be able to see that he is an honest, industrious worker who cares about other people. When that is the case, true worship is elevated in the eyes of those who come to appreciate that he is a good worker and a fine person on account of his religion. Similarly, because of his beliefs, a young person may become the object of ridicule. But if he is dependable and conscientious about his school assignments and treats others with kindness and respect, eyewitnesses may be favorably impressed and be prompted to investigate his beliefs. Again, fine conduct would result in an excellent witness. —Compare Titus 2:6-8. W 7/1 15, 16

Saturday, October 14

Trust in Jehovah and do good; reside in the earth, and deal with faithfulness. Also take exquisite delight in Jehovah, and he will give you the requests of your heart.

—Ps. 37:3, 4.

In God's new order, his trusting servants will receive the full reward for their faithfulness to him. Forever will they be freed from the corrupt system of things that now oppresses them. Forever will they be freed from the curses of sin and death. And the fine training that God's servants are now getting in

working and living together according to God's standards will be put to immediate use as they cooperate under the direction of God's kingdom to begin building a paradise new earth. What happiness will then be experienced by all who keep trusting Jehovah! How grateful they will be to him as they see blessing after blessing poured out upon them! Our God will direct his people in the most beneficial and lasting use of the things he has made for their enjoyment. Thus we have every reason to keep trusting in Jehovah. W 7/15 19, 20a

Sunday, October 15

Supply to your faith virtue.

—2 Pet. 1:5.

We cannot instill faith in others unless we have it ourselves. We can be glad that faith is one of the fruits of the spirit, so that it will increase with cultivation and care. Virtue also is important for the reason that, when it comes to our witnessing to others, all our effort and all our talking go for nothing unless Jehovah blesses our efforts and makes the seed of truth grow. It does not help in seeking to offer a sacrifice of praise if we are not living according to the truth. Virtue is moral excellence, and is needed if we are to qualify to be among those dressed in white robes. (Rev. 7:9) We can understand that a man who is secularly very busy and yet is alert to speak in favor of the Bible and who lives according to it will do much more to advance the truth than one who can spend more time witnessing but who is not living up to God's Word. Time and effort spent witnessing are not the only factors that produce fruitage. Rather, it is Jehovah who gives the increase.—1 Cor. 3: 7. W 8/1 15, 16

Monday, October 16

If your eye makes you stumble, throw it away; it is finer for you to enter one-eyed into the kingdom of God than with two eyes to be pitched into Gehenna.—Mark 9:47.

It benefits us to keep from stumbling others to a fall, even the most insignificant one. (Mark 9:42) We do well also to keep from letting ourselves be stumbled by others of whom we expected more because of their Christian claims. But do we value our own prospects for eternal life highly enough so as to guard against stumbling our own selves? What—stumble ourselves? Yes, indeed. How? After speaking about stumbling others Jesus added the above words of caution. In this case Jesus pointed to destruction by the fire of Gehenna, which became a symbol of everlasting destruction. (Matt. 23:33) Just as the hypocritical scribes and Pharisees of Jesus' day stumbled themselves into Gehenna, so a dedicated, baptized Christian of today can stumble himself into being sentenced by God to Gehenna, everlasting destruction, even as Jesus warned. Let us take warning from Judas' example. W 8/15 13-16a

Tuesday, October 17

You, O Jehovah of armies, are examining the righteous one; you are seeing the kidneys and the heart. May I see your vengeance upon them, for to you I have revealed my case at law.—Jer. 20:12.

Of course, we do not desire to put the vindication of ourselves forward as the thing of greatest importance to us. Rather than our justifying ourselves, we want the righteous Judge Jehovah to do the vindicating of us, as Job did. (Job 19:25-27) But if, after thorough self-scrutiny, we are convinced of our innocence on

the basis of God's Word, then, without fear of being found fault with, we can reveal our "case at law" to him and wait for his "day of vengeance" to come. Making a "clean breast" of everything, we can say to Jehovah what Jeremiah did. In that "day of vengeance" Jehovah's arrows will pierce, not our kidneys, but those of our persecutors, producing a deep, fatal wound. (Jer. 46:10; Lam. 3:13) Christians who are keeping their integrity toward Jehovah welcome examination by him. They plead for it, just as the psalmist David did at Psalm 26:1-3. W 11/1 23, 24a

Wednesday, October 18

The master . . . will gird himself and make them recline at the table and will come alongside and minister to them. And if he arrives in the second watch, even if in the third, and finds them [watching], happy are they! —Luke 12:37, 38.

It was in Judea, probably during the fall of 32 C.E. that Jesus told this to his disciples. Even if earlier expectations of the Master's coming were not fulfilled, they were to keep on watching right into the third watch—the darkest hour that precedes the dawn. Though this period of awaiting the arrival of Jesus, the Son of man, should stretch beyond earlier expectations, his thieflike approach is certain! None should be lulled into thinking it is indefinitely delayed. However, Jesus' watchful slaves are to do more than simply keep awake. Just as the Master girds himself to minister to them, so he expects them to be girded for service. (Luke 12:35, 36, 39, 40) Our diligence in doing so will result in our being counted happy at the Master's coming. W 1/1 1-3a

Thursday, October 19

I will show a waiting attitude for the God of my salvation. —Mic. 7:7.

From 1 Timothy 5:22 we can see that if Timothy failed to make sure that the one appointed was measuring up to the Scriptural requirements, he would bear a certain accountability for any wrongs that the unqualified man might commit. The same holds true today. So why not wait humbly and patiently until such time as others can see your fine works? (1 Tim. 5:24, 25) Really, in all areas of life, we should heed the encouragement, "wait for Jehovah from now on and to time indefinite." (Ps. 131:3) Let us not become impatient because God's time for executing judgment has not yet arrived. Instead, we should want to voice the kind of confidence that Micah expressed. Moreover, may we continue to show patience toward all, forgiving their minor transgressions against us and taking into consideration their limitations and circumstances. Yes, may we never allow impatience, coupled with pride, to jeopardize our relationship with our patient God, Jehovah. W 2/1 16, 17a

Friday, October 20

By day Jehovah will command his loving-kindness, and by night his song will be with me; there will be prayer to the God of my life.—Ps. 42:8.

Prayer is a fine way in which we can thank Jehovah for his loving-kindness. Likely we pray regularly. But could we broaden out as respects thanking and praising God in prayer? It is so easy to get into the practice of just asking him for things, for ourselves, our family, our congregation and others. The prophet Daniel set us a fine example. (Dan. 6:10) It is good in our

prayers to be specific about God's goodness toward us. If you had a fine experience in the preaching work, specifically thank God for it. If you received a gift, you likely thanked the person who gave it to you. But what about thanking the One who has made all things? Have you discerned the Bible's counsel on some weighty problem? Express thanks in prayer. And when you are privileged to represent others in prayer, why not mention distinct, specific examples of God's blessings for which all of you are thankful. W 2/15 20, 21a

Saturday, October 21

These are the ones that come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. —Rev. 7:14.

Jeremiah himself did a work of planting and building up a class of non-Israelite individuals who survived Jerusalem's destruction in 607 B.C.E.: the Rechabites and the Ethiopian eunuch named Ebed-melech. (Jer. 35:1-9; 38:1-13) These God-fearing friends of Jeremiah pictured the "great crowd" who today befriend the Jeremiah class. The unbreakable loyalty of the "great crowd" to the Jeremiah class will be amply rewarded. Against them the present-day fighters against God will not prevail. With the Jeremiah class they will survive the war at Har-Magedon. They will form the basis for the "new earth" under Jehovah's "new heaven." (Rev. 7:9-17; 21:1-4) Great is the pleasure that the Jeremiah class has in building up in the "great crowd" the valid hope of inheriting the approaching earthly paradise according to the loving purpose of the Sovereign Lord Jehovah. W 12/15 20, 21b

Sunday, October 22

Not a promise failed out of all the good promise that Jehovah had made to the house of Israel; it all came true.

—Josh. 21:45.

Today God's servants are surrounded by a grossly corrupt and violent world, similar to that of Noah's day. To keep from being swallowed up in wickedness, discouragement, or disbelief, we very much need to keep trusting Jehovah fully. We need to have the same attitude of mind that Joshua, a faithful servant of Jehovah, had long ago. For it is not only in ancient times that God's servants have seen the fulfillments of his words and promises. Similar fulfillments have come to pass in our day. An example of this is what has happened to the world in this generation. Contrary to the predictions of many human leaders that this century would mark a glorious new scientific age where mankind's problems would be solved, God's words at 2 Timothy 3:1-5, 13 are having fulfillment. This has happened according to Jehovah's precise timetable, beginning with the year 1914, the turning point in human history. W 7/15 10, 11a

Monday, October 23

The one first in his legal case is righteous; his fellow comes in and certainly searches him through.

—Prov. 18:17.

There are times when matters come up on which there are divided opinions. People have varying backgrounds and experiences and so will draw different conclusions. Different opinions can provide a stimulating basis for examining one's own viewpoints to test their soundness. A person may feel that his person-

al presentation of a matter sounds plausible and right, but 'his fellow comes in and searches him through,' by means of a more objective approach and Scriptural argument. This would certainly apply to a discussion among elders where such a process is required to resolve some question or problem affecting the spiritual welfare of our brothers. So it is expected that elders can have honest differences of opinion where there is no clear principle or guideline provided. At their meetings they should freely express themselves but, far from wrath and debates, always manifesting the fruits of God's spirit.—Gal. 5:22, 23. W 3/1 11a

Tuesday, October 24

Let him that can make room for it make room for it.

—Matt. 19:12.

Yes, singleness by choice is only for those who "can make room for it." Among first-century Christians only a minority were able to do so. This is evident from the instructions given about men who would qualify as ministerial servants and elders. The manner in which they presided over their families was to be considered, showing that such would customarily be married men with children. (1 Tim. 3:2, 12) Since this is so, it may be asked, How can a person be sure that he is one of the few that can make room for singleness? The apostle Paul answers: "If anyone stands settled in his heart, having no necessity, but has authority over his own will and has made this decision in his own heart, to keep his own virginity, he will do well." (1 Cor. 7:37) The person with the "gift" of singleness, therefore, should be able to see this on his own. W 5/1 5-7

Wednesday, October 25

Let the older men who preside in a fine way be reckoned worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard in speaking and teaching. For . . . "The workman is worthy of his wages."—1 Tim. 5:17, 18.

Contributed funds are used for the support of missionary activity and to assist other full-time workers, including traveling elders, to have basic necessities. That contributed funds can rightly be used to help those who are looking after the spiritual interests of others is made clear from Paul's words. This does not mean that elders should receive a salary for their work. But in agreement with Scriptural principles, it is appropriate that the Governing Body and the branch organizations use contributed funds to assist materially those who are enabled thereby to devote themselves more fully to spiritual work. Additionally, our local congregations incur expenses in connection with their Kingdom Halls. Contributions are needed to cover these expenses so that no reproach is brought on God's name for the congregation's failure to pay bills. W 9/1 14-16a

Thursday, October 26

Share with the holy ones according to their needs. Follow the course of hospitality.

—Rom. 12:13.

Some whose marriage mates have separated from them, or divorced them, have asked for advice on overcoming the loneliness that results from their not having their marriage mate with them. Through no fault of the believer the unbelieving marriage mate may have departed. How does one cope with this problem? The believer will have to make an effort

to pursue a course in keeping with Christian principles that will, at the same time, help to combat depression and feelings of loneliness that arise. Perhaps it is possible to arrange one's affairs to spend more time in telling others about God's kingdom or in studying the Bible with newly interested ones. Becoming involved in helping those in need in the congregation is another way of overcoming loneliness due to a marriage mate's having left one. Of course, all such is good advice also for those who have never had a marriage mate or those who have lost their mate in death. W 9/15 12, 14b

Friday, October 27

Never again shall I call down evil upon the ground on man's account, because the inclination of the heart of man is bad from his youth up.

—Gen. 8:21.

Very early in the history of man a diagnosis of the human heart is set out by the finest heart specialist at Genesis 6:5, 6. There we have both the heart of man and the heart of God mentioned. Because Jehovah felt so hurt at his heart, he released a global deluge, preserving alive only Noah and his wife and their three sons and three daughters-in-law. In this way eight human hearts kept beating. Right after they emerged from the deluge-proof ark they turned to the worship of their heavenly Preserver. As they joined in offering up sacrifice to Jehovah God, a rainbow formed in the sky and bode good for them, even as noted in Jehovah's words. But why did he also say that the 'inclination of man's heart is bad'? It was due to the fact that the human family had inherited this from Adam. W 11/1 9, 12

Saturday, October 28

Here I have put my words in your mouth. See, I have commissioned you . . . to build and to plant.—Jer. 1:9, 10.

Jeremiah was commissioned as "prophet to the nations," not only to uproot, pull down, tear down and destroy, but also "to build and to plant." Not build what was pulled down and torn down, not plant what had been uprooted and destroyed, but foretell the building of what Jehovah purposed to be built and the planting of what he purposed to be planted and grow to full fruition. This part of Jeremiah's commission definitely now relates to the true kingdom of Jehovah God now that, since 1914, "the kingdom of the world did become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ." (Rev. 11:15) Hence there must now be the global fulfillment of Christ's words as recorded at Matthew 24:14. The doing of this carries with it the planting of true Christianity and the building of it up in many territories newly witnessed to by the Jeremiah class and their active supporters. The spiritual paradise needed to be built up. *W 12/15 19b*

Sunday, October 29

In peace I will both lie down and sleep, for you yourself alone, O Jehovah, make me dwell in security.—Ps. 4:8.

A person who keeps his wants to a reasonable minimum enables himself to spend more of his time and energy in study and in the service of his Creator. He can concentrate on building confidence in Jehovah and his promises. Fire, riots or violence might destroy his home, but they cannot destroy the real security that comes from Jehovah. Such a person can rightly say as did the psalm-

ist. Then again, where one's home and possessions are concerned, will they necessarily be left standing during the "great tribulation"? Therefore, we can see that it is unwise to become too attached to things such as homes and furnishings, however enjoyable they may be at present. It is not that God condemns such, but he knows that attachment to them could prove dangerous, as happened with Lot's wife. (Luke 17:31, 32) Instead, we should look forward to the time in God's new order when, in total security, his servants can build suitable homes for habitation. *W 4/1 10-12a*

Monday, October 30

Be as free people, and yet holding your freedom, not as a blind for badness, but as slaves of God.—1 Pet. 2:16.

Whenever evidence of sincere repentance is missing, the elders need to be careful that they do not allow themselves to be governed by sentimentality. They cannot condone wrongdoing, simply ignoring or viewing as of little consequence the reproach and trouble an unrepentant person's lawlessness has brought upon the congregation. Were they to do so, this could have a damaging effect on the congregation as a whole. Some members of the congregation might be emboldened to take liberties and ignore Peter's inspired counsel. Furthermore, the wrongdoer himself might come to regard sin lightly, exercising even less restraint in the future and get others involved in lawlessness. (Eccl. 8:11) So when the genuineness of a wrongdoer's repentance is subject to serious question and when there is clear evidence that corruption is likely to result, elders should take disfellowshipping action. *W 11/15 15a*

Tuesday, October 31

One there is that is lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy. But you, who are you to be judging your neighbor?—Jas. 4:12.

To get wisdom from God we must consult his Word. (Jas. 1:2, 5) Why will this help? Because Christians have the same human problems today as servants of God have faced throughout the centuries. If we look to the Scriptures we will see how faithful men, including the apostles and their associates, gave advice and handled these problems. Circumstances dif-

fer, of course, but there is no problem for which the Bible does not provide the right principle. Application of the principle brings into play knowledge and conscience. However, each one has to be fully convinced in his own mind. If a Christian conscientiously could not see the other's point of view clearly, in his own mind, it would do him no good, but actually harm, should he adopt that view contrary to his own conscience. And neither one should criticize, dispute with, judge or look with contempt on the other, even as James counsels. *W 12/1 4, 17*

Wednesday, November 1

Everyone remaining in union with him does not practice sin; no one that practices sin has . . . come to know him.—1 John 3:6.

The person who is truly following "The Way" tries to avoid being "righteous overmuch" or "excessively wise," in the sense that he does not assume an air of wisdom or of self-righteousness and look for the faults and poor judgment of others. (Eccl. 7:16) But he sincerely makes righteousness his aim. He does not weakly give in to wrong desires or succumb to pressures that would force him to commit serious wrongs, breaking his integrity toward God. Nonetheless, imperfection will at times cause us to make mistakes and to sin. If we do commit a sin, we acknowledge it and repent, asking forgiveness through prayer to Jehovah in Christ's name. We rely on Christ's perfect sacrifice as a basis for forgiveness. Then we should put forth every effort not to repeat that sin. To take up a course of sin would result in loss of Jehovah's favor. *W 10/15 12*

Thursday, November 2

Happy is the man that does not put himself on judgment by what he approves.—Rom. 14:22.

When involved in "gray areas" we should look to the Bible and Bible aids. If we still are not clear on a decision, why not consult elders or others who can help us to see what the Bible says? But we should not let others make our decision for us. They are not our conscience. Rather, we should weigh matters ourselves, make our own decision, and then follow through on this conscientious conclusion. With the passage of time we may come to see the matter in a different light, and make an adjustment, but we should not do anything about which we have doubts, so that we will not be self-condemned. All Christians should strive constantly to come closer to imitating God and Christ. In doing so we will be progressing continuously toward having a conscience more accurately trained. At all times we should be doing all things in such a way as to maintain a good conscience. *W 12/1 20, 21*

Friday, November 3

My God will fully supply all your need to the extent of his riches in glory by means of Christ Jesus.—Phil. 4:19.

This assurance and the evidence from God that this promise is true will be a source of happiness. The greater happiness or joys are: First, the understanding of God's purpose for the earth and mankind on it, and the place we individually occupy in that purpose. This gives aim, purpose to life, which is more important to happiness than mere possessions. Then, living as God requires frees us from many fears and dangers. If we are properly taking care of our families, both materially and spiritually, we will have joy, because we most likely will have happier family relations. Our children grow up with a purpose in life. It is then much easier for the members of our families to see the futility of seeking pleasure through drugs, immoral associations and the pursuit of goals that have no lasting reward. We thereby escape the many diseases, mental and physical, that come from the loose, wasteful, unreal way of life pursued by many today. *W 8/1 7, 8a*

Saturday, November 4

When there are judgments from you for the earth, righteousness is what the inhabitants of the productive land will certainly learn.—Isa. 26:9.

Through the Kingdom's arrangement, provision will be made for every person on earth to have personal, special attention and help to learn the proper way of living. All obedient ones the King 'will guide to fountains of waters of life.' (Rev. 7:17) Do the people in general have this care and guidance now? No, people receive

very little personal help from their governments. There are laws for protection and guidance, made by men and enforced by men. But obedience from the heart, because a law is right, is not cultivated. There is also a failure in dispensing justice. Also, a vital need today is hope, hope that has a foundation. Hope is joyful anticipation with the prospect of realizing what is hoped for. The resurrection is the only real hope for the dead. Millions will be resurrected under God's Kingdom rule, to learn righteousness and live. Are you doing your part to make this blessed hope known? *W 10/1 4-6*

Sunday, November 5

Jehovah went on to say to me: "You have seen well, for I am keeping awake concerning my word in order to carry it out."—Jer. 1:12.

Who, then, of us today, whether we belong to the anointed Jeremiah class or belong to those actively supporting that class, dares to discontinue his personal wakefulness? We do the wise thing if we imitate Jehovah himself. To illustrate his own wakefulness he caused Jeremiah to see in vision the "offshoot of an almond tree." (Jer. 1:11) Jeremiah knew that the word for "almond tree" means "one awakening." This tree is the first one to awake in the spring of the year by its blossoming. Jehovah was like the offshoot of an almond tree in his own awakening to the season into which the nations and kingdoms were entering. His prophetic Word applies at a certain time, and at that time he will carry it out. His word will never fail owing to an inattentiveness on his part. Do we believe that today when we are well into the year 1978? *W 12/15 4b*

Monday, November 6

Jehovah himself will give strength . . . to his people. Jehovah himself will bless his people with peace.—Ps. 29:11.

Is there any basis for trusting the nations suddenly to cooperate world wide, unselfishly, in every sphere of human activity? Are they conducting a worldwide educational program that would unite all mankind and motivate all people to a common purpose? None of these things are being done by them. But in all the nations Jehovah's servants are peacefully and unitedly cooperating to teach people about the incoming one government for all mankind that Jehovah God has purposed. Yes, in the midst of this very difficult period, these last days of the present system, Jehovah has protected and prospered his trusting servants in a marvelous way. Despite immense cruelties heaped upon them by persecutors, his worshipers have grown until they number upward of two million. (Isa. 60:22) In addition, his servants are learning how to produce the fruitage of God's spirit. (Gal. 5:22, 23) And fulfilled upon them are the words of the psalmist. *W 7/15 15, 12a*

Tuesday, November 7

The Sovereign Lord Jehovah will not do a thing unless he has revealed his confidential matter to his servants the prophets.—Amos 3:7.

All mankind are very much interested in the future. This human desire to know about coming events before they occur causes many people to consult those claiming to know the future—the spirit mediums, soothsayers and astrologers. More and more persons are consulting their horoscopes and Ouija boards in

an effort to learn what the demon-inspired oracles say will happen. There is one very great difference, however, between those who serve Jehovah and those who do not, when it comes to this inborn desire to know the future. Never do God's people consult such demonic sources in an effort to know the future. There is a very good reason why they do not. It was in the ninth century B.C.E. that the above truth was recorded by the prophet Amos. These prophets, in turn, relate to Jehovah's people in general what to expect in the future, and this is the basis for the confidence of Jehovah's people. *W 1/15 1-4*

Wednesday, November 8

As the congregation is in subjection to the Christ, so let wives also be to their husbands in everything . . . the wife should have deep respect for her husband.

—Eph. 5:24, 33.

The Christian wife expresses subjection to her husbandly head in the same way that the Christian congregation is in subjection to the Christ. She shows him, not merely respect, but "deep respect." If such deep respect keeps her from speaking disparagingly to him or about him, how much more so should it keep her from disloyally showing undue interest in someone outside their union, engaging in a flirtation to any degree. She can never honor Jehovah God by dishonoring her husband or their marriage relationship. (Prov. 2:16, 17) But if she loves her husband and children, is chaste and a worker at home, showing a quiet and mild spirit, she will indeed be like a precious jewel and will bring praise to Jehovah God. She will gain her husband's unfading love. *W 3/15 6*

Thursday, November 9

For everything there is an appointed time, even a time for every affair under the heavens: . . . a time for war and a time for peace.
—Ecc. 3:1, 8.

For many persons the all-important question is, *When will the great tribulation take place? When will God intervene in human affairs as he did in ancient times and bring an end to distressing world conditions?* As much as God's servants have earnestly longed to know the time, one thing is certain: No man can pinpoint the exact day and hour. (Mark 13:32; Luke 12:40) But Jehovah God does have a set time for it, even as is seen from the words above. In Noah's day, when conditions on earth reached the limit of God's long-suffering, He sent the great deluge. (Gen. 6:3, 5-7) When his people Israel were in bondage in Egypt, he delivered them in his due time. (Ex. 2:24, 25) Later, when the nation of Israel exhausted God's patience, he brought up against them the king of Babylon. (2 Chron. 36:15-17) Also, "when the full limit of the time arrived," God sent his Son to earth.
—Gal. 4:4. W 4/15 17, 18

Friday, November 10

My food is for me to do the will of him that sent me and to finish his work.
—John 4:34.

Whether an unmarried adult has the gift of singleness or not, he can profit from considering Bible examples of those who made a success of singleness. It can make his own life as a single person more meaningful and rewarding. Even married couples can benefit, as time and circumstance can deprive a person of a mate and thus confront that one with a decision as

to what to do about remarriage. As a single man, Jesus is certainly the outstanding example. He was totally absorbed in doing his Father's will. He would rise early in the morning and serve on into the night, teaching the people, healing the sick and liberating those under demonic control. His was a willing service. Noteworthy too, is the fact that Jesus was at ease in the company of all—men, women and children. He would accept invitations to meals and even banquets, seizing opportunities to impart spiritual instruction. W 5/1 12-14

Saturday, November 11

The solid foundation of God stays standing, having this seal: "Jehovah knows those who belong to him," and: "Let everyone naming the name of Jehovah renounce unrighteousness."—2 Tim. 2:19.

Let us be strong and serve, as we wait patiently on Jehovah. Already, his patience has meant salvation for a multitude of persons. In land after land we have seen miracles of salvation and expansion taking place following World War II. Who knows what further feats of ingathering Jehovah purposes to perform before his appointed time for the great tribulation? Truly he is great and 'is doing wondrous things.' (Ps. 86:8-10) Whatever Jehovah's will is for the days just ahead, let us continue to stand firm, girded for his service. Let us have confidence in the words of the apostle Paul above. As we expend ourselves in Kingdom service, may we be used by Jehovah in finding many more of 'those belonging to him,' that all of us, together, may come to rejoice in his undeserved kindness by Christ Jesus, both now and for all eternity to come! W 1/1 19, 20a

Sunday, November 12

I well know, O Jehovah, that to earthling man his way does not belong. It does not belong to man who is walking even to direct his step.
—Jer. 10:23.

The good news from God's Word centers around the kingdom of God. Why? Because all of God's purposes toward mankind find their focus in the Kingdom. What man needs today is good government—a government that provides proper guidance but does not take away freedom, incentive and individuality. Government by God is essential to the life and happiness of the human race. Man has amply demonstrated that he cannot govern himself successfully by any form of rule that he can devise. But the Creator knows exactly what we need. He knows our feelings, our wants, our loves, our desires. (Matt. 6: 7, 8, 32) Only He can bring real satisfaction into our lives. "You [God] are opening your hand and satisfying the desire of every living thing," the Bible says. (Ps. 145:16) This he will do by means of his kingdom, which it is our privilege to make known to all who will hear. W 10/1 1, 2

Monday, November 13

It is Jehovah your God you must worship, and it is to him alone you must render sacred service.—Matt. 4:10.

Jesus' rebuff to Satan showed that the symbolic cedar of Lebanon did not look pretty to him. (Ezek. 31:3, 7-9) Neither has that man-made political structure of this system of things looked alluringly pretty and worshipful to Christ's true disciples in this day. True, Jehovah God describes the prettiness of the symbolic cedar of Lebanon

from the world's standpoint, but to Him the thing symbolized by that cedar in Lebanon (Pharaoh the king of Egypt and his crowd) does not look pretty. It is wicked; for which reason he says: "According to its wickedness I will drive it out." (Ezek. 31:11) Do we today view the symbolic cedar as Jehovah God does, and do we believe that the final fulfillment of His words will shortly take place without fail? Our conviction in this matter will decide for us the question: Shall we go along with the nations and dwell under the symbolic cedar tree, or shall we get out from under it? W 5/15 6a

Tuesday, November 14

Really, then, as long as we have time favorable for it, let us work what is good toward all, but especially toward those related to us in the faith.
—Gal. 6:10.

Proving ourselves to be Christ's disciples includes not only proclaiming the good news but also coming to the aid of persons in real need and treating them kindly regardless of how they may have acted toward us. Nevertheless, just as caring for the needs of one's own family takes priority over attending to the needs of strangers, so one's responsibility toward fellow believers takes priority over obligations toward nonbelievers. Many opportunities to do good toward fellow believers present themselves. If an accident, a natural disaster or some other calamity reduces some of them to a needy state, we certainly should want to help our spiritual brothers. (1 John 3:16-18) Of course, if a person is irresponsible, lazy and unwilling to accept available work, he should not expect aid.
—2 Thess. 3:10. W 7/1 17, 18a

Wednesday, November 15

Finally, all of you be like-minded, showing fellow feeling, having brotherly affection, tenderly compassionate, humble in mind.—1 Pet. 3:8.

At 1 Peter 3:7 the apostle Peter gives fine counsel to husbands on showing proper consideration for their wives. The "like manner" referred to by Peter is outlined in his previous words, starting from chapter two of his letter, where he gives appropriate counsel on proper subjection and related subjects. Speaking of Jesus Christ, Peter wrote that he had left his followers a model to follow. (1 Pet. 2:23) That really was the course of kindness, a truly worthy example for husbands to follow in "like manner." Of course, Peter, at 1 Peter 3:1-4 also had some wise advice for the wives to follow in "like manner" as well. Such, indeed, is the way of kindness for wives professing to be servants of Jehovah God. But that is not all. When it comes to showing that kind spirit in the family circle, parents are not the only ones called upon to do so, but children are also. Yes, as Peter shows, all should. W 9/15 3-5a

Thursday, November 16

The form of worship that is clean and undefiled . . . is this: to look after orphans and widows in their tribulation, and to keep oneself without spot from the world.—Jas. 1:27.

When we cheerfully and unselfishly come to the aid of persons in real need, Jehovah God and his Son view this as being done to them. (Prov. 14:31; 19:17) Jesus, when highlighting what differentiated the approved "sheep" from the condemned "goats," made the same point. (Matt.

25:40, 45) Accordingly, a willingness to come to the aid of the poor and afflicted is essential to one's being a true worshiper of Jehovah. Such active concern for the afflicted and disadvantaged should start with one's own relatives. For example, the Scriptures obligate children and grandchildren to care for needy parents. (1 Tim. 5:4) A deliberate failure to discharge this responsibility constitutes a denial of the faith. Further, since true Christians form an association of brothers, they must care for needy members in their midst before assisting persons outside the congregation. W 9/1 7, 8a

Friday, November 17

That is why a man will leave his father and his mother and he must stick to his wife and they must become one flesh.—Gen. 2:24.

Both husband and wife need to take into consideration the Christian feelings of each other in the matter of sexual relations. God made man and woman to enjoy a close, warm intimacy in marriage. For that reason the woman was made as a complement to the man, that is, she serves to make the man complete. The man and woman are to be "one flesh." For this arrangement to work satisfactorily for both partners in their intimate relationship together, each has a role to play. Paul wrote that husbands are to love their wives as their own bodies. (Eph. 5:28) For a wife to be genuinely happy she needs to feel that she is wanted, loved. In the intimate lives of the man and his wife, this love needs to be made manifest if the two are to promote family unity and understanding.—1 Cor. 7:3-5. W 9/15 12-14a

Saturday, November 18

God is a Spirit, and those worshiping him must worship with spirit and truth.—John 4:24.

Thus Jehovah God must be worshiped, for he is "the God of truth." (Ps. 31:5) Truthfulness is essential, not only in order to have peace with God, but also to live in peace with others. (Eph. 4:25) Think of what "truth" means in the family circle. If "truth" is always spoken, there is trust between family members. There is respect and closeness between husband and wife. The communication gap does not exist. Children are anxious to let their parents know what is going on in their lives, for they are confident that they will receive consideration and guidance in solving their problems. They also know that their parents are not saying one thing and doing another. They can count on their parents for help in any situation. The way for the Christian is to think, feel and act as Jesus did. This requires him to follow the "truth" in all its aspects, just as Jesus fulfilled all things that Jehovah God had set for him to do. W 10/15 14-16

Sunday, November 19

Do not be afraid because of their faces, for "I am with you to deliver you," is the utterance of Jehovah.—Jer. 1:8.

These last days of this system of things are no time for us to "put on the soft pedal," just because Christendom's kings, princes, priests and people will intensify their fight against us. With more than fifty-eight years of public service world wide already behind it, the Jeremiah class is no longer "but a boy."

Since 1919 it has put up with warfare against it by the political, religious, and popular elements of this old world. Till now Jehovah's assuring words have proved true, that all the opposers would not prevail against it. His words will prove equally true in the more strenuous days just ahead as the time for Jehovah's vengeance draws near. Our war-minded enemies will not prevail against us! Why not? Because the Sovereign Lord, Jehovah of armies, remains with us, to "deliver" us in the future just as he has done in the past. So we shall see our foes bite the dust! W 12/15 17, 18b

Monday, November 20

He has brought into my kidneys the sons of his quiver.—Lam. 3:13.

We do not want Jehovah God to become our enemy. (Jas. 4:4; Isa. 63:10) Ancient Israel had that occur to it. Jeremiah, in the above, likens Jehovah to a Bowman in the war. Barbed arrows, shot at a person in flight and plunging deeply into the kidneys, spelled death for the one trying to escape. Such a deadly wound for the people represented by Jeremiah meant death for the kingdom of Judah as an independent nation with a Davidic king at Jerusalem. How sad! At present we are living in the last days of Christendom, which was foreshadowed by unfaithful Jerusalem and the kingdom of Judah. For us to avoid, as it were, the arrows of Jehovah in the coming great tribulation, we must take heed to our kidneys. We must consider seriously the examination of these vital organs by Jehovah as the Examiner thereof. What does he find our moral, spiritual condition to be deep down inside us? W 11/1 10, 11a

Tuesday, November 21

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous so as to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.—1 John 1:9.

To gain and maintain an unblemished standing with God we need to have our sins forgiven. This requires that we confess our transgressions to him, show true repentance or regret, and pray for forgiveness on the basis of Jesus' atoning sacrifice. Reproof based on God's Word and its righteous principles can show us just how we are sinning and, therefore, helps us to take the necessary steps to gain God's forgiveness. Such reproof can also aid us to avoid more serious wrongdoing. In reading the Bible or Bible-based counsel or when hearing God's Word discussed at a congregational meeting, we may come to realize that we have sinned in some respect. We may sincerely regret our failings, pray to be forgiven and request the help of God's spirit in making further progress toward harmonizing our life with his will. In thus *taking to heart* Bible counsel and *applying* it, we reprove ourselves. *W 11/15 1-3*

Wednesday, November 22

Just as you want men to do to you, do the same way to them.—Luke 6:31.

This is a simple guide for counseling. We like to be understood, so we must be understanding. We like to have our say, so we must let others have theirs. If we dislike being lectured to, do we refrain from lecturing others? Counseling involves listening, and in this way we not only show reasonableness, but also gain insight into the person's problem and become aware of his feelings. Counsel so given

comes across as a part of a conversation and not as a lecture being delivered. We are so aware of the shortcomings of all of us that it is difficult to take correction from any of us—unless the correction we get is God's correction! How good our advice is depends on how closely it sticks to God's Word. We came out of systems where men's rules prevail, with tragic results. No longer do we want to be subjected to human rules not required by God's Word. The Pharisees by their rules not only burdened down the people but also made void God's Word.—Matt. 23:4. *W 12/1 19-21a*

Thursday, November 23

I have no one else of a disposition like [Timothy's] who will genuinely care for the things pertaining to you.—Phil. 2:20.

Besides working under the apostle Paul's direction in advancing spiritual interests, Timothy apparently also labored with his hands to provide for his personal needs. He shared many of the dangers and problems that Paul described at 2 Corinthians 11:26, 27. Despite all of this, Timothy continued to labor in cooperation with Paul, not just for a short period, but for some fifteen years, yes, evidently until the apostle's death as a martyr. What made it possible for Timothy to stick to the work rather than to return to his home congregation for a more settled way of life? It was his sincere desire to serve others regardless of the personal cost to himself, for which reason the apostle Paul could say the above respecting Timothy. Furthermore, Timothy was humble, recognizing his own limitations. What a fine example he set for all Christians today! *W 6/1 8, 9a*

Friday, November 24

The fear of Jehovah means the hating of bad.—Prov. 8:13.

"There is no fear in love." (1 John 4:18) On the other hand, there is a proper fear and thus the Bible says that "the fear of Jehovah is pure," as well as the above. (Ps. 19:9) It is not morbid dread, but it involves reverence and a wholesome fear of displeasing Jehovah. This is a protection against following a bad course. Naturally, a person having "a tight grip on the word of life" knows, for instance, that the Bible condemns sexual immorality. It shows that such morally corrupt conduct may also lead to distress, as in the case of Amnon and Tamar. (2 Sam. 13:1-19) By way of contrast, what a fine example we have in Joseph, the son of Jacob! Repeatedly tempted by the wife of his master Potiphar, Joseph firmly refused to have sexual relations with her. Though falsely accused and imprisoned for his refusal, Joseph had not sinned against Jehovah God. His conduct can be recalled with profit if temptation to engage in sexual immorality should arise in one's life.—Gen. 39:7-23. *W 6/15 23-25a*

Saturday, November 25

You should gird up your hips, and you must rise up and speak to them everything that I myself command you. Do not be struck with any terror because of them.—Jer. 1:17.

Like the prophet Jeremiah, we have had to 'gird up our hips' for an extended period of Kingdom-preaching and discipline-making. Already this "time of the end" has stretched out over sixty-three years, and many of us have been sharing "the true knowledge" with others for twenty, thirty, forty or more years. (Dan. 12:4) At times we may have

felt as did Jeremiah when he said: "I am not going to make mention of [Jehovah], and I shall speak no more in his name." But the girding of truth around our hips impels us to go forward in God's service. His word proves to be 'like a burning fire shut up in our bones,' so that we cannot desist from making known Jehovah's glorious name any more than could Jeremiah. (Jer. 20:9) That Jehovah is continuing to help us to gird for this all-important service is shown by thrilling reports received yearly from our brothers all around the world. *W 1/1 8, 9a*

Sunday, November 26

Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.—Matt. 12:34.

Jehovah certainly is part of our lives and should be in our thoughts. We regularly seek his blessing and guidance. So we should not hesitate to speak of him, referring to him in our conversation and indicating our interest in his acts and purposes. Of course, we want to avoid giving a self-righteous impression. Jesus condemned hypocritical Jewish religious leaders for displaying piety merely to be seen and heard. (Matt. 6:1-5) Yet the Bible does urge us to praise and thank Jehovah constantly. So, while taking care not to sound self-righteous, with modesty and conviction we can mention his dealings and ways, which include how he has dealt with us or how we are involved with him. During the day you probably talk about many subjects with others either in school, at work, at home or in the neighborhood. If the situation lends itself to speaking about Jehovah God in a sincere and natural manner, then by all means do so, showing what is in your heart. *W 2/15 9-11a*

Monday, November 27

Let wives be in subjection to their husbands as to the Lord.
—Eph. 5:22.

Thus wrote Paul regarding that perhaps somewhat touchy subject of subjection of the wife to the husband. To many women those are 'fighting words' in today's world of women's liberation. But it does not have to be so at all. If a woman truly loves her husband and her husband is meeting the qualifications of a Christian husband, as noted in the Scriptures, then it can be a pleasure for her to be in subjection to him. That is not abject slavery. Rather, it is playing her God-given role, which results in her happiness. Just what can the Christian wife do to make a marriage happy? It may require some changes in her personality, just as the husband may have to make some changes. If the woman tends to be independent, well able to care for herself, she may find that it is not so easy to be in subjection to a husband. She may have to make some adjustments in her thinking, even drastic changes in some cases, so as to do her part in making a happy union. W 9/15 13, 14

Tuesday, November 28

If anyone does not provide for those who are his own, and especially for those who are members of his household, he has disowned the faith and is worse than a person without faith.
—1 Tim. 5:8.

The servant of Jehovah God who experiences problems because of economic difficulties has a big advantage over those who do not serve Jehovah. He is comforted by the fact that the God he serves knows his situation better than he does, and, as a loving Father,

can be trusted to assist in time of need. Would Jehovah God provide meetings for spiritual strengthening, and opportunities for preaching the good news of the incoming new order, and yet not back up his servants who put God's interests first in their lives? (Matt. 6:33) Also, since God himself says that 'one who does not provide for his own is worse than an unbeliever,' would he not himself abide by that same principle? "Is there injustice with God? Never may that become so!" declares the apostle Paul. May we always have a like confidence in our God, Jehovah!—Rom. 9:14. W 4/1 17a

Wednesday, November 29

You wives, be in subjection to your husbands, as it is becoming in the Lord. You husbands, keep on loving your wives and do not be bitterly angry with them. You children, be obedient to your parents in everything, for this is well-pleasing in the Lord.
—Col. 3:18-20.

A woman's devoted care for her family is part of her sacred service, since Jehovah has given her that assignment. And she should be whole-souled in carrying it out as befits an assignment from God. The same is true of the husband, for he must carry out his assigned role to provide things needful and to give loving oversight to the family. So wives' obedience to husbands, husbands' love for wives, children's obeying parents—all should be whole-souled to be pleasing to Jehovah. (Col. 3:23, 24) Are we dealing with these positions that we have in Jehovah's arrangement in a sacred way—or in a profane or worldly way? Of course, apart from these family responsibilities, a vital part of sacred service is bearing witness. W 8/1 8, 9

Thursday, November 30

Everyone must be salted with fire.—Mark 9:49.

With those words Jesus concluded his discussion about a disciple's letting his hand, foot and eye make him stumble into Gehenna. That is to say, everyone guilty of letting body members make him stumble to an irrecoverable fall had to be "salted with fire." The fire with which he must thus be salted was the "fire" about which Jesus had just been talking, the fire of Gehenna. What would that mean for one salted in this way? Not the same as the effect of one's

being salted with salt. It would mean the individual's destruction. When the ancient cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were salted with fire from heaven they were destroyed. (Luke 17:28, 29) Jehovah holds to this rule of dealing with all who have no one to blame but themselves for stumbling to a fall. As a safeguard against our being "salted with fire" we must "deadened [our] body members that are upon the earth as respects fornication, uncleanness, sexual appetite, hurtful desire . . . On account of those things the wrath of God is coming." —Col. 3:5, 6. W 8/15 19, 20a

Friday, December 1

Better is one who is patient than one who is haughty in spirit. Do not hurry yourself in your spirit to become offended, for the taking of offense is what rests in the bosom of the stupid ones.—Eccl. 7:8, 9.

We should avoid viewing undue impatience lightly. Note that the patient person is here contrasted with the one who is haughty or proud. The proud person may reason: Why should I have to put up with irritations and annoyances caused by the stupidity and selfishness of others? Who do they think I am? Also, the haughty one is quick to take everything personally and to lash out against anyone who might correct him. He nurtures resentment, keeping it close to him as if in his own bosom. Truly, such a person is "stupid." His haste in taking offense results in rash words or actions, to his own hurt and that of others. He is also unbalanced in his view of himself. (Rom. 12:3) Furthermore, the individual may jeopardize his standing with Jehovah.—1 Pet. 5:5. W 2/1 5, 6a

Saturday, December 2

You are too pure in eyes to see what is bad; and to look on trouble you are not able. Why is it that you look on those dealing treacherously, that you keep silent when someone wicked swallows up someone more righteous than he is?—Hab. 1:13.

Today we see on this planet a shocking abundance of war, revolution, all manner of injustice, crime and corruption, oppression and tyranny. All such wickedness is rebellion against God as the almighty Sovereign and therefore he will bring about the great catastrophe that will mark an end to all the wicked. All such wickedness is an affront to him, which he cannot tolerate indefinitely. That is why Jesus began his Model Prayer with the petition: "Let your name be sanctified." (Matt. 6:9) God's comments about the days of Noah show that the wicked conditions back there were an affront to Him and so He took action. (Gen. 6:3, 5, 6) And now, for ages, righteous men have been asking the question that Habakkuk asked. W 4/15 15, 16

Sunday, December 3

Noah proceeded to do according to all that God had commanded him. He did just so.—Gen. 6:22.

By Noah's day the world of mankind had become exceedingly corrupt and violent. God told Noah that the ancient world was to be destroyed by means of an earth-wide flood. Noah and his family trusted Jehovah, so they began preparing for it. But Noah had to keep trusting Jehovah for many years, since he was told about the flood decades before it occurred. What of the other people of that ancient world? "They took no note," Jesus said. Yet, right at the appointed time "the flood came and swept them all away." (Matt. 24:39) Our existence today demonstrates that God's words are trustworthy. It also proves that the best course for us is to keep trusting Jehovah. Why so? Because all of us are descendants of Noah. Those who did not trust Jehovah in Noah's day did not have any more children. They all perished under the floodwaters, cutting off their lines of descent. How wise to keep trusting Jehovah! He will without fail reward us. W 7/15 6a

Monday, December 4

Let the thief steal no more, but rather let him do hard work, doing with his hands what is good work.—Eph. 4:28.

Honesty is one of the requirements of "The Way" that makes it narrow. What real feeling of security and happiness can we have in a world where we cannot trust our fellowman? Therefore, Christians follow the way of honesty, not in word only, but also in deed. A true Christian will not steal or practice extortion. He will not do business in an underhanded

way, misrepresenting matters. He will not offer bribes for special favors or privileges. Even items found are returned to their owners whenever possible. (Deut. 22:1-3) But can a Christian consistently follow this course in a world system that is operated on dishonest principles? True, at times those who follow true Christianity have suffered loss. But, generally, they are recognized as reliable, conscientious and trustworthy, and able to get along well with others. It takes courage to stand up for honesty, but we can rely on God's promise at Hebrews 13:5, 6. W 10/15 4, 5a

Tuesday, December 5

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous so as to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.—1 John 1:9.

Sometimes individuals err, committing minor trespasses. It is not a requisite to go to elders about every minor offense in order to get right again with God. What should be done, for example, if disparaging speech was used against someone in an isolated case? Or, perhaps a person lost his temper on occasion. Maybe there was a run-in with a brother and a slight altercation ensued that was shortly thereafter regretted. Such incidents could be mentioned to an elder, if one desires to do that. Keep in mind, however, that elders are not "father confessors" having to be approached over every minor infraction of some principle. An elder who is approached about such things would endeavor to be helpful. But his counseling you would not, in itself, make the matter right for you. You gain forgiveness by confessing the wrong to God, repenting and then leaving the wrong course. W 3/1 7

Wednesday, December 6

Let marriage be honorable among all, and the marriage bed be without defilement, for God will judge fornicators and adulterers.—Heb. 13:4.

In early times civil marriage or civil validation of marriage did not play a very prominent part in people's lives. It does not seem to have been a great issue as regards the honorableness of a marriage from the Christian point of view. Apparently the honorableness of a marriage depended most directly upon its acceptance by the Christian congregation as conforming to divine standards, with consideration also being given to attitudes and standards of people in the community where the Christians lived. Christians would seek to be "recommending [themselves] to every human conscience in the sight of God." (2 Cor. 4:2) However, it is a fact that, in more recent times and in many parts of the earth, the relationship of the civil authorities to marriage and its validation has taken on greater prominence. Rightly, Christians must take this fact into account in keeping their marriages "honorable." W 3/15 9, 10a

Thursday, December 7

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.—Gal. 2:9.

In the first century C.E., Jesus Christ provided centralized direction through the apostles and other elders of the Jerusalem congregation. Also Paul, as an apostle to the nations, did much to build up the congregations spiritually. The manner in which

Paul and his associates fulfilled their commission from Jesus to preach and make disciples was acknowledged as fully acceptable by the body of elders at Jerusalem. What about today? Very early in the modern history of Jehovah's Witnesses members of the oldest congregation came to be associated with their publishing agency, the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. Today, living at Bethel, the hive of activity centered at the headquarters of the Society, there are over 200 persons who have energetically pursued spiritual interests there for more than ten years. Many have done so far longer. W 6/1 2, 3a

Friday, December 8

The Lord be with the spirit you show. His undeserved kindness be with you people.—2 Tim. 4:22.

Everyone has a certain spirit. That is, he has a particular disposition, inclination or motivating force. Hence, it is not surprising that people often become well known for the motivation behind what they say and do. Thus Moses is described as "by far the meekest of all the men who were upon the surface of the ground." (Num. 12:3) Abigail, who eventually became the wife of King David, was "good in discretion." (1 Sam. 25:3, 39) True Christians have put on the new personality and should therefore have a fine spirit. After all, they have clothed themselves with such motivating forces as love, compassion, kindness, lowliness of mind, mildness and long-suffering. (Gal. 5:22, 23) Certainly, within the congregation personal attitudes are important, for the apostle Paul, in writing to his co-worker Timothy, expressed himself as above. W 6/15 1-3

Saturday, December 9

If I have put gold as my confidence, . . . I should have denied the true God.
—Job 31:24, 28.

When a person is dead, how many of his material possessions can he enjoy? None of them. But with those who want to keep living, and who turn to God for security, that will not be the case. They will not have let themselves become trapped by material concerns. Indeed, they are ready to abandon any material possession "on that day when the Son of man is to be revealed." (Luke 17:30) How extensive will the destruction of material things be at the coming great tribulation? Only time will tell. But in the examples that the Bible records there was huge material loss. But the Christians who fled Jerusalem before 70 C.E. escaped with their lives and kept their freedom. So, too, at the coming tribulation, there could be great loss materially. So think now, where is your mind, and heart, centered—on this system of things or on God's new order? Your actions, your way of life, show where you look for security. The faithful man Job set a fine example for all of us. *W 4/1 15-17*

Sunday, December 10

More than all else that is to be guarded, safeguard your heart, for out of it are the sources of life.—Prov. 4:23.

When Jehovah "makes proof of our hearts," we want him to find our love and affections centered on him as the One whom we sincerely worship, and not on false gods. (1 Thess. 2:4) For this to be true in our case, we must finally be able to say what the psalmist said to Jehovah God: "I have inclined my heart to do your

regulations to time indefinite, down to the last." (Ps. 119:112) Today, when human maladies abound, spiritual maladies are the most serious. These have a bearing, not just on our present life, but also on our prospects for eternal life in God's new order. Do we desire spiritual well-being now in the midst of a sick world? It is wise to do so, for this gives promise of endless life in happy association with God and his universal organization. Making this our heartfelt desire, then we will conscientiously follow the above certified prescription issued by the finest heart specialist for our times. *W 11/1 24, 25*

Monday, December 11

Deaden, therefore, your body members that are upon the earth as respects fornication, uncleanness, sexual appetite, hurtful desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of those things the wrath of God is coming.
—Col. 3:5, 6.

To do such a deadening, what must we do? We must really exercise self-control over our literal body members that are upon the earth. For instance, we must restrain our eyes from reading pornographic literature or looking at filthy motion pictures or television presentations, or using our hands in thievery or immoral practices, or gratifying the urge of our feet to dance or to walk companionably with a friend of this world into areas of temptation. We must spiritually kill our love for "the things in the world," that is, "the desire of the flesh and the desire of the eyes and the showy display of one's means of life." (1 John 2:15, 16) We must also hate what God hates.—Prov. 6:16-19. *W 8/15 21a*

Tuesday, December 12

Make friends for yourselves by means of the unrighteous riches.—Luke 16:9.

Jesus' words here give rise to the question: What are these "unrighteous riches"? There is certainly nothing unrighteous about spiritual riches. But this cannot be said about material wealth. Both the possession of and the desire for material riches can lead persons to commit unrighteous acts. Wealthy persons may become oppressive, harsh and callous. Instead of responding compassionately toward persons in need, they may take unfair advantage of them, even as James reminds us. (Jas. 2:6, 7) Some of such persons indulged their corrupt desires for pleasure while refusing to pay the wages due their workers. (Jas. 5:4, 5) Other people, because of a driving desire to gain riches, have resorted to fraud and deceit to attain their goals. "He that is hastening to gain riches will not remain innocent." (Prov. 28:20) In view of all the undesirable factors that are so frequently tied in with material riches, Jesus rightly applied the term "unrighteous" to them. *W 9/12 3a*

Wednesday, December 13

You have acted foolishly. You have not kept the commandment of Jehovah . . . now your kingdom will not last.
—1 Sam. 13:13, 14.

While there may be just cause to become impatient at times, we need to recognize the seriousness of impatience that stems from pride or that can cause us to act rashly. Illustrating this danger is the case of King Saul. After Jonathan struck down the Philistines at Geba, they, in retaliation, assembled a mighty force and encamped at Michmash. In the meantime Saul was at

Gilgal in the Jordan valley, waiting for the prophet Samuel. When the prophet did not arrive at the expected time, Saul became impatient. Fearing the consequences of delay, he yielded to impatience and presumptuously went ahead with the sacrifice, disregarding the command of Jehovah, through Samuel, to wait. Saul's impatience, leading to a sinful act, was one of the chief reasons for Jehovah's removing kingship from his line of descent. So we should never underestimate the trouble that undue impatience may bring upon us. *W 2/1 8a*

Thursday, December 14

We have as high priest . . . one who has been tested in all respects like ourselves, but without sin. Let us, therefore, approach with freedom of speech to the throne of undeserved kindness, that we may obtain . . . help at the right time.—Heb. 4:15, 16.

To the obedient "other sheep," Christ becomes the "Eternal Father" who can give them life. (John 10:16; Isa. 9:6) The testing that he underwent on earth assures us of the tenderest, most considerate and understanding help. Christ's righteous life gained for him God's favorable decree that he had maintained perfect obedience, completely free from sin, free from entertaining even a wrong thought. This provides proof that, with His help, anyone can maintain integrity and gain God's smile of approval, and that even now. On reaching perfection, a man can maintain the same perfect sinless obedience. What a great work Christ's life, his sacrifice and his priesthood accomplish! He aids 144,000 others to be kings and priests with him, and to bless humankind through their work. *W 10/1 4, 5a*

Friday, December 15

You are near in their mouth, but far away from their kidneys.—Jer. 12:2.

To men we might appear to be one thing, but to God, whose scrutinizing eyes pierce the surface appearance and circumstances and probe into the lowest depths of us, we may really be another thing. Material and social well-being does not of itself mean a good relationship with God, a close intimacy with him. If we are not careful, we could be classed with those Israelites who seemed to have God's favor and backing, but who inwardly were estranged from him, and of whom Jeremiah wrote. So, when things go nicely and pleasantly with such kind, they may take God's Word in their mouths and do a lot of talking about him. Yet, deep within themselves—in their real subsurface selves—they do not have a close tie with God. He plays no real part in their inward lives. He is far away from their kidneys. His advice is not implanted away down inside them. So, when they persecute Christians, their kidneys do not correct them. May we never be like that! W 11/1 18, 19a

Saturday, December 16

All the body, by being . . . made to cooperate through every joint that gives what is needed, . . . makes for the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.—Eph. 4:16.

The serious responsibility associated with making disciples does not rest solely with the person conducting the Bible study. All in the congregation, by word and example, can aid those who are studying the Bible to become disciples of Christ. How is this? In the congregation there are fine

examples in Christian kindness, generosity, depth of concern, spiritual insight and appreciation. As a Bible student observes the fine conduct of various ones, he is affected in a wholesome way and is encouraged to make progress in Christian living. That is why those who are conducting Bible studies do well to acquaint interested persons with others in the congregation. In this way these fellow believers can do their part in assisting Bible students to become disciples of Jesus Christ. All of this is in line with the principle given above. W 5/1 13a

Sunday, December 17

The undeserved kindness of the Lord Jesus Christ be with the spirit you show.—Phil. 4:23.

Just as a person manifests a particular spirit, so an entire congregation of God's people has a certain spirit. It is very likely that an observant person will notice the effects of that force at work in their minds and hearts, perhaps producing a spirit of friendliness, love, or one of tranquility and peace, or of zeal and enthusiasm. Of course, the spirit could be one that produces negative effects. But what a blessing when that spirit is a fine one! Obviously, the apostle Paul desired that the congregations display such a spirit. Your congregation may have an excellent spirit, and may be very responsive to counsel from the Scriptures. Moreover, it may have a loving, warm, cooperative, hospitable spirit. Those associated with the congregation may be very spiritual in their viewpoint. In that case, 'the undeserved kindness of the Lord Jesus Christ is with the spirit your congregation shows.' —Gal. 6:18; Philem. 25. W 6/15 4, 5

Monday, December 18

Admonish the disorderly, speak consolingly to the depressed souls, support the weak, be long-suffering toward all.—1 Thess. 5:14.

Yes, frequently fellow believers have spiritual needs. According to the words of the apostle Paul above, all in the congregation have a responsibility to do what they can to provide spiritual aid. Some may be neglectful of their Christian obligations and therefore need to be admonished. Older women, for example, may need to "recall the young women to their senses to love their husbands, to love their children, to be sound in mind, chaste, workers at home, good, subjecting themselves to their own husbands." (Titus 2:4, 5) Those who are disheartened because of problems need encouragement. Might they not be built up by hearing what Scriptural thoughts have sustained you? Would it not be strengthening for them to be assured of your concern? There may be some who have a weak conscience. Hence, those with a strong conscience should bear the weaknesses of their brothers by not insisting on their rights. W 7/1 19a

Tuesday, December 19

Abhor what is wicked, cling to what is good.—Rom. 12:9.

From what the Bible says about Esau and King Saul, we can draw some vital points as to whether a wrongdoer is truly repentant. (Gen. 25:29-34; 27:34; 1 Sam. 15:17-30) Tears may accompany expressions of true sorrow. Nonetheless, like Esau's tears, emotional displays are not in themselves proof of repentance. By the same token, the absence of such does not necessarily mean that the erring

one is unrepentant. The important thing is that the individual deeply regrets the wrong, acknowledging it as a sin against Jehovah. He would bring into question any claimed repentance if he continued to justify or excuse his actions. The person should come to hate the wrong, loathe it, abhor it. While there may be a natural measure of embarrassment in his having become guilty of grave sin, his primary concern should be the reproach he brought upon Jehovah God and the congregation. He should sincerely regret having damaged his relationship with Jehovah. W 11/15 9a

Wednesday, December 20

Here I have made you today a fortified city and an iron pillar and copper walls against all the land.—Jer. 1:18.

Jeremiah's prophesying roused opposition. His opposers desired to kill him. Think of the resistance that Jeremiah had to put up, the endurance he had to display—for more than forty years! He was one of Jehovah's spokesmen to whom James directed our attention, saying: "Take as a pattern of the suffering of evil and the exercising of patience the prophets, who spoke in the name of Jehovah." (Jas. 5:10) Jeremiah's constantly reminding himself that he had not come in his own name, but that he spoke in Jehovah's name, strengthened him to endure and defeat the purpose of his attackers who were really fighting against God. Jehovah did not strike Jeremiah with terror before his foes, for Jeremiah did not let himself be struck with terror at their menacing appearance and numbers. (Jer. 1:17) That was excellent for twenty-six centuries ago and also an illustration for our day. W 12/15 6, 8

Thursday, December 21

My judicial decision is to gather nations, . . . kingdoms, in order to pour out upon them . . . all my burning anger; for by the fire of my zeal all the earth will be devoured.—Zeph. 3:8.

Daniel prophesied similarly at Daniel 12:1. Jesus Christ referred to this time in his great prophecy regarding the conclusion of this system of things. (Matt. 24:21, 22) And the book of Revelation tells of the battle of the great day of God the Almighty, taking place at Armageddon. (Rev. 16:14, 16) But why should the Creator want to bring such a worldwide holocaust, such a global catastrophe upon humankind? Because as the Creator and Owner of the earth he is keenly interested in this planet and the people on it. Remember, Jesus Christ told us to pray for God's kingdom to come, for God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven. For that prayer to be answered God will need to rid the earth of all violence and wickedness, together with all men and institutions opposed to his sovereignty, opposed to having God's will done on earth. W 4/15 9-11

Friday, December 22

Search out for yourselves seven certified men . . . full of spirit and wisdom, that we may appoint them.—Acts 6:3.

The growth of the Jerusalem congregation opened up opportunities for others besides the apostles to serve in caring for the needs of all. Very early in the history of the congregation we read of young men who evidently rendered manual services for the apostles. What fine training for the future these young men were receiving by being in close association with the

apostles! In time, the relief work became just too much for the apostles to supervise. Hence, they invited the brothers in the congregation to select from among themselves seven qualified men to handle the daily distribution of food. All seven were men of outstanding spiritual qualifications, "full of spirit and wisdom." Also, as the congregation grew, the apostles must have appointed such men to serve along with them as elders in caring for the spiritual needs of the disciples. Today ministerial servants enjoy similar privileges with like prospects. W 6/1 9

Saturday, December 23

I am he who searches the kidneys and hearts, and I will give to you individually according to your deeds.

—Rev. 2:23.

Let us remember: We are now under special examination. Ever since Pentecost God's servants have also been under examination by the head of the Christian congregation, Jesus Christ. Among the messages he sent to the seven designated congregations of Asia Minor he made the above warning statement. Let us not forget: Jesus Christ now searches through us beyond the heart and down to the kidneys. In Revelation 2:18 he speaks of his eyes as being "like a fiery flame," to indicate that his visual powers are very bright, sharp and penetrating to great depths. In this respect he is like Jehovah God, who is "searching the heart, examining the kidneys." (Jer. 17:10) So, if we honestly search our heart motives and examine what we really are as Christian personalities, we can take courage to reveal our case at law to Jehovah and wait on him to act as the Righteous One to vindicate us. W 11/1 21, 22a

Sunday, December 24

The little one himself will become a thousand, and the small one a mighty nation.

I myself, Jehovah, shall speed it up in its own time.—Isa. 60:22.

By the end of World War II, the integrity-keeping Christians had grown to about 140,000 in number. Now they learned that a great work remained to be done and they shouldered this responsibility with the attitude described in *The Watchtower* of September 15, 1944, page 280: "The awake ones . . . do not say, 'It is a long time yet to the wind-up . . .'. No; the faithful watchers and servants do not worry about chronology . . . They keep their eye and heart on Jehovah's kingdom, and not on the time clock." Today, we find more than 2,000,000 persons actively engaged in proclaiming the Kingdom, and further expansion is in prospect, for at the 1977 Memorial the total attendance was 5,107, 518, of whom only 10,080 professed to be of the anointed class. How happy this "slave" is that Jehovah's patience has resulted in an ingathering far beyond the early expectations! W 1/1 12, 13

Monday, December 25

God went on to say: "Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness."

—Gen. 1:26.

The issue is one of sovereignty—God's sovereignty or rulership—not, however, as to whether God is sovereign. This is a fact. But a challenge was made with regard to the deservedness and righteousness of Jehovah's sovereignty. It is because of this issue that God has allowed wickedness to exist for a time. God's permission of wickedness all revolves around

the fact that God made the first human pair in *his image and likeness*. Men are free moral agents. They can make a choice to do good or bad. They are not robots "programmed" to do only good. Adam and Eve, as such intelligent persons, were perfect in this regard. To create them unable to make moral choices would leave them incomplete, with something lacking. For God to withhold freedom of decision or freedom to choose right or wrong would have precluded their having been made in his image. To guide them Jehovah God gave them a conscience.—Rom. 2:15. W 10/1 8, 9a

Tuesday, December 26

Before these days Theudas rose, . . . and a number of men . . . joined his party. But he was done away with . . . After him Judas the Galilean rose . . . and he drew off people after him. And yet that man perished, and all those who were obeying him were scattered abroad.

—Acts 5:36, 37.

Consider the situation in Jerusalem in the first century C.E. The people in general and their leaders acknowledged that conditions were far from satisfactory. Yet, what were the wise men and leaders of the people predicting about the future? Some were quite satisfied with the *status quo*. Others advocated revolt against Rome. None, however, of that city's wise men and counselors were foretelling that Jerusalem would be completely destroyed in a great tribulation—and within that generation. Any such eventuality was farthest from their thoughts! Today a like condition prevails, in spite of the worldwide Kingdom preaching of Jehovah's people. W 1/15 5

Wednesday, December 27

Is there anyone sick among you? Let him call the older men . . . and let them pray over him . . . And the prayer of faith will make the indisposed one well, and Jehovah will raise him up. Also, if he has committed sins, it will be forgiven him.—Jas. 5:14, 15.

Imperfection has deeply ingrained itself in the human family. This may be more pronounced in the actions of some who say or do things that are annoying. Without realizing it a person may make a "nuisance" of himself by repeatedly approaching the elders about some fancied wrong. On the other hand, brothers who are spiritually disturbed over some problem should feel free to approach elders. If serious sins have been committed, that is an evidence of some weakness that needs to be rectified. A person may reach a point where his own prayers seem to be hindered; he may feel condemned in his heart, losing confidence and freeness of speech. (1 John 5:14; 4:17, 18) In such cases, one is urged to approach the older men, confess one's sins, and benefit from their counsel. W 3/1 8, 9

Thursday, December 28

The overseer should therefore be irreprehensible.
—1 Tim. 3:2.

Since elders have such a weighty responsibility in the Christian congregation, their conduct should certainly be exemplary. Therefore, if an elder commits a grave wrong, he is morally obligated to inform the body of elders respecting this, even though he may have repented of his error. Why? Because, having ceased to be irreprehensible, he is now disqualified from continuing to serve as an

overseer. For men with serious spiritual blemishes to serve as elders would not conform to God's standard of holiness. If there is a valid accusation against an elder or if he confesses to gross sin, the other elders should assume full responsibility for relieving him of his eldership and should reprove him as needed, imposing whatever restrictions are advisable. Or, if he is unrepentant, they should take disfellowshipping action. Instances of wrongdoing involving ministerial servants should be dealt with in the same way.—1 Tim. 3:10. W 11/15 16, 18, 19a

Friday, December 29

The wife should have deep respect for her husband.
—Eph. 5:33.

If a wife has a husband who has not until now shown the consideration she would like to see, she has the opportunity to work for improvement. The apostle Peter said that women with unbelieving husbands could help their spouses if such wives, by their chaste conduct together with deep respect, showed Christian subjection to their husbands. (1 Pet. 3:2) That being the case, the matter should be far easier to handle if the husband is a dedicated and baptized Christian, working with his wife in Jehovah's service. There are many ways that wives can win over their husbands. It can be by the way that they maintain the home. If it is kept clean and tidy, that can go a long way in encouraging the husband to play his role properly. Do you take pleasure in your role as homemaker? When your husband's friends come to visit, is he proud of the home into which he has them enter? That is something to think about. W 9/15 14, 15

Saturday, December 30

Serve Jehovah with rejoicing. Come in before him with a joyful cry.—Ps. 100:2.

Thus the ancient psalmist encouraged the people of Israel. He desired all Israel to gather to the temple at Jerusalem to engage in pure worship. We can gain strength and encouragement by considering the situation and faith of those who served Jehovah back there. They had to maintain obedience to the Law, which held the highest standard of morality and which, by its sanitary and dietary laws, tended to keep the Jews from association with those not worshipers of the true God. At times they were called upon to fight these people who, generally, desired to destroy Israel and take their land. Imagine the courage it took to go out in battle against these nations, their soldiers being hardened warriors, while the Israelites, for the most part, spent their time in peaceful farming pursuits. But because of their faith in God they were able to win. W 8/1 16, 17a

Sunday, December 31

In your skirts there have been found the blood marks of the souls of the innocent poor ones.—Jer. 2:34.

Before the gaze of the whole world Christendom still flaunts the evidences of her death-dealing course of action. She is the most reprehensible part of the world empire of false religion, for she claims to act in the name of Christianity or in the name of the religion approved by the God of the Bible. No wonder the non-Christian world has no respect for what professes to be Christian! By Christendom the God of the Bible has been presented in a false light. Her guilt is not hid from his eyes. He will deservedly punish it openly in full. But first he has raised up the Jeremiah class (who are supported by the "great crowd" of "other sheep") to call the attention of everybody to the apostate, adulterous course of this world's biggest religious organization. The hour approaches for Jehovah's executorial forces to overtake Christendom. W 12/15 14b

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