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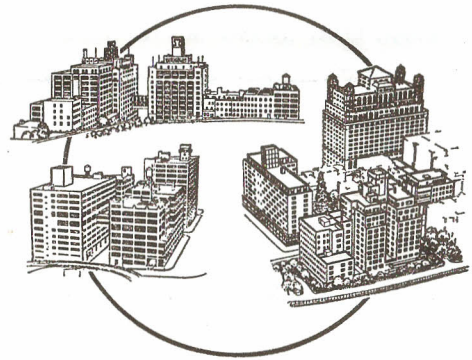
YEAR
BOOK

1980

YEARBOOK
OF
JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES



**1980
YEARBOOK**
of Jehovah's Witnesses
Containing Report for the Service Year
of 1979
Also Daily Texts and Comments



Corporate Publishers
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*Jehovah's Witnesses
are grateful to their
Heavenly Father, Jehovah,
for the privilege of sharing
with all mankind the marvelous
Kingdom hope through Jesus Christ.
—Rom. 15:12, 13.*

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1980 YEARBOOK of Jehovah's Witnesses

Millions of people today find themselves with 'no hope and without God in the world.' (Eph. 2:12) Notwithstanding the glowing human promises made in this century for a better future, they despair of ever seeing the troubled world conditions straightened out. They are swept along with the spirit of the world, thus becoming apathetic, depressed and cynical. In their frustrations many turn to violence, drugs, sexual immorality, crime and even suicide. Thus a report from New Zealand states: "Never have people been so demoralized, so dissatisfied with human government."

But there is a notable exception. There is a group of people, upward of two million of them, scattered throughout some 200 lands and islands of the seas, who have a 'living hope' regarding the future. Why? Because they have implicit faith in the ability and willingness of the Creator to set matters straight in his own due time. And they have strong reasons for believing that that due time is close at hand. Who are they? They are Jehovah's Witnesses. They have experienced in their own lives the fulfillment of these inspired words: "May the God who gives hope fill

you with all joy and peace by your believing, that you may abound in hope with power of holy spirit.”—Rom. 15:13; 1 Pet. 1:3.

✓THEIR HOPE

Their hope is based on God's sure promises. What has God promised? His promises are highlighted in the words that his Son, Jesus Christ, spoke while here on earth, and in the prayer that he taught his followers to pray: “Our Father in the heavens, let your name be sanctified. Let your kingdom come. Let your will take place, as in heaven, also upon earth.” Here, he was giving Christians something for which to hope. (Matt. 6:9, 10; 7:7) For in making these petitions, Christians would be looking forward in faith to the vindication of God's name, the triumph of righteousness, and the doing away with religious hypocrisy and all other evils on earth.

Yes, for God's will to be done upon earth means that God “will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore.” (Rev. 21:4) Those words, in effect, promise everlasting life in perfection and happiness on a paradise earth for billions of Adam's offspring, living and dead. Furthermore, the time for these things to be realized is near at hand. This is seen by the physical facts in fulfillment of such prophecies as those found at Matthew chapters 24 and 25, Mark chapter 13, Luke chapter 21, 2 Timothy 3:1-5 and Revelation 6:1-8.

For all mourning and tears to be done away with, there would also need to be the returning of loved ones from the graves. So we are given the hope of a resurrection of “all those in the

memorial tombs,” “of both the righteous and the unrighteous.” Because of this hope Christians do not mourn as do others.—John 5:28, 29; Acts 24:15; 1 Thess. 4:13.

STRONG BASIS FOR HOPE

Why can Jehovah's Witnesses be so confident about their Christian hope? First of all because Jehovah God, the Creator, does indeed exist. All his visible creation testifies to that; and not only to his existence, but also to ever so many of his marvelous qualities or attributes, such as his wisdom, power and love. (Rom. 1:20) Further, his dealings with humankind, as recorded in his Word, prove that he is a faithful God, that he simply cannot lie. (Titus 1:2; Heb. 10:23) Because of this Christians “have strong encouragement to lay hold on the hope set before” them. What Jehovah God promises he fulfills.—Heb. 6:18.

The very steps that Jehovah God has taken to bring about the fulfillment of his promises give Christians further basis for strong hope. Foremost among these steps is his sending his Son to earth to die for our sins. Since humankind had been sold into the slavery of sin and death through Adam's sin, for us to be able to enjoy everlasting life under Kingdom conditions, the slavery to sin and death would have to be abolished. (Rom. 5:12) To this end God “gave his only-begotten Son, in order that everyone exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life.” Since then God has been making further preparations for Kingdom blessings by calling out and training 144,000 anointed followers of Jesus to be associated with him as the ‘seed of Abra-

ham,' which will bless all mankind.—John 3:16; Gal. 3:16, 29; Rev. 14:1; 20:6.

THE POWER OF HOPE

Hope and faith are closely related. But it would be a mistake to view hope as a mere aspect of faith. Bible writers distinguish between the two as at 1 Corinthians 13:13: "Now, however, there remain faith, hope, love, these three." Faith gives substance to hope, even as we read: "Faith is the assured expectation of things hoped for." On the other hand, hope strengthens faith.—Heb. 11:1.

Hope sustained the faithful men of old. Without a doubt the prophecy Jehovah God gave in Eden furnished Abel a basis for hope: "I shall put enmity between you [the Serpent] and the woman and between your seed and her seed. He will bruise you in the head and you will bruise him in the heel." Because of this promise the apostle Paul could write: "For the eager expectation of the creation [the world of mankind] is waiting [although unknowingly] for the revealing of the sons of God [Christ's anointed body members]. For the creation was subjected to futility, not by its own will but through him that subjected it, on the basis of hope that the creation itself also will be set free from enslavement to corruption and have the glorious freedom of the children of God. For we know that all creation keeps on groaning together and being in pain together until now."—Gen. 3:15; Rom. 8:19-22.

The patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were sustained by the hope of a "city" having real foundations, God's kingdom. Because of this they were able to reach out for a better place, to one

belonging to heaven. Hope also sustained the prophet Moses.—Heb. 11:10, 13-22, 24-26, 35.

And was it not hope that sustained Jesus Christ? Yes, for we read that it was "for the joy that was set before him" that he was able to endure so much and come off victoriously. He had strong confidence in the ultimate triumph of righteousness, even as can be seen by his Model Prayer. He also had the hope of again sharing the glory he originally had with his Father.—Heb. 12:2; John 17:5.

What a sad picture Jesus' apostles and other disciples presented when their Master was put to death! At that time they were without hope, depressed, fearful, inactive. But what a change took place when their hopes were revived by means of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead!—Luke 24:17, 32.

How prominently hope loomed up in their lives after that! In particular did they have strong hope in the return of their Master and in the resurrection of the dead. Their hope, in fact, became the issue between the rulers and those Christians. Thus on one occasion the apostle Paul stated in court that it was because of "the hope of the promise that was made by God to our forefathers I stand called to judgment."—Acts 26:6, 7; 23:6; 3:21.

No question about it, hope has sustaining power. It supports us when under trial, when tests and disappointments come. The Christians at Thessalonica demonstrated this, for Paul wrote them, "we bear incessantly in mind your faithful work and your loving labor and your endurance due to your hope in our Lord Jesus Christ before our God and Father."—1 Thess. 1:3.

Hope also serves as a protection. That is why it is likened to a helmet: "Let us keep our senses and have on the breastplate of faith and love and as a helmet the hope of salvation." (1 Thess. 5:8; Eph. 6:17) Just as the helmet of old, made of various materials, protected a soldier engaged in carnal warfare, so hope, the spiritual helmet, protects our minds against attacks by doubts as to our teachings and against temptations to violate Bible principles.

Because hope also makes for security it is likened to an anchor. "This hope we have as an anchor for the soul, both sure and firm." (Heb. 6:19) Even as an anchor serves to keep a ship firm, secure and steady in the midst of a raging storm, so our Christian hope helps us survive the storms of life, whatever their nature—disappointments, injustices, sickness, adversity or persecution.

STRENGTHENING THE CHRISTIAN HOPE

Without a doubt, Jehovah God caused all the foregoing to be recorded in his Word so that "through the comfort from the Scriptures we might have hope." (Rom. 15:4) It follows then, that by feeding daily on God's Word we will strengthen our hope. This requires both time and effort. Actually it means taking time that we would ordinarily spend doing other things and using it for Bible reading and study. (Eph. 5:11, 15, 16) Since no Christian is sufficient in himself, we must also meet with fellow Christians. At such meetings we can incite others and be incited by them to love and fine works by making public declaration of our hope. (1 Cor. 12:14-26; Heb. 10:23-25) In fact, whenever opportunities come

our way we want to "make fast our hold on our freeness of speech and our boasting over the hope firm to the end." The more we do so, the brighter and stronger our hope becomes.—Heb. 3:6.

But let us not overlook that it is also "through our endurance" that we gain hope. Not only does hope help us to endure, but endurance, in turn, strengthens our hope. That is why it is written: "Let us exult while in tribulations, since we know that tribulation produces endurance; endurance, in turn, an approved condition; the approved condition, in turn, hope, and the hope does not lead to disappointment." Yes, when we keep doing God's will, resisting opposition and temptations, we gain the realization that God approves us, that we are pleasing to him. This, in turn, strengthens our hope. (Rom. 5:3-5) It is even as we also read: "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, in order that you may . . . through faith and patience inherit the promises."—Heb. 6:11, 12.

What else can strengthen our hope? Unselfish love will, for "love . . . believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things." (1 Cor. 13:4, 7) Love believes all things that God has promised in his Word, thereby strengthening hope. Love will make us optimistic, positive, forward looking; it will make us hope for the best. Hope does not easily give up as to prospects for improvement in others. It is ready to give them the benefit of the doubt. Love will cause a Christian mate to keep on hoping that the unbeliever will eventually become a believer. Time and again such hoping has been rewarded after as much as 25 years! When we are going from house to house with the

good news of God's kingdom, love will make us hopeful about finding sheeplike ones who are hungering and thirsting for righteousness.

Holding a good conscience, being honest with ourselves and having a good relationship with our heavenly Father will also serve to strengthen our hope. Because of having a bad heart Judas saw his case as hopeless and so committed suicide. (Matt. 27:3-5) Because of having a good heart the apostle Peter was able to recover from his having denied his Master three times. (Matt. 26:75; John 21:15-17) Due to his having a good conscience the apostle Paul could hopefully ask others to pray for him: "Carry on prayer for us, for we trust we have an honest conscience."—Heb. 13:18.

As has been previously observed, prayers are, in effect, expressions of hope. We strengthen our hope by expressing it in prayer and we should also pray for God to strengthen our hope even as Jesus emphasized that always we should 'pray and not give up.' (Luke 18:1) So, we keep praying for our hopes to be realized in God's due time. Since the more we pray, the stronger our hope will become, let us 'keep praying incessantly,' yes, keep 'persevering in prayer.'—1 Thess. 5:17; Rom. 12:12.

That Jehovah's Witnesses have this kind of hope can be seen from the reports of their hope-inspired activity for the 1979 service year.

GOOD NEWS DUE TO HOPE-INSPIRED ACTIVITY

"As cold water upon a tired soul, so is a good report from a distant land." (Prov. 25:25) Good reports have indeed come this year from many lands. This is truly cause for rejoicing, for Jehovah's people have experienced severe testings in

recent years. There have been testings due to disappointments regarding the realization of certain hopes. In more and more lands nationalism is making the witness work more difficult. There are ever-increasing economic pressures due to inflation and unemployment. The modern trend toward materialism, pleasure-seeking and the gratifying of fleshly desires has been taking its toll. (For example, had it not been for disellowshipings, the United States would have seen an increase of almost 3.5 percent instead of almost 1.5 percent.)

That there truly is cause for thanksgiving can be seen from the fact that in spite of slight decreases in literature placements during the 1979 service year there was an increase of about 14 percent in baptisms for a total of 113,672. There were also increases in hours, about 4 percent, and also slight increases in return visits and home Bible studies. Also cause for thanksgiving are the reports from such lands as Nigeria and the Philippines. After a few years of decreases in the number of Witnesses in these lands, recent months have seen a definite upswing. In one African land—in spite of a ban—Witnesses by the thousands were able to attend circuit assemblies, and hundreds have been baptized. Their hopes are bright and strong in spite of their situation.

The news from Malawi, on the whole, is encouraging. Our brothers have won out. (Isa. 54:17) The year 1979 marked a turning point, for most of our brothers there have been released, although thousands remain in refugee camps across the border in Mozambique. Currently, government officials are stressing the paying of taxes, so that now a tax receipt rather than a party

card is what they require. This furnishes no problem for the Witnesses. Relief was also provided for those who were in need of material things. In many places brothers are making a good name for themselves by working hard on community projects. The number of circuits and home Bible studies have increased, along with baptisms.

Hope-inspired activity in Brazil resulted in an all-time peak of 106,970 Witnesses as well as an all-time peak Memorial attendance of 299,453. During the year a total of 9,387 persons symbolized their dedication by water baptism. Hong Kong saw a 10-percent increase; Italy an 8-percent increase, for a total of 77,774 Witnesses, and Japan a 10-percent increase, with a peak of 50,473 publishers. It was also happyfying to see increases this year, though not large, in such lands as the United States and Great Britain. By consulting the chart one can note many other lands that showed increases. Germany saw hundreds more baptized than were last year.

Among the most encouraging aspects of the 1979 service year report is the greatly increased number of those who shared in the pioneer and especially the auxiliary pioneer work; the latter requires devoting 60 hours a month to preaching and teaching. This shows that ever so many of Jehovah's Witnesses have the self-sacrificing spirit in spite of the world's trend to ever more self-indulgence.

Thus the past year saw Japan reach a peak of 15,194 pioneers, which at the time was more than 30 percent of the total Witnesses. In Korea there was a 46-percent increase in the number of auxiliary pioneers over last year. There one

Witness taxi driver serves as such although working the greater part of each day to earn a living. How does he do it? He leaves a Bible study aid in the back seat of his cab, and that often results in opportunities to witness. In this way he has been able to place as many as 142 books in one month. Also in Korea, on an average each month 15 percent of the brothers imprisoned because of their stand on neutrality manage to do auxiliary pioneer work.

Among other lands that give encouraging reports of this feature of the witness work are Great Britain, France and the United States. In Great Britain mothers with several small children manage to arrange their affairs to serve in this way six to nine months out of the year. In Mexico mothers with six, seven and even ten children occasionally manage to do the same. In Newfoundland one mother successfully served as such for one month although working eight hours a day at a secular job, having an unemployed husband and seven children to care for!

THE PRINTED PAGE GIVES HOPE

Can one tract cause a truth-hungry person to embrace the Bible hope that the Witnesses bring? Indeed it can. A Witness going from house to house in Sesotha, South Africa, met a woman who, as the result of reading the tract "Why Are We Here?" was waiting for the Witnesses to call. She wanted to become a member of their "church," for it was clear to her from reading this tract that the Witnesses had the truth. A Bible study was started with her and a year later she dedicated herself to God and was baptized.

Can reading one copy of a magazine inspire

hope in a person? Again, the answer is Yes. A prisoner in Portugal chanced to receive a copy of the *Awake!* magazine for the first time. His response? He wrote to the branch there: "Dear Sirs: I read *Awake!* magazine for the first time and would like to express my appreciation for this splendid magazine which I found endowed with non-political, humanistic and one hundred percent realistic tenor. I am really unable to express all that I felt, however, I will try to give a picture of what could have been my career if I had spent my leisure time reading a magazine like *Awake!* Then I would have followed a course different to that which brought me behind prison bars . . . Nevertheless, I am convinced that with the precious aid of *Awake!* magazine, I will succeed in making a new course for my life."

From the following it is clear that reading just one book can also give one the Bible-based hope: In Mexico a young woman, a drug addict and in miserable shape both physically and morally, asked for some cigarettes from a Witness who was visiting a prison. In place of cigarettes she was given a copy of the *Truth* book. Circumstances prevented making a return visit on her but a year later the Witness who had given her the book met her on the street. She was very happy. She had overcome her drug habit and was now associated with the Witnesses. She had liked the book so much that she got in touch with the publishers of it, began studying the Bible with the Witnesses and before long dedicated herself to God and was baptized.

In particular has the beautifully illustrated publication *My Book of Bible Stories* been an effective instrument in building hope in people. Thus from

Belize, Central America, comes this report: "The book *My Book of Bible Stories* seems to have taken Belize by storm. One eighty-year-old man, in appreciation for what he had learned, said: 'After all these years I just discovered that I was still a boy.' It is common for people to approach a Witness on the street and ask for 'one of those books like my neighbor has.' Books are requested by people who have never listened before. Among schoolchildren it is THE book to have." An experienced Nigerian Witness expressed similar sentiments. It is a "book that appeals to both friend and foe . . . I have seen people come to Jehovah's Witnesses' homes asking for a book. . . . I see that even persons that never allowed Jehovah's Witnesses to stand at their doors before come asking for the book. In our territory it is known as 'The book.' Schoolteachers like the book . . . even illiterates want it."

An Austrian girl of eight years wrote the Society: "I would like to let you know how much I enjoy the book 'My Book of Bible Stories.' Especially do I find enjoyment in looking at the powerful pictures again and again. All the stories are wonderful. I have read the entire book and now start reading it again with all the Bible texts. I have also been able to show the book to my teacher and I am also reading out of it to my girl friend. I want to thank you so much for it."

A Witness in Japan introduced the *Bible Stories* book to the president of his company with whom he rides to work. After carefully reading it he procured 300 copies for his employees. In presenting it to them he encouraged them to read it with their families.

In Nigeria a Witness was able to place 37 copies of the *Bible Stories* book with the students at the college where he worked. One 15-year-old Witness girl placed over 400 copies of this book with her teachers and fellow students.

In the Dominican Republic a certain Protestant pastor liked the *Bible Stories* book so much he ordered 50 copies of it for his church members. In New York a Sunday-school teacher ordered 60 copies for her pupils and friends.

In Fiji a young man obtained a copy of *Bible Stories* and took it with him to his outer island. When a Witness called some weeks later he found a group of 15 young children who were eager to tell him the things they had learned from this young man. A producer of radio Bible quizzes personally stated he benefited from reading this book. Now people are asking for copies so as to be able to answer his quizzes.

The book *Your Youth—Getting the Best out of It* has also been well received in Fiji. A Witness with a large family tries to get some witnessing done by translating articles from the Society's English publications into the vernacular language and presenting them to the local radio station. As a result of the translation and broadcast of the chapter "Your Clothes and Appearance Talk—About You" she received 40 requests for copies of the *Youth* book from which this was taken. People are now calling at her home to request Bible studies.

In Ecuador two missionaries make it a practice to visit schools and ask permission to speak with the students. In nine months they placed 5,817 copies of the books *Your Youth—Getting the Best*

out of It and Did Man Get Here by Evolution or by Creation?

The printed page continues to be used mightily in helping truth-hungry people to gain a solidly based hope.

THE BIBLE HOPE CHANGES PEOPLE'S LIVES

Preaching the good news of the Kingdom hope caused people of Bible times to be "washed clean" of all sorts of bad practices. (1 Cor. 6:9-11) The same is true today, even as the following experiences show.

In Sweden a Witness got a telephone call from a man at whose door he had left a "not-at-home" slip. The man had been at home but was too depressed to answer the door. But upon reading the slip, which was entitled "Alive and Healthy Forever," he asked the Witness to call immediately. The man had been so greatly depressed that morning that he had loaded his revolver and was ready to do away with himself when the Witness called. But upon reading the slip about 'staying alive and healthy forever' he changed his mind. The Witness was able to comfort him with the Kingdom hope, upon which he subscribed for the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines.

In Canada a mother who had recently become a Witness asked that someone witness to her son in prison. He turned out to be such a violent alcoholic wrongdoer that he had received an indefinite prison sentence making it likely that he would never get out of prison. The prison officials warned the Witness elders about this man. But he responded so well to the Kingdom hope that, after 19 years in prison, he was released on parole. He will always have a parole office check-

ing on him. Now he is such a quiet, smiling, happily married father that one could not imagine him ever having been a violent alcoholic!

In Austria a Witness going from house to house met a young man who was still in bed although it was late afternoon. Disappointed with life, he had turned to alcohol and drugs as being the only alternative to suicide. A regular Bible study was started with him. After the second study he quit smoking; after the third study he got rid of his outlandish beard. In time he overcame other problems. Asked at a recent circuit assembly what was the highest point in his life, he replied that it was getting baptized the day before.

How the 'living hope' helps people to straighten out their married lives is seen from two experiences from Belize, Central America. In going from house to house Witnesses placed the book *Making Your Family Life Happy* with a woman who was living out of wedlock with a man. The couple immediately started to read the book together, spending long hours looking up the scriptures. Upon the next visit the Witnesses noticed that the *Family* book was on the center table. The woman had written out the entire passage of Genesis 2:24, which reads: "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." By the time the Witnesses called again the woman announced that she was now Mrs. ——. Her husband gladly welcomed the Witnesses and a home Bible study was started.

In the same country there was a woman who had lived with a man for 25 years and had nine children by him. Upon becoming familiar with the

Kingdom hope and its requirements she asked the man to marry her. He refused, and so she left him, taking all her nine children with her. Elders in her congregation not only kept helping her spiritually but also were able to find a way for her to make a living and provide for her children as well. No question about it, the Bible hope changes people's lives for the better.

SPREADING HOPE DESPITE PERSECUTION

The lot of many of Jehovah's Witnesses today calls to mind the words of the apostle Paul: "We are pressed in every way, but not cramped beyond movement; . . . we are persecuted, but not left in the lurch; we are thrown down, but not destroyed."—2 Cor. 4:8, 9.

How Jehovah is providing such help in our day can be seen from this report from an African land where there is much persecution:

'When we were arrested, the police confiscated all our literature, Bibles, books and magazines. Later, when some political prisoners from another area were transferred to our camp we were happily surprised to see that they had some of our publications. The police had decided to sell the books they had confiscated from our brothers to make a profit. These political prisoners, in turn, were willing to sell these books to us. In this way I was able to have a considerable supply of literature. Imagine my happiness when I could see the name of a brother I knew written on the inside cover, and there I was, in prison, now benefiting from his confiscated literature!'

The past year saw a new law passed in a certain African land whereby stricter measures were to be taken against all those practicing an unauthorized religion. However, the Witnesses there have not let this deter them in the least. During the past year more than 2,000 newly dedicated persons were baptized; new highs were reached in the number of full-time preachers and nearly 30,000 Bible studies are being conducted with interested persons.

In another land where the Witnesses' activity is banned, four brothers spent four months in prison because of obeying God as ruler rather than men. Upon their release two of them lost their jobs. One of these started a small grocery business, which enables him now regularly to auxiliary pioneer. His example impelled four others in his congregation to join him in this activity.

There is particularly severe persecution in another land where many hundreds are in prison. Still, those at liberty carry on fearlessly. Thus in one area where there are only three baptized Witnesses seven publishers share in witnessing and 60 attend meetings. One brother is conducting studies with 168 people in groups of about 40.

Adding to the tests the brothers have to face in some lands, opposers try to make them compromise not only as to nationalism, but now in matters of witchcraft and ancestor worship. One brother relates: 'I was beaten with the butt of a gun mostly around the head. However, Jehovah strengthened me. What brought me joy was that on the next day the persecutors came back to my home and asked for literature, for which they contributed.'

In still another land where the Kingdom work is banned a Witness schoolteacher makes it a point to call on all the parents of her students. She discusses with them the progress their children are making, behavior problems and the like. This has opened many opportunities for her to give a witness concerning God's kingdom and as a result she has several home Bible studies.

THE "LIVING HOPE" CONVENTION

Jehovah God commanded his ancient people Israel to come together three times annually in festivals. He well knew how faith-building and hope-inspiring such gatherings would prove to be for his people.—Deut. 16:16.

In keeping with this divinely appointed pattern Jehovah's people in most lands gathered during 1979, twice for circuit assemblies and once for the "Living Hope" convention. The number of "Living Hope" district conventions in each land ran from one to over ninety.

These conventions undoubtedly served their purpose in building up the faith and strengthening the hope of Jehovah's people. They also served to give a grand witness to Jehovah's name and kingdom. In fact, much favorable newspaper, radio and TV publicity resulted. They featured stories telling what changes for the better the truth had made in the lives of people, how even "prisoners find God through Witnesses." TV stations featured the baptism service, and newspapers carried pictures and stories about it. One newspaper showed a picture of 'an inmate of a Federal correction institution who was starting a new life with his being baptized into the faith of Jehovah's Witnesses.'

All who attended were conscious of their spiritual needs, and they received rich blessings. Thus one zealous pioneer couple was heard to exclaim at the close of the first Milwaukee convention: "This absolutely was the very best convention we ever attended. We feel so encouraged and built up!" A report from Sweden stated: "Never before [were] so many spontaneous remarks heard about the value of the program during and after the assembly. It reached the hearts of all categories and gave clear and straightforward counsels." Expressions such as, "This is what we need!" and, "This is what we want, clear guidelines!" were repeatedly heard.

Of course, to report on the "Living Hope" convention with the same candor Bible writers displayed, it would be necessary to observe that not all in attendance showed the same appreciation. There were still some who milled around in the corridors during the program, or engaged in extended conversation while brothers were speaking from the platform. There was also scrambling for preferred seats, which was hardly in keeping with the love that should mark Christ's followers. —John 13:34, 35.

Among the foremost blessings of the convention were, of course, the releases. On Friday afternoon the conventioners received the *Commentary on the Letter of James*. This textbook, which contains a verse-by-verse treatment of James' letter, caused great excitement. It will be used in many lands as a textbook in the Theocratic School for the next two years. Saturday the conventioners were delighted to receive *Choosing the Best Way of Life*, which contains much fine counsel based primarily on the two letters of the apostle Peter.

And Sunday morning the conventioners were pleasantly surprised to receive the release of two cassettes containing a recording of the book of Acts.

Greatly appreciated by all were the three dramas based on Bible themes. The first, "What Are You Choosing?" graphically depicted the choice that Moses had to make between all that Egypt had to offer and being a servant of Jehovah God. Next came "The Need of the Fatherless Boy—Can You Help Him?" It deeply touched the hearts of all who heard and saw it, and no doubt its effect will be felt in the greater attention congregations will now pay to those who are, literally and spiritually, widows and fatherless boys. Powerful, timely and most thought-provoking was the drama "Be Transformed by Making Your Mind Over." It really had a soul-searching message for all who were getting careless as to the kind of entertainment they are choosing these days.

Many were the fine, upbuilding talks that were given, but space permits touching on just a few of these. The 100-year record of *The Watchtower* and of those associated with it as 'messengers of hope' was not only enlightening but most encouraging. The talk dealing with our conscience directed the pointed counsel to those who blithely say, "It doesn't bother *my* conscience." That talk showed how important it is to make certain what God's Word has to say about a matter, and how it will affect our brothers as well as what effect it might have on ourselves. And because of the inroads that the world's unclean spirit is making among some of God's people, other talks stressed the Christian requirements of chasteness, self-control and "holy acts of conduct."

1979 SERVICE YEAR REPORT OF

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

Country	Population	1979 Peak Pubs.	Ratio, One Pub- lisher to:	1979 Av. over Pubs.	% Inc. 1978
Afghanistan (G-14)	17,500,000	3	5,833,333	3	
Alaska (A-36)	421,388	1,241	340	1,157	6
Algeria (J-6)	17,800,000	21	847,619	16	-6*
American Samoa (N-33)	30,600	75	408	57	-11*
Andorra (F-6)	30,066	75	401	68	3
Anguilla (H-46)	6,524	14	466	11	
Antigua (J-47)	70,794	184	385	175	2
Argentina (P-46)	25,050,000	35,635	703	32,475	2
Aruba (J-46)	62,392	308	204	283	-3*
Australia (O-26)	14,376,400	29,247	492	28,468	2
Austria (E-8)	7,456,403	12,843	581	12,702	2
Azores (G-2)	275,000	291	945	271	-1*
Bahamas (H-45)	230,000	467	493	445	4
Bahrain (H-12)	305,000	14	21,786	7	133
Bangladesh (J-17)	90,000,000	8	11,250,000	6	100
Barbados (J-47)	255,000	1,282	199	1,201	5
Belgium (E-6)	9,776,654	17,921	546	17,201	-3*
Belize (J-43)	142,000	526	270	492	-7*
Benin (L-6)	3,200,000	1,349	2,372	1,001	-9*
Bermuda (G-46)	60,000	219	274	207	2
Bolivia (N-46)	5,000,000	2,426	2,061	2,305	1
Bonaire (J-46)	8,544	30	285	27	4
Botswana (P-9)	720,000	299	2,408	284	6
Brazil (M-48)	120,635,000	106,970	1,128	101,894	
British Isles (D-5)	54,504,300	77,634	702	74,862	1
Brunei (L-20)	170,000	6	28,333	4	
Burma (J-18)	31,170,000	979	31,839	941	6
Burundi (M-9)	4,000,000	156	25,641	139	-9*
Cameroon (L-7)	7,500,000	12,156	617	10,806	-2*
Canada (C-42)	23,002,900	63,995	359	61,281	1
Canary Islands (J-4)	1,572,701	1,358	1,158	1,272	8
Cape Verde Rep. (K-3)	300,000	109	2,752	96	7
Cayman Islands (H-44)	15,600	34	459	27	13
Central Afr. Rep. (L-8)	2,200,000	1,003	2,193	803	1
Chad (K-8)	4,100,000	155	26,452	106	-17*
Chile (O-45)	10,917,460	15,106	723	14,389	-2*
Colombia (K-45)	26,586,976	14,879	1,787	14,397	-3*
Comoros (N-11)	244,200	2	122,100	1	New
Congo (M-8)	1,400,000	1,008	1,389	828	-7*
Cook Islands (N-35)	18,000	52	346	46	-6*
Costa Rica (K-44)	2,125,620	5,158	412	4,923	2
Curaçao (J-46)	159,067	763	208	729	2
Cyprus (G-10)	500,000	962	520	928	7
Denmark (D-7)	5,113,253	13,178	388	12,706	-3*
Djibouti (K-11)	101,000	3	33,667	3	50
Dominica (J-47)	70,302	194	362	173	-2*
Dominican Rep. (J-46)	5,000,000	6,278	796	5,941	-3*
Ecuador (L-44)	7,185,000	5,045	1,424	4,866	-4*
El Salvador (J-43)	4,595,595	6,176	744	5,943	4
Ethiopia (L-11)	28,000,000	1,475	18,983	1,180	-20*
Faroe Islands (B-5)	41,575	82	507	68	6
Fiji (N-32)	600,000	667	900	624	2
Finland (B-9)	4,757,450	13,478	353	12,792	3
France (F-6)	53,383,000	67,135	795	64,759	1
French Guiana (K-48)	45,000	252	179	241	3

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES WORLD WIDE

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

1978 Av. Pubs.	1979 No. Bptzd.	Av. Pio. Pubs.	No. of Cong.	Total Hours	Av. Bible Studies	Memorial Atten- dance
3			1	489		7
1,087	73	105	22	198,004	594	3,003
17	3		1	972	13	52
64	2	11	1	16,093	58	174
66	1	3	1	6,250	28	196
11		2	1	2,152	2	22
171	6	17	4	33,551	129	429
31,713	754	954	632	3,667,326	22,383	62,705
292	9	7	5	37,934	172	885
27,864	1,297	1,587	525	4,427,021	10,691	59,983
12,504	611	533	217	1,845,483	5,713	22,296
275	13	27	12	55,365	250	749
428	18	32	10	74,882	400	1,429
3				500	3	15
3		2	1	3,072	20	32
1,141	61	42	16	139,978	582	3,138
17,706	757	673	281	2,404,262	5,835	36,383
530	24	42	14	93,914	441	1,979
1,106	3	10	66	83,983	392	2,655
202	9	16	4	38,237	158	522
2,278	302	365	68	668,192	2,512	8,827
26	1	3	1	6,491	33	115
268	18	22	10	56,114	286	856
101,929	9,387	4,453	2,056	13,142,499	62,645	299,453
73,859	3,269	3,896	1,133	10,531,823	31,540	158,167
4		1		674	14	12
884	76	192	62	319,311	792	2,417
128	20	7	5	26,745	188	407
11,025	316	36	440	712,232	6,400	19,143
60,540	2,733	3,477	1,041	8,882,885	25,438	125,293
1,174	126	127	31	263,664	871	3,177
90	24	18	5	38,435	253	503
24	1	2	1	4,487	40	69
797	14	36	43	108,688	479	2,304
127	5	22	11	37,171	137	260
14,703	811	886	273	2,234,754	13,531	46,604
14,856	1,349	872	271	2,366,639	13,850	59,383
				114	1	2
892	8	11	42	49,252	371	1,954
49		4	2	8,281	35	183
4,842	347	213	109	694,725	3,575	14,308
717	50	48	10	137,905	862	1,917
864	65	41	14	115,692	328	1,556
13,081	280	563	231	1,505,950	3,513	22,316
2			1	55		
176	3	21	7	39,751	102	570
6,129	365	472	112	1,105,586	6,841	22,371
5,043	349	421	105	975,052	5,179	22,709
5,693	387	377	133	1,072,095	6,177	22,276
1,466	44	80	41	192,436	1,076	3,815
64	1	15	4	16,343	32	125
610	47	86	24	147,830	634	2,323
12,480	500	935	250	1,864,134	5,219	21,477
64,167	3,647	2,413	1,191	9,333,052	31,283	133,584
233	14	12	3	46,507	338	785

Country	Population	1979 Peak Pubs.	Ratio, One Pub- lisher to:	1979 Av. Pubs.	% Inc. over 1978
Gabon (M-7)	520,000	421	1,235	344	4
Gambia (L-4)	493,000	13	37,923	12	-8*
Germany, F. R. (E-7)	59,426,000	97,629	609	96,112	-1*
Ghana (L-6)	10,551,995	21,707	486	20,273	-3*
Gibraltar (G-5)	29,278	89	329	82	
Greece (G-8)	9,000,000	18,590	484	18,460	-1*
Greenland (A-49)	49,338	73	676	67	5
Grenada (J-47)	110,000	322	642	295	5
Guadeloupe (J-47)	324,000	2,621	124	2,548	
Guam (K-24)	100,000	145	690	121	5
Guatemala (J-43)	6,500,000	5,309	1,224	5,054	2
Guinea (L-4)	5,143,284	277	18,568	192	-6*
Guinea-Bissau (L-4)	530,000	1	530,000	1	
Guyana (K-47)	800,000	1,226	653	1,171	-4*
Haiti (J-45)	5,000,000	3,149	1,588	2,958	-8*
Hawaii (H-35)	896,600	4,564	196	4,434	-1*
Honduras (J-43)	3,563,823	3,016	1,182	2,809	-6*
Hong Kong (J-20)	4,600,000	819	5,617	796	10
Iceland (B-3)	224,384	124	1,810	116	-7*
India (J-15)	650,000,000	4,879	133,224	4,499	
Iran (H-12)	32,000,000	71	450,704	45	-22*
Iraq (H-11)	12,029,000	3	4,009,667	3	-84*
Ireland (E-5)	4,860,000	1,825	2,663	1,770	2
Israel (H-10)	4,930,000	242	20,372	231	-2*
Italy (F-7)	56,601,363	77,774	728	74,991	8
Ivory Coast (L-5)	6,670,000	1,234	5,405	1,178	
Jamaica (J-45)	2,119,200	6,653	319	6,277	1
Japan (F-23)	114,178,000	50,473	2,262	48,078	10
Jordan (H-10)	2,800,000	75	37,333	42	-11*
Kenya (M-10)	15,000,000	2,133	7,032	2,043	5
Kiribati (L-31)	56,000	6	9,333	3	50
Korea (G-21)	37,692,583	25,832	1,459	25,074	-1*
Kosrae (K-30)	3,889	21	190	20	5
Kuwait (H-11)	1,100,000	29	37,931	26	4
Lebanon (H-10)	3,300,000	1,703	1,938	1,615	-5*
Lesotho (Q-9)	1,213,960	614	1,977	571	
Liberia (L-5)	1,500,000	1,068	1,404	1,014	1
Libya (J-8)	2,444,000	5	488,800	2	-67*
Liechtenstein (F-7)	25,340	31	817	26	13
Luxembourg (E-6)	425,900	885	481	863	3
Macao (J-20)	375,000	13	28,846	12	33
Madagascar (O-12)	9,000,000	946	9,514	884	7
Madeira (H-3)	262,800	344	764	324	4
Malaysia (L-18)	13,282,000	471	28,200	451	-1*
Mali (K-6)	5,000,000	40	125,000	35	3
Malta (G-8)	320,000	86	3,721	80	1
Malvinas Islands (S-47)	2,089	4	522	2	-50*
Marquesas Islands (M-37)	5,419	6	903	3	
Marshall Islands (K-31)	25,044	144	174	134	-9*
Martinique (J-47)	330,000	1,064	310	1,028	-2*
Mauritania (K-4)	1,500,000	2	750,000	1	
Mauritius (O-13)	909,812	391	2,327	377	3
Mexico (H-42)	69,381,104	96,800	717	89,888	-3*
Montserrat (J-47)	12,335	29	425	23	10
Morocco (H-5)	18,884,000	138	136,841	119	-18*

1978 Av. Pubs.	1979 No. Bptzd.	Av. Pio. Pubs.	No. of Cong.	Total Hours	Av. Bible Studies	Memorial Atten- dance
330	13	24	14	56,051	345	818
13		3	1	4,333	12	26
96,738	3,240	3,025	1,426	11,974,464	30,693	164,306
20,924	1,433	1,334	452	3,534,071	19,333	71,668
82	4	5	1	12,059	20	125
18,620	474	765	454	2,496,717	5,688	33,224
64		12	7	14,504	40	120
282	8	26	7	57,132	226	885
2,537	122	65	38	336,024	1,881	6,647
115	7	23	1	25,396	104	360
4,974	400	305	90	830,932	4,195	16,810
205	2	56	13	89,702	396	726
1		1	1	97	4	8
1,214	55	142	30	253,612	1,017	3,566
3,199	127	206	73	556,474	3,367	14,577
4,458	156	630	59	1,010,534	3,842	11,975
2,978	189	266	62	622,211	3,568	13,415
723	70	156	10	278,439	1,082	1,676
125	4	9	3	20,696	59	298
4,506	345	561	296	1,030,575	3,117	11,764
58	8	14	1	20,037	115	178
19		1	1	113	1	
1,738	72	294	67	498,527	783	3,547
236	12	11	5	32,996	89	399
69,252	6,379	4,873	1,290	13,694,166	48,572	167,790
1,173	155	89	43	234,817	1,398	3,863
6,240	478	231	167	837,598	4,249	16,897
43,776	4,685	12,746	1,090	18,203,569	64,333	118,494
47		3	1	4,444	23	95
1,948	201	301	87	618,556	2,276	5,535
2		1	1	366	6	28
25,264	1,163	2,424	506	4,397,801	14,411	52,949
19		5	1	6,337	37	140
25		1	1	1,473	9	76
1,699	97	69	46	234,595	855	3,575
571	30	47	30	107,541	407	2,264
1,000	32	94	30	231,001	1,166	3,420
6		1	1	134	1	
23		2	1	3,875	15	59
838	67	50	19	138,728	527	2,005
9		4	1	6,710	19	22
829	59	46	29	151,091	1,167	4,336
313	39	23	8	55,242	321	910
454	36	63	19	139,013	723	1,040
34	2	11	1	21,634	125	90
79	4	6	1	12,887	59	250
4		1	1	162	7	9
3		2	1	1,812	11	7
148	8	22	3	34,612	198	472
1,049	42	29	17	142,171	790	2,924
1				63	1	5
367	23	22	8	60,442	270	942
92,649	7,056	6,775	3,811	15,006,322	78,739	401,980
21		1	1	3,489	19	101
146	5	8	3	21,100	70	239

Country	Population	1979 Peak Pubs.	Ratio, One Pub- lisher to:	1979 Av. Pubs.	% Inc. over 1978
Nepal (H-16)	14,000,000	18	777,778	14	-13*
Netherlands (E-6)	14,022,181	26,920	521	26,040	-2*
Nevis (J-46)	11,230	33	340	29	-6*
New Caledonia (N-30)	139,000	377	369	354	-5*
Newfoundland (D-47)	530,000	1,084	489	1,048	
New Hebrides (M-31)	104,146	64	1,627	57	27
New Zealand (Q-31)	3,095,500	6,966	444	6,591	1
Nicaragua (J-44)	2,200,000	3,422	643	3,068	-5*
Niger (K-7)	4,730,000	64	73,906	54	15
Nigeria (L-6)	79,758,969	94,618	843	91,217	
Niue (N-33)	3,578	14	256	8	-27*
Norway (B-7)	4,066,134	6,963	584	6,716	-1*
Okinawa (J-21)	1,109,950	916	1,212	876	2
Pakistan (H-14)	77,000,000	196	392,857	188	2
Palau (L-22)	13,000	39	333	33	14
Panama (K-44)	1,829,625	2,975	615	2,880	
Papua New Guinea (M-28)	2,811,537	1,402	2,005	1,352	-1*
Paraguay (O-47)	2,646,000	1,541	1,717	1,304	-11*
Peru (M-45)	17,000,000	12,779	1,330	12,026	
Philippines (K-21)	47,000,000	62,562	751	58,418	-4*
Ponape (K-29)	22,000	73	301	66	-1*
Portugal (G-5)	9,228,000	20,189	457	19,672	2
Puerto Rico (J-46)	3,340,000	15,842	211	15,575	-2*
Réunion (O-13)	490,000	560	875	530	4
Rodrigues (O-14)	28,373	15	1,892	9	-10*
Rwanda (M-10)	4,800,000	145	33,103	127	23
St. Eustatius (J-46)	1,335	8	167	7	40
St. Helena (O-5)	5,147	95	54	86	-3*
St. Kitts (J-46)	35,135	131	268	116	1
St. Lucia (J-47)	109,000	283	385	247	3
St. Martin (J-46)	10,423	52	200	48	
St. Pierre & Miquelon (D-47)	6,000	8	750	3	-40*
St. Vincent (J-47)	106,000	139	763	126	-7*
Salpan (J-28)	14,335	19	754	16	
San Marino (F-7)	20,339	74	275	71	11
São Tomé (M-7)	80,000	8	10,000	6	50
Saudi Arabia (J-11)	7,900,000	35	225,714	30	50
Senegal (K-4)	5,000,000	355	14,085	340	4
Seychelles (M-13)	64,000	34	1,882	31	-21*
Sierra Leone (L-4)	3,002,426	752	3,993	701	-22*
Solomon Islands (M-30)	210,000	541	388	486	
South Africa (Q-9)	27,335,000	26,960	1,014	25,624	-2*
South-West Africa (P-8)	850,000	306	2,778	281	7
Spain (G-5)	35,978,128	40,485	889	39,254	5
Sri Lanka (L-16)	14,500,000	591	24,535	566	3
Sudan (K-9)	18,500,000	90	205,556	87	9
Suriname (K-47)	375,000	851	441	828	-3*
Swaziland (P-10)	527,791	625	844	587	-4*
Sweden (B-8)	8,296,132	16,853	492	16,485	1
Switzerland (F-7)	6,298,000	10,178	619	9,997	1
Syria (H-10)	7,840,000	188	41,702	160	5
Tahiti (N-36)	131,963	481	274	448	3
Taiwan (J-20)	17,000,000	953	17,838	918	-5*
Tanzania (N-10)	17,550,000	1,510	11,623	1,553	11
Thailand (K-18)	45,221,625	726	62,289	704	-2*

1978 Av. Pubs.	1979 No. Bptzd.	Av. Pio. Pubs.	No. of Cong.	Total Hours	Av. Bible Studies	Memorial Attend- ance
16		1	1	1,366	7	56
26,545	822	1,557	281	3,882,782	8,071	45,746
31		4	1	7,141	12	82
372	41	15	8	48,690	256	914
1,052	37	89	33	180,979	400	2,016
45	4	6	3	13,052	71	159
6,520	378	366	117	943,059	2,987	14,768
3,246	362	275	69	613,656	3,679	11,213
47	2	20	6	29,203	73	99
91,656	2,995	4,423	2,118	13,555,495	62,177	244,634
11		1	1	710	8	71
6,808	200	201	188	716,624	1,868	12,433
859	68	172	21	282,700	989	2,158
184	13	29	6	56,536	184	500
29	5	11	1	18,461	116	126
2,879	268	234	70	583,555	3,404	10,719
1,365	95	103	80	251,861	1,116	5,250
1,464	81	96	46	199,028	867	2,566
11,992	1,503	1,537	292	2,796,411	12,972	44,324
60,676	2,386	6,192	2,051	9,967,337	23,796	173,624
67	1	10	1	16,858	56	211
19,281	1,446	855	381	2,659,849	14,547	52,378
15,853	706	615	231	2,083,753	9,378	41,596
510	44	25	10	88,019	356	1,534
10	1	2	1	1,578	5	49
103	37	35	7	66,209	292	518
5		2	2	4,343	19	35
89	2	2	2	9,163	35	199
115	23	8	2	19,820	91	329
240	16	15	5	36,231	182	632
48	2	4	1	7,794	41	200
5		2	1	1,571	3	9
136	2	11	4	23,820	78	317
16		6	1	10,247	33	52
64	2	2	1	8,846	25	108
4	2	1	1	1,241	14	80
20		1	1	1,635	7	91
328	36	59	8	112,625	418	732
39	2	2	1	3,859	23	96
895	22	166	35	278,310	1,274	2,626
487	40	71	30	116,131	422	1,872
26,196	1,306	1,527	854	4,261,686	16,271	74,325
263	24	25	11	60,763	259	733
37,380	2,767	2,873	722	7,238,349	26,356	84,417
547	50	92	20	174,163	596	1,813
80	5	10	2	20,511	118	232
854	37	68	12	153,086	602	2,201
612	26	37	28	114,417	490	2,040
16,277	612	1,161	306	2,396,016	7,127	28,490
9,858	498	302	227	1,328,114	5,574	19,403
153		6	7	21,391	80	365
437	35	38	11	72,590	329	1,080
962	37	121	47	210,515	601	2,596
1,401	73	144	77	324,265	1,158	3,874
720	40	115	26	199,068	580	1,539

Country	Population	1979 Peak Pubs.	Ratio, One Pub- lisher to:	1979 Av. Pubs.	% Inc. over 1978
Togo (L-6)	2,572,195	1,405	1,831	1,315	-39*
Tokelau Isls. (M-33)	1,603	4	401	3	-25*
Tonga (N-33)	96,294	24	4,012	19	-5*
Trinidad (K-47)	1,098,200	3,177	346	2,978	4
Truk (K-28)	31,600	37	854	35	-3*
Tunisia (H-7)	6,000,000	60	100,000	55	15
Turkey (G-10)	45,000,000	835	53,892	809	-2*
Turks & Caicos Isls. (H-45)	6,000	19	316	17	
Tuvalu Isls. (M-32)	7,300	12	608	8	300
Uganda (M-10)	12,000,000	137	87,591	113	-11*
U. Arab Emirates (J-12)	760,000	16	47,500	15	25
U.S. of America (F-42)	218,409,800	533,781	409	521,370	1
Upper Volta (L-5)	6,147,363	128	48,026	111	28
Uruguay (P-47)	2,760,000	4,220	654	4,064	-2*
Venezuela (K-46)	14,000,000	14,560	962	13,780	3
Virgin Is. (Brit.) (J-46)	11,000	75	147	71	-5*
Virgin Is. (U.S.) (J-46)	80,000	489	164	462	3
West Berlin (E-7)	1,926,826	5,048	382	4,978	-2*
Western Samoa (M-33)	151,983	133	1,143	108	-15*
Yap (K-27)	7,869	40	197	38	-5*
Zaire (M-9)	26,000,000	20,623	1,261	19,314	7
Zambia (O-9)	5,649,000	54,333	104	50,962	-3*
Zimbabwe Rhod. (O-9)	7,140,000	11,373	628	10,418	-8*
188 Countries	1,970,690		1,893,308		.6
† 17 Other Countries	215,385		203,762		-6*
GRAND TOTAL (205 countries)	2,186,075		2,097,070		.5

* Percentage of decrease

† Work banned and reports are incomplete

Many were the appreciative comments heard on the symposium dealing with "Soundness of Mind in a Mixed-up World." These talks underscored the value of cultivating a realistic view of life; of forming trusted relations with Jehovah God and our brothers; of strengthening our Bible-based hope and the will to live, as well as of allowing for variety and recreation in one's life. A fine point made in the talk "Choosing the Best Way of Life" was that Jehovah God will save us from stumbling—even as he did David in the case of Nabal's insolence—but we must do our part. The brothers also appreciated the candor of this same talk, which acknowledged the Society's re-

1978 Av. Pubs.	1979 No. Bptd.	Av. Pio. Pubs.	No. of Cong.	Total Hours	Av. Bible Studies	Memorial Atten- dance
2,145	16	44	67	99,028	768	2,925
4			1	118	8	
20		5	1	7,456	35	73
2,875	144	271	44	530,568	2,567	7,791
36	4	6	2	11,590	57	140
48	4	1	1	5,089	29	94
822	60	44	11	137,225	453	1,359
17		1	2	4,653	20	70
2		2	1	2,740	19	83
127	9	10	7	25,175	111	291
12				359	4	37
513,673	26,958	32,878	7,464	76,477,271	275,978	1,335,268
87	1	37	5	55,791	266	455
4,149	189	345	90	777,888	3,850	11,673
13,332	1,011	1,018	181	2,480,967	13,294	49,261
75	3	3	3	8,883	44	266
450	10	21	8	65,520	327	1,303
5,095	165	147	64	604,859	1,559	7,450
127	9	20	3	31,235	112	350
40		10	1	15,631	78	206
18,114	2,252	2,427	741	5,285,204	28,367	78,010
52,617	1,475	2,184	1,235	7,271,468	49,666	224,451
11,357	661	595	489	1,659,712	6,411	24,872
1,881,610	106,102	123,880	38,761	299,796,391	1,167,736	4,988,208
205,088	7,570	3,678	3,839	19,177,956	93,999	335,558
2,086,698	113,672	127,558	42,600	318,974,347	1,261,735	5,323,766

MEMORIAL PARTAKERS WORLD WIDE: 9,727

sponsibility for some of the disappointment a number felt regarding 1975.

"Christlike Modesty—Evidence of Wisdom" made the point that modesty means to be aware of one's limitations. The Bible shows that God is humble, but since he is without limitations the term modesty does not appropriately apply to him. Then again, a Christian may be humble and yet not be fully aware of his limitations, as in the case of the apostle Peter.—Ps. 18:35; Mark 14:27-31, 66-72.

The heartwarming message contained in the public talk, "Mankind's Only Hope—God's Unshakable Kingdom," also elicited many expressions

of appreciation. And ending the convention on a very positive and encouraging note was the final discourse, "Spurred on by Our Living Hope."

The witnessing from house to house and on the streets, preaching the good news of the Kingdom and advertising the convention on Friday morning, was again a high point. And let it be noted that it fitted in so well with all the admonition that was given on the importance of the witness work. It furnished a fine opportunity for newer publishers to share in the house-to-house activity as well as for all others to have a taste of Kingdom-preaching. Such field service is especially fruitful and is appreciated because of its effectiveness. In many places the fact that thousands share in this activity at the same time resulted in much favorable publicity, both in the newspapers and on TV. Featured extensively were descriptions of this work under such headings as "Watchtower Carrying Message for 100 Years," "Witnessing for God is a labor of love," and "15,000 Witnesses blanket area with Watchtower today."

In passing it might be noted that the simplified feeding program in some lands allowed so many more of the brothers to enjoy the convention program. Furthermore, many expressed great pleasure at the fine arrangements of Kingdom songs presented by means of recordings before each morning and afternoon session.

The "Living Hope" conventions did indeed furnish "food at the proper time." All, whether Witnesses or not, who came to these conventions "conscious of their spiritual need," had their faith and love strengthened and their 'living hope' made more bright and real.—Matt. 24:45-47; 5:3.

ACTS OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES IN MODERN TIMES

The good news of the Kingdom is being preached world wide, just as Jesus said would occur before the end comes. (Matt. 24:14) Yet the tremendous witness being given today was made possible, in part, by the preaching and teaching of Jehovah's Witnesses in previous years. In the next 223 pages, consider the lives and activities of many of the persons who shared in starting and developing the Kingdom preaching in modern times in the following five countries.

FRANCE: An obscure Swiss woodcutter started the preaching work in France around 1900. You will read with fascination how, despite difficulties such as unfaithful brothers and Nazi persecution, from that one early Witness there has today come to be a mighty army of over 67,000 Kingdom proclaimers.

LEBANON AND SYRIA: Despite recent civil war and political crisis, read how Jehovah's Witnesses here have courageously carried on with their Kingdom activity.

ISRAEL AND JORDAN: In these countries where Jesus once walked and taught, you will learn how Bible truth is marvelously uniting Jews and Arabs.

We believe that reading these stirring reports of Christian faith in modern times will strengthen and encourage you to carry on in your service to God.

France

France has over 212,000 square miles (550,000 km²) of territory, being the largest country in Europe, with the exception of the Soviet Union. The French are in the habit of calling their country the "hexagon" (six-sided figure). You can see why by examining the accompanying map of France. The country is blessed with fine beaches along the English Channel and the Atlantic and Mediterranean seacoasts, and with the majestic, snowcapped mountains of the Alps and the Pyrenees.

France is a republic that is divided into 96 administrative departments and includes the Mediterranean island of Corsica. The French population of over 53 million is a mixture of various types reflecting their distant ancestors: Mediterraneans, Celts, Germans and Latins. French is the language spoken today by all Frenchmen, although in what used to be Alsace-Lorraine the older folk still speak German or a local German dialect. Polish is spoken by many of the miners who came to France from Poland after the first world war. There are also a great number of Italians and Algerians. Recently many thousands of Spanish and Portuguese workers have come to France, which means that their languages can often be heard throughout the country.

On the whole, France is a Catholic country, the French Protestant community having been greatly diminished by the persecutions of the 16th and 17th centuries. However, commenting on the religious situation in France, the *Encyclopædia Britannica* states:

"A phenomenon common to all western countries but evident in France to a marked degree is the falling away of the mass of the people from the religious groups. It is associated with the growth of industrialization and urbanization. While rural communities in general remain more attached to the traditional faith, the townspeople, particularly in suburban districts, are in process of de-Christianization."

RUSSELL LAYS THE GROUNDWORK

The activity of Jehovah's Witnesses in France dates back to the end of the 19th century. In 1891 the Watch Tower Society's president, Charles T. Russell, visited Paris and recorded his impressions of the French field in the November 1891 issue of *Zion's Watch Tower*: "The French are rapidly turning to open infidelity, although many still are blinded by gross Romish superstition."

However, this unfavorable impression did not prevent Brother Russell from having the *Studies in the Scriptures* translated into French. He also made arrangements for various tracts and pamphlets to be translated into French, thus laying the groundwork for future preaching of the good news in France.

AN OBSCURE SWISS WOODCUTTER

Sometime in the 1890's, an obscure Swiss woodcutter named Adolphe Weber traveled to the United States. There, in Pittsburgh, he worked for Brother Russell as a gardener and obtained a deep knowledge of the Scriptures from him. After a time, Weber offered to return to Europe to evangelize the French-speaking countries. Brother Russell eventually accepted his proposition and agreed to finance the preaching work in French-speaking Europe.

Adolphe Weber was a simple man of peasant-like appearance. But, at the same time, he was a devout, mature Christian who knew well the English, French and German languages. Back in Switzerland, he inserted advertisements in French-language religious newspapers and magazines for Volume I of *Studies in the Scriptures* and booklets written by Brother Russell.

FIRST SIGNS OF INTEREST

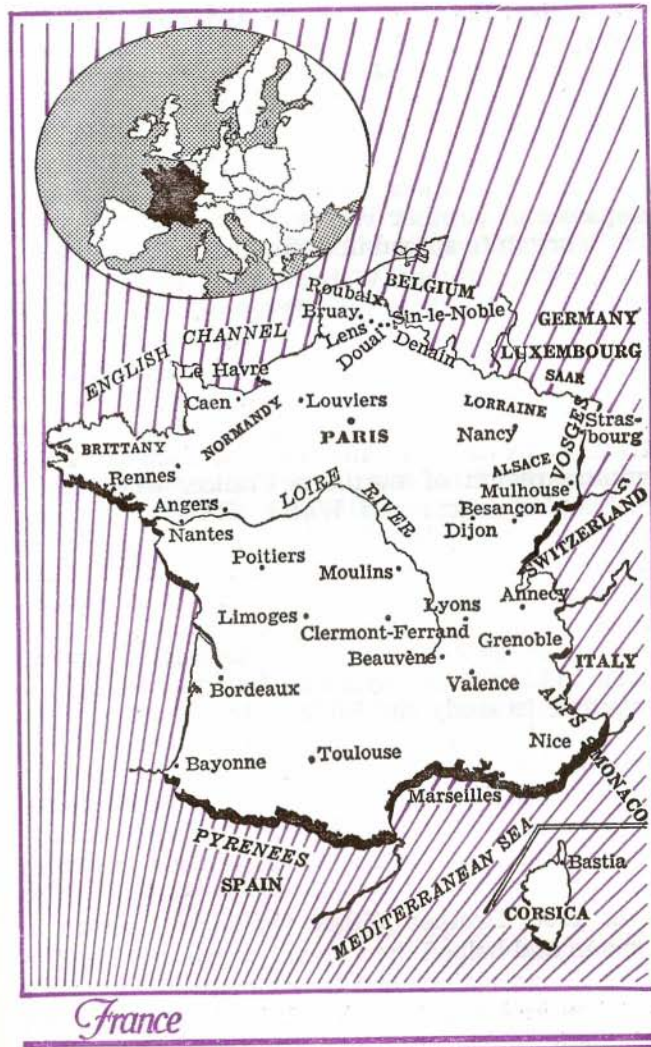
On August 12, 1900, a Frenchman named Elie Thérond, living in a little place called Beauvène in central France responded to the advertisement and ordered the Bible literature. Elie recognized the ring of the truth and soon began spreading the message himself. Later, in 1905, his home became the first depot for filling orders of Watch Tower literature in France.

In 1901 Jean-Baptiste Thilmant, a grocer living in a Belgian mining village near Charleroi, also read one of Brother Weber's advertisements and ordered Bible literature. By 1902 he organized in his home a small group of Bible students. This group later carried the truth into northern France, as we shall soon see.

In 1903 Brother Russell visited Europe again and made arrangements with Brother Weber to publish a French edition of *Zion's Watch Tower*. It started as an eight-page quarterly edition, the first issue dated October 1903. In January 1904, it became a monthly periodical.

"CULTIVATING" FRENCH SOIL

As a result of Brother Weber's advertising campaign in the press, more and more people were ordering and studying the Society's Bible literature. During the summer, Weber would work in



Switzerland as a woodcutter and gardener, distributing tracts and preaching among the French-speaking Swiss people. Then he would set off on long trips visiting people in France and Belgium who had ordered literature or had subscribed for the *Watch Tower*. During his travels he did gardening and odd jobs to earn his keep. As a consequence of Brother Weber's devoted service, the truth began to spread in different parts of France.

In 1904, Brother Weber visited the Thilmant family near Charleroi, Belgium. He showed them how to distribute tracts outside Protestant churches, and encouraged them to extend their activities into northern France. Thus, in August 1904, Thilmant and his young daughter Joséphine traveled by train to the town of Denain in the mining region of northern France, where they distributed tracts and *Watch Tower* magazines outside the Baptist church. Several members of this church read the literature with interest and subscribed for the *Watch Tower*. These families soon started putting awkward questions to their Baptist minister, who finally told them not to come to his church anymore. They decided to meet together to study the Bible in the home of Jules Lequime, in Haveluy, near Denain. Incidentally, the children and grandchildren of these families in Denain—the Lequimes, Vaucamps and Polards—are still active Witnesses, two of the grandsons at present serving as circuit overseers in France.

In 1906, Brother Weber visited this group in Denain and helped them to get organized. The Denain Congregation soon began distributing tracts outside the Protestant church in the nearby town of Sin-le-Noble. In time, several families there

became interested in the truth, including the Palmaert family. Brother Weber organized them into a group that met in the home of Victor Jupin, who died on November 15, 1969, after having served Jehovah faithfully for some 60 years.

The Baptist minister in Denain still nurtured hopes that those who had become Bible Students would eventually return to the Baptist fold. He thought to himself: 'Wait until one of them dies or wishes to get married! Then they will come running to me to conduct the service.' His hopes were dashed first in 1906, when a brother died, and again in 1907, when two of the Lequime daughters got married. Brothers from the local congregation of Bible Students handled the services.

Meanwhile, the work was still progressing farther south. The year 1907 saw a schoolteacher near Rennes distributing Volume I of *Studies in the Scriptures* and *Watch Tower* magazines in Catholic Brittany. By that time, three literature depots were operating in France, and subscriptions for the French *Watch Tower* could be sent to any of these three addresses. Toward the end of 1907 an "Appeal for Volunteers" was published in the French *Watch Tower*.

During 1908 and 1909, the Denain and Sin-le-Noble congregations preached in surrounding territory and began forming study groups in other towns of northern France, such as in Lens and Auchel in the Pas-de-Calais Department.

EARLY PILGRIM VISITS

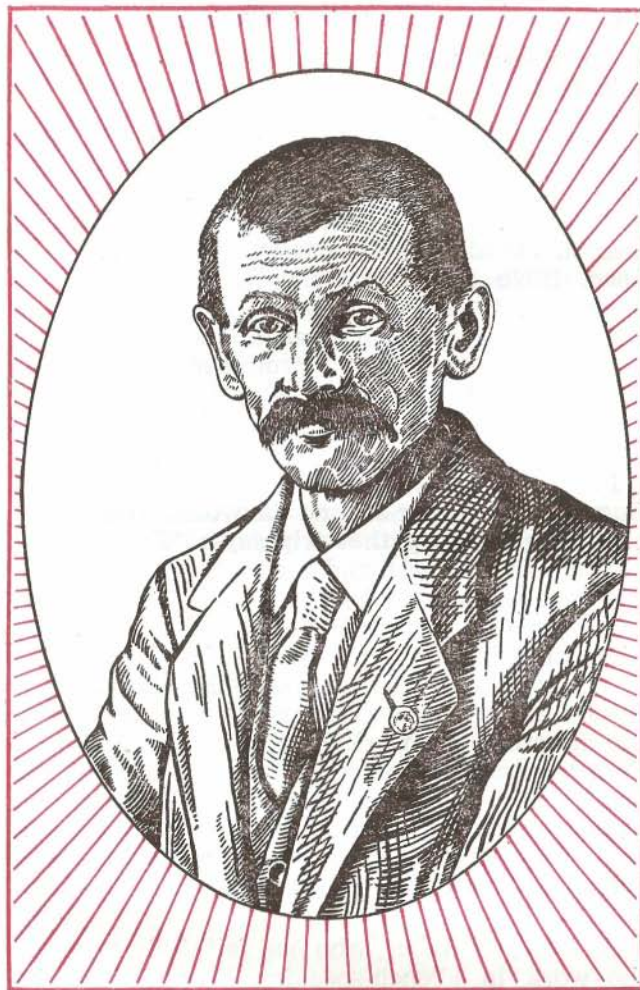
From December 1908 to February 1909, Weber made pilgrim visits to groups and isolated brothers in 20 departments or administrative districts all over France, including such large towns as Besan-

con, Grenoble, Valence, Bordeaux, Nantes, Rennes, Angers, Paris and Nancy. At this time, too, the truth began to penetrate the German-speaking region of Alsace-Lorraine. A brother Schutz was active in the town of Sainte-Marie-aux-Mines, and other Bible Students in the small town of Petersbach were distributing the publication *Food for Thinking Christians* in the German language.

In December 1909 and January 1910, three pilgrim brothers, A. Meyer, S. Segulier and Adolphe Weber, visited 34 towns in France and held meetings in many of them, including Roubaix, a large textile manufacturing town in the north of France, where a congregation was organized. The longest stopover was in Paris, from December 18 to 20, 1909, which indicates that interest was being developed by this time in the French capital. This same year, the French *Watch Tower* changed its name from *Le Phare de la Tour de Sion* (literally The Lighthouse of Zion's Tower) to *La Tour de Garde* (The Watch Tower), the name by which it is still known today.

In 1910, the first issue in French of the "People's Pulpit" tracts was published. The April 1910 issue of the French *Watch Tower* carried another "Call for Volunteers," which stated: "We now have a large stock of *People's Pulpit* tracts. 100,000 copies of the first tract have just been printed. This is a special issue that can be given to everybody."

The year 1910 ended with another pilgrim trip throughout France by Brother Weber. He started his travels on December 22, 1910, and visited 30 groups of Bible Students in France, ending his trip on January 28, 1911. Immediately prior to his trip, on December 4 and 5, 1910, a general assem-



1900

Adolphe Weber, a Swiss woodcutter, started the preaching work in France

bly of Bible Students in the north of France was held in Lens.

RUSSELL MAKES TWO MORE VISITS TO FRANCE

In 1911, the big event was a visit by the Society's president, Charles T. Russell. On April 14, he spoke to a group of over 100 at an assembly held in Denain, and the following day to 70 in Lens. Bible Students from Belgium were also present at these assemblies. Brother Weber and Alexandre Freytag, another Swiss brother who was beginning to play a prominent part in the direction of the work in the French-speaking countries, assisted Brother Russell on these occasions.

From December 1911 to March 1912, Brother Russell made a tour around the world. The *Souvenir Notes* covering that trip says: "From Rome we went on to Paris, and here met with the little class of International Bible Students in that great city." Among the arrangements Russell made while on this trip was provision for the opening up in June 1912 of what was called the "French Office" in Geneva, Switzerland. It was responsible for directing the work in France, Belgium and French-speaking Switzerland. Brother Russell put Emile Lanz, a Swiss dentist living in Mulhouse, Alsace, in charge of this branch office. Lanz enlisted the services of Alexandre Freytag, who helped with the translating of the French *Watch Tower*.

So Adolphe Weber, who had faithfully overseen the work in French-speaking Europe from its beginning at the turn of the century, stepped down in favor of the more educated Lanz and Alexandre Freytag. However, Brother Weber kept a good spirit and continued his yearly pilgrim

visits to congregations and isolated brothers in the French-speaking territories. In December 1912, he set out on a long trip throughout France that took him into 42 towns and villages.

A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

The March 1913 issue of the French *Watch Tower* published a letter addressed to the French-speaking brothers by Brother Russell. In it he stated, among other things:

"I was happy to learn recently of the growing interest shown by the brothers in France, Switzerland, Belgium and Italy. I am very happy about this. . . . I must say a few words about the advantages of the work of the voluntary distributors who hand out tracts freely and wisely to anyone who will really read them. This work must undoubtedly be done particularly in Protestant localities, according to instructions you will receive from the Geneva office. . . . I hope a big effort will be put forth this year in France, with correspondingly great blessings for all the volunteers who share in the harvest work. It appears the colporteur work has not succeeded as well in France as elsewhere. We regret this, but we must accept it."

Several assemblies were held in France during this pre-World War I year. In March, a two-day assembly was held in Lens, in the north, and during the summer there was another two-day assembly in the same region, in Denain, where 260 attended.

RUSSELL AND RUTHERFORD IN PARIS

On August 31, 1913, Brother Russell again passed through Paris, holding a meeting in the Salle de l'Exposition d'Agriculture, rue d'Athènes, near the Saint-Lazare station. Some 70 brothers,

including a few who had come from Belgium, Switzerland and Germany, were present.

A few weeks later, on September 19, 1913, Joseph F. Rutherford also gave a public talk in Paris. The following day, he gave a public talk in the north of France, in Denain's Grand Theatre, before an audience of over 1,000!

PRE-WORLD WAR I REPORT

Reporting to Brother Russell on the work accomplished in 1913 in France and French-speaking Switzerland, Brother Emile Lanz wrote:

"We have decided to concentrate our efforts specially on those parts of the country in which Protestant descendants of the Huguenots and members of other Protestant sects are established. We are organizing public meetings in these areas and gathering the addresses of those who show interest. . . . The 'Tour de Garde' [French "Watch Tower"] has 800 subscribers. . . . The service of the pilgrim brothers is limited to French Switzerland, northern France and Belgium, where there are congregations."

Thus the period running from the turn of the century up until 1913 ended with the accent being placed on the French Protestants, who make up only 1.5 percent of the population, and not even all of these, since emphasis was placed on the north of France.

The year 1914 also marked an extension of the work in Alsace. On February 20, the brothers from Mulhouse organized the first public meeting to be held in Strasbourg. Brother Emile Lanz gave the talk "Where Are the Dead?" before a large audience. Of those present, 350 persons left their names and addresses. This inter-

est was followed up by a colporteur brother from Germany, and thus a small group of Bible Students was formed in Strasbourg. In July, seven new brothers were baptized.

DIFFICULT TIMES IN FRANCE

The French *Watch Tower* of August 1914 announced a general assembly in Denain on August 15, 16. But on August 3, 1914, Germany declared war on France, and this assembly had to be canceled. Early in August, Germany invaded Belgium and the north of France. Some of the brothers evacuated to the Paris area, where they joined up with the small congregation that already existed there. Other brothers stayed behind the lines and continued preaching. Even though the area was occupied by the Germans, the brothers in and around Denain were able to hold meetings every Sunday. They received handwritten copies of the *Watch Tower* from their brothers in Charleroi, Belgium.

Farther south, Brother Theophile Lequime, who had left Denain and now lived in the Paris area, translated *Watch Tower* articles and duplicated them for the brothers. Thus, whether in front of or behind the German lines, the brothers received spiritual food. Yet, there was a growing feeling of disappointment among some anointed Christians, including Emile Lanz himself. He saw 1914 draw to a close without Christians' being "caught away . . . to meet the Lord in the air," according to their understanding of 1 Thessalonians 4:17. The work in the French-speaking lands was manifestly entering into a difficult period.

In his report to Brother Russell on the 1915 service year, Lanz wrote a long text justifying the

activities of the Geneva office. However, he did not include a word about the past efforts that had made the work grow to such an extent that the Geneva office became necessary! Brother Russell became suspicious of the way Lanz was handling things, and in 1916 sent Conrad Binkele, an American of German origin, from Brooklyn to Switzerland to investigate matters. Lanz resented this, showed a rebellious attitude and finally turned against the Society. Thus, Brother Binkele took charge of the central Swiss office in Zurich, and Alexandre Freytag had oversight of the "French Office" in Geneva. That crisis was over.

A BIGGER CRISIS

Brother Freytag, who translated the Society's publications into French, began taking liberties, inserting his own ideas into the *Watch Tower*. Brother Weber noticed these changes and advised Brooklyn. Brother Russell, who had just recently appointed Freytag as manager of the Geneva office, wrote Weber: "If he [Freytag] is an evil servant, this will manifest itself."

On October 31, 1916, Brother Russell died, and this brought further doubts and tests upon the brothers, as they awaited news as to who would be his successor. Finally, in January 1917, Brother Rutherford was elected the Society's president.

Later, Rutherford, through a letter to Freytag, encouraged the French brothers 'to follow the established program for the Berean questions.' This term was applied to questions supplied for group study of the *Watch Tower*. It seems that in 1917 these Berean studies were being neglected among the French-speaking congregations, which explains Brother Rutherford's letter.

But another reason why Brother Rutherford insisted on the use of the Berean questions was to help the brothers stick to the truth as published by the Society. It is quite likely that Brother Rutherford had been informed of Freytag's inserting his own ideas into the *Watch Tower* when translating it. Significantly, when Freytag organized an assembly for the French-speaking brothers in Geneva, October 6-8, 1917, Brother Rutherford wrote a letter to be read at the convention, which stated, in part:

"I wish to take this opportunity to greet you in Christ's love and to assure you of my deep interest in your spiritual and temporal happiness. . . . The fiery tests that are being permitted will show who are approved and who are not. . . . All those who have pride and ambition in their hearts are in great danger, because the fallen angels will take advantage of their weakness and will conquer them unless they react strongly against these tendencies. Any deep-rooted bitterness in their hearts constitutes an opening for the Evil One. . . . Let us be messengers and servants of the truth, not of error. . . . Let us avoid empty discussions and turn away from all calumny and gossip. . . . God loves faithfulness and loyalty, which means that we should be loyal to God, loyal to the Master, loyal to his cause and to the methods He has organized for the spreading of the message of his Kingdom."

Although warm and generous toward his associates, Brother Rutherford was also a brusque and direct type of person. He was suspicious of those who seemed to work to curry his favor. On the other hand, Freytag was a man who attached a great deal of importance to character development, and he liked to draw attention to himself and to attract admirers, particularly among the

sisters. So Freytag was one of those that Rutherford caused to take offense.

In a report on the French work printed in the December 1918 issue of the *French Watch Tower*, Freytag openly criticized the 'headquarters office' for informing him that henceforth the Geneva office should become financially self-supporting. It should be remembered that, at that time, Brother Rutherford and seven other brothers from the Bethel headquarters were unjustly serving prison sentences in Atlanta, Georgia, U.S.A. Freytag apparently reasoned: 'Russell is dead. His fellow workers are in prison. So according to Revelation 3:15-21, they are the modern Laodiceans whom God has spewed out of his mouth. I am the Lord's messenger. God has chosen me to establish the new earth and henceforth to lead his people.'

THE PARIS CONGREGATION INFORMS PITTSBURGH

In view of this situation, on January 19, 1919, the Paris Congregation sent a letter to the Geneva office and a copy to the Society's headquarters, which had temporarily been moved to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. This letter told about the "faulty" translations of books, booklets and magazines into the French language. It said that they contained "so many mistranslations that the brothers hesitate to sell or distribute several of the publications." The letter expressed regret for "the methods used by one of the managers responsible for the Geneva office." This letter was signed in behalf of the committee of elders of the Paris Congregation by Brother H. Roussel, Secretary.

That same month, January 1919, the Paris Congregation formed what they called the "Centraliz-

ing Committee" to replace the Geneva office. They did this because they no longer felt that the direction coming through the Geneva office represented the Lord's direction.

FREYTAG PREPARES A TAKEOVER

Starting with the April 1919 issue, Freytag printed his name on the second page of each *French Watch Tower*, no longer as "manager" of the Geneva office, but as "editor" of the *Watch Tower*. As the official French edition of the *Watch Tower* represented less and less the English edition, some brothers in Switzerland took it upon themselves to publish a more accurate translation of the English-language *Watch Tower*. Thus there were for a time two French editions of the *Watch Tower* circulating among the brothers!

In August 1919, Freytag transferred a part of the Society's literature stock and other property to his own address. Knowing that in January the Paris Congregation had informed Pittsburgh of what was going on, and that on March 25, 1919, Brother Rutherford had been released from prison, Freytag doubtless realized that the Society would certainly soon take action against him. So he began stowing away the property that he intended to keep for himself.

Finally, in the September 1919 issue of the *French Watch Tower*, Freytag wrote an article in which he claimed that God's truth was now to be found through him in Geneva.

AN EVIL SLAVE IS DISMISSED

The very next issue of the *Watch Tower* contained a letter from Brother Rutherford addressed to all French readers. It read:

"Dear Brothers in Christ,

"... Acting as the Lord's representative, several years ago Brother Russell established in Geneva, Switzerland, a branch office of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, appointing Brother A. Freytag as its local representative. Brother Freytag's position was that of a simple servant of the Society and of the Lord. . . . He was never authorized to publish any magazine or tract or to distribute any publications apart from those written by Brother Russell or under his direction. . . . His case appears to be very serious, since now he claims that the Lord has appointed him as his special messenger entrusted with finishing the Church's work.

"Because of his unfaithful conduct, the administration of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society has dismissed him and relieved him of all business to do with the French-language branch, replacing him by Brother C. C. Binkele. Brother Binkele has been authorized to choose, subject to my approval, a French brother to manage the French work under his oversight."

FREYTAG TAKEN TO COURT

Although Freytag was legally dismissed as the representative of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, the matter did not end there. The staff at the office took sides with him, and he refused to vacate the Society's premises, 7, rue de la Tour-Maitresse, Geneva. He also held on to the Society's *Watch Tower* subscription file, the stock of literature and the very costly equipment used for showing the Photo-Drama of Creation. Furthermore, he continued publishing a magazine entitled "The Watch Tower."

Every effort was made to persuade Freytag to give up the Society's property, but without success. In the end, the case was taken to court, and Freytag was obliged to make restitution of the

property he had stolen from the Society. The office of the Society in Geneva was officially closed and its operations transferred to Berne, Switzerland.

Naturally, all of this was a big test for the brothers in France, Belgium and French-speaking Switzerland. A few, mostly in Switzerland, followed Freytag, who founded a sect with himself as "the Lord's messenger." With the financial support of his followers, Freytag later bought a big country house outside Geneva from which he ran his sect. It still exists in France under the name of "The Friends of Man."

PEACE RESTORED, GOOD PROGRESS FOLLOWS

The work in the French-speaking field got off to a fresh start. After the Freytag affair had been handled, the French brothers held a small convention in Paris on September 28, 1919, at which a fine spirit of unity and peace was manifest. The brothers resolved to work in harmony with the brothers appointed by the Society's president. The "Centralizing Committee" was dissolved, as it was only a 'defensive measure' against the dealings of the Geneva office until the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society reorganized the work.

Once again there was just one French *Watch Tower*, with Brother Adolphe Weber back on the translation committee. Brother Rutherford wrote to the French-speaking brothers, his letter appearing in the November 1919 French *Watch Tower*. After having expressed regret over the Freytag affair and explaining that now Brother Ernest Zaugg in Berne was in charge of the French-language work, he said:

"We now hope that the Lord will see fit to make unity and harmony prevail among the French-

speaking friends. . . . If circumstances had been more favorable, I would have been happy to visit you, but in this moment of great distress upon individuals and nations, it seems impossible to do this. However, if, by the Lord's providence, the way is opened up next year, I hope to come to see you."

The new setup for managing the work in France, as organized by Brother Rutherford, was as follows: Conrad Binkele, whose office was in Zurich, was in general charge. Ernest Zaugg, with an office in his home in Berne, was the manager of what was called the "French work," under the supervision of Brother Binkele. Brother Zaugg had two local "assistants and counselors," namely, Joseph Lefèvre, in Paris, and Emile Delannoy, in Le Havre. Lefèvre was Zaugg's assistant for the publishing of literature in French, and Delannoy was to help him take care of the needs of the French congregations. In addition, Brother Henri Roussel was put in charge of a literature depot at his home, 11, rue du Rhin, Paris.

On August 27, 1919, the French International Bible Students Association was formed, with its headquarters at 11, rue du Rhin, Paris. Of course, the work in France was still under the direction of the Swiss branch, but this local association gave the French organization a solid legal footing.

Early in 1920, Brother Zaugg made a long trip to visit the brothers in France (including Alsace-Lorraine) and Belgium. Back in Berne, he wrote a letter to the brothers, saying:

"We were deeply touched to see the zeal of the brothers and sisters who are at the ready awaiting orders from the Society and the equipment necessary for starting the work of extending the

harvest. Everywhere I got the firm feeling that the terrible testing of these past years has produced fruitage in our beloved brothers in France, Belgium and Alsace, and we are convinced that the Supreme Master has thus prepared his own so that they can finish by means of his instruments the work that must still be done in the French-speaking territories."

The teaching abilities of the brothers increased as the "Minister of the Word of God" (called V. D. M.) questions were used. These consisted of a four-page written review made up of 22 questions on Scriptural subjects. The French brothers would send these question sheets to the Berne office for checking. Those who answered satisfactorily at least 85 percent of the questions were considered proficient ministers of the Word of God.

The year 1920 also saw local pilgrim brothers appointed in France. The first was Brother Alfred Durieu from Roubaix, who had already been active in the colporteur work. In August, Brother Joseph Lefèvre, from Paris, also began serving as a pilgrim, visiting isolated brothers in central France, an area that had been neglected for so long while the French work was being directed by Lanz and Freytag. Then in December 1920, Brother Emile Delannoy was appointed as a pilgrim for France, and Brother Werner Giger for Alsace-Lorraine and the Saar.

After World War I, Germany returned Alsace-Lorraine to France. Also, the Saar coal mines were allotted to France as war compensation, although the Saar itself was placed under the League of Nations for a period of 15 years. However, both of these territories were once again placed

under the administration of the Society's office in Berne.

RUTHERFORD VISITS—NEW ORGANIZATION

As he had hoped, Brother Rutherford visited Paris in September 1920. On September 19, he met with about 120 brothers, of whom nearly 40 had come from Belgium and from Alsace. Brother Alfred Durieu translated for him. In the evening, Brother Rutherford gave a public talk in the Sociétés Savantes Hall to an audience of about 1,000, over 300 of whom left their names and addresses so as to be visited.

Toward the end of 1920 the creation of the "Central European Office" was announced. The countries under the supervision of this office in Zurich (formerly called "German branch in Switzerland") were Switzerland, France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Austria and Italy. Brother Binklele was appointed its manager, and Brother Zaugg was confirmed as manager of the "French work," with offices in Berne.

THE PHOTO-DRAMA PRODUCES FINE RESULTS

The Photo-Drama of Creation was used extensively in France during 1920. It was shown, for example, in the northern town of Denain to 900 persons. Even finer results were realized in Alsace-Lorraine and the Saar. The *French Watch Tower* of April 1921 reports:

"The Photo-Drama has been a complete success in different parts of Alsace-Lorraine and the Saar Basin. The greatest success was obtained in Saarbrücken, Völklingen and Strasbourg. . . . Although the hall (in Saarbrücken) can seat 3,000, many interested persons were turned away every evening . . . In Völklingen, although the sessions were

due to start at 8 p.m., we had to start at 6:30 p.m., and the shopkeepers closed their stores earlier especially to be able to attend the Photo-Drama. In Strasbourg, at the 4th session, the audience of 2,000 persons listened with unusual interest and deep respect until 11:30 p.m., while the marvelous establishment of God's kingdom was explained to them. We pray that our kind heavenly Father will enable this seed to bear much fruit."

There is no doubt that Jehovah blessed these efforts to make known his name and kingdom in this territory. The report of Swiss pilgrim Werner Giger published in the August 1921 issue of the *French Watch Tower* tells:

"In Strasbourg the meeting attendance continues to be very good. Even on Sunday, the Berean Studies on Volume VII are attended by a hundred persons, whereas before we were only 50. In Brumath a group of 30 interested persons has been formed. They never miss a meeting and they are visibly growing in knowledge. . . . Here in Strasbourg, 10 brothers and sisters have volunteered for the colporteur work. Coming back to Saarbrücken, there is now a group of 150 interested persons who meet together regularly. . . . In that region [the Saar] several of the friends would like to be baptized."

This great interest being shown in Alsace and the Saar was followed up by the few local brothers, as well as by brothers from Switzerland. The Berne office put Fred Germann in charge of the work in Alsace-Lorraine and the Saar, where he served faithfully until he was transferred elsewhere in 1926. He was zealously backed up in this work by Henri Geiger who was the overseer of the Strasbourg Congregation. Thus, by 1921, the work

began to be well organized in Alsace-Lorraine and the Saar.

THE WORK MOVES AHEAD DESPITE TESTINGS

The work was also moving ahead in the rest of France. Early in 1921, baptism services were held in Denain and Bruay-en-Artois in the north of France, and also in Paris. The Memorial report for that year showed a total attendance in France of 422 in 16 different towns, including an attendance of 81 in Denain and 68 in Paris.

A call for colporteurs was published in the October 1921 issue of the French *Watch Tower*. The preaching work was being carried out mainly through the distribution of the book *Millions Now Living Will Never Die*. The Society printed a special letter for the brothers to use in offering this book to their relatives and friends.

The pilgrim work, too, was intensified in France during 1921. Brothers Delannoy and Durieu visited congregations and isolated groups both north and south of the river Loire, and Brother Adolphe Weber visited congregations in eastern and northern France, as well as in Paris and Normandy, finishing his trip in Alsace.

It will be recalled that after Alexandre Freytag left the truth in 1919, Brothers Delannoy, Lefèvre and Roussel were appointed as assistants to Brother Zaugg in France. Roussel, you may remember, was the brother who, as secretary of the Paris Congregation, had signed the letter sent to Geneva and Pittsburgh in January 1919, protesting against Freytag's disloyalty and expressing loyalty to the Society. Well, as time went by, both Brothers Lefèvre and Roussel became discontented and ended up as evil servants.

This second testing period in the French field was really an aftermath of the rebellion that had taken place in America back in 1917. In that year, P. S. L. Johnson and four members of the board of directors of the Society had tried to wrest control from the newly elected president, Brother Rutherford. Thwarted in their plans, they began to spread their opposition outside of Bethel in an extensive speaking and letter-writing campaign throughout the United States, Canada and Europe.

In 1920, Johnson visited the oldest congregations in the north of France, such as Sin-le-Noble. His purpose was to cause division, and draw the brothers away from Jehovah's organization, and he eventually was successful. In September 1922, a group of French brothers, including Roussel and Lefèvre in Paris, printed a 16-page declaration, entitled "A Necessary Realignment," criticizing Brother Rutherford. They distributed it widely among the French-speaking brothers, adding to the confusion and divisions.

In 1922, a general meeting was held in Denain, and pilgrim Brother Adolphe Weber was sent from Switzerland to handle matters. Sister Rachel Beugin and Brother Samuel Nongailard describe what happened:

"According to the discontented ones, Brother Russell was the faithful and wise servant, and since his death in 1916 the work must remain as he had left it. No more light was due to appear. . . . For these discontented ones, preaching from door to door was unacceptable. For them, we should simply wait for God to intervene at Armageddon. With the help of his Bible, Brother Weber proved to them that the organization was right. . . . A vote took place which was a very close thing: 39 were against

the Society's viewpoint and 42 were for it. The 39 'rebels' left, taking their chairs with them, and formed the 'Association of Bible Students in Denain.' "

Yet, while some left the truth in 1922 and became evil servants, the majority of the brothers remained faithful. Brother Rutherford visited Paris and strengthened the brothers in June of that year. Door-to-door work with the *Millions Now Living Will Never Die* book was begun in 1922. Also, *Watch Tower* studies were organized for the first time in the congregations. And the pilgrim work was greatly stepped up during 1922.

Thus, in spite of the severe testings the French brothers had undergone, those who remained faithful were able to have a grand share in the vital Kingdom proclamation.

WITNESSING IN ALSACE-LORRAINE

With the increased distribution of the *Golden Age* magazine (in German), the Watch Tower Society established an office and literature depot for Alsace-Lorraine in the city of Strasbourg, and Brother Henri Geiger was put in charge of it. The *Golden Age* magazines were sent in bulk from Berne and wrapped and sent out to subscribers from this Strasbourg office. The sisters would visit the many restaurants in Strasbourg, and go from table to table offering the magazines to people who were dining. Often they placed as many as 90 magazines in one evening. Sister Lydia Geiger was particularly successful in this work, sometimes placing 2,000 magazines a month.

In 1923 Brother Franz Zürcher was sent by the Berne office to show the Photo-Drama in Alsace-Lorraine and the Saar. This Swiss brother con-

tinued to share in the Photo-Drama work in France and the Saar until 1925, when he was called in to the Berne Bethel. In 1923, there was a congregation in Mulhouse, Alsace, with about 50 associated. But that year there were 110 present at the Memorial in Mulhouse, and the same number in Strasbourg.

A STRENGTHENED ORGANIZATION

Organizationally, the French work got off to a good start in 1923. A "service director" was appointed by the Society in each congregation. He had two assistants, one to look after the accounts and the other to take care of the literature supplies, these three brothers forming a "service committee." This marked the beginning of centralized theocratic direction in the French field. Throughout 1923, the Society organized Testimony Days through the service directors. Then on August 26, 1923, the French brothers took part in the "World-wide Witness" organized by the Brooklyn office.

Another milestone in the development of the work in the French-speaking field was the publishing in French of *The Harp of God*. This book gave a powerful impetus to the teaching work in France. Also, on September 2 and 3, 1923, a general assembly for the French-speaking brothers was held in Denain. Brothers Zaugg and Weber from Switzerland were present, and they, along with French pilgrim Emile Delannoy, gave the principal talks. A large banner showing the words "Advertise the King and Kingdom" was unfolded before the audience, just as Brother Rutherford had done the year before at Cedar Point in America. The brothers were enthused, and all

those present unanimously adopted a resolution. Summing up the French work for 1923, Brother Rutherford wrote:

"In the whole work we mark a real increase of zeal amongst the friends. We appreciate the great privilege we now have to proclaim the good tidings of the kingdom. Generally the friends go out in groups of five or six for colporteuring, and they sell on Sunday mornings upwards of 250 volumes."

The year 1924 saw the publishing in French of the first issues of the *Golden Age* magazine. It became a bimonthly magazine in 1925, but ceased publication on Brother Rutherford's instructions in 1926. Then it appeared again in October 1932, when it became a regularly published monthly magazine.

In May 1924, Brother Rutherford made a brief visit to France, speaking in Paris and in the north. He observed: "The French people are awakening in some measure to the truth, but there is yet much to be done in France." Then, in July, a general assembly for the French-speaking brothers was held in Haveluy, near Denain, in the north of France, with Brother Zaugg and several other members of the Berne Bethel family serving on the program.

HOPES OF BROTHERS

There was a total attendance in 1924 of 557 at the Memorial in France, including about 300 in Alsace-Lorraine. Sister Suzanne Beugin notes regarding the hopes of many brothers: "Those of the remnant expected to go to heaven before the end of 1924. Brother Delannoy, who came to visit us in Denain, comforted those of us who were of the great multitude. He said we would not be

abandoned. Nevertheless, when the end of 1924 came, I was relieved to see that my parents were still there.' However, this situation portended further testings and siftings to come the following year.

1925—A CRITICAL YEAR

The year 1925 got off to a good enough start, with the *French Watch Tower* magazine being enlarged from 12 to 16 pages. Also, the tract entitled "Ecclesiastics Indicted" was distributed in France, many copies right outside the churches. In the whole of the French-speaking field, over two million of these tracts were put out!

Brother Rutherford visited France once again in May of 1925. He was scheduled to give the talk, "The Frauds of the Clergy Exposed," at the great Trocadéro Palace overlooking the river Seine opposite the Eiffel Tower. Brothers from the north of France had come down to Paris a week beforehand to help the local brothers advertise it. But the large-sized handbills quickly got into the hands of the Catholic clergy, who put pressure on the police to stop this street advertising. As a result, some of the brothers were arrested.

About 2,000 persons responded to the invitation and came to the talk. Brother Rutherford began to speak when suddenly about 50 priests and members of Catholic Action, armed with sticks, rushed into the hall singing the *Marseillaise* (the French national anthem). Three times, Brother Rutherford left the stage and then came back. Opposers were shouting: 'If he's a judge, let him go judge the Americans!' The August 1, 1925, *Watch Tower* reported:

"While a greater mass of the audience were opposed to the clergy, yet . . . they were bantering

with each other and paid no attention to the speaker; and it was impossible to address them. . . . it became absolutely necessary to abandon the meeting."

That same year of 1925 sparked off even greater difficulties within the organization. The book *Millions Now Living Will Never Die* had been widely used in the French field since 1921, and on the basis of its contents, much was expected of 1925. But when 1925 came and went without the anticipated happenings coming to pass, those on the outside who had read the book made fun of the brothers. Brother Jules Anache in Sin-le-Noble writes: "We were scoffed at by our enemies who wrote articles, one of which was entitled 'Millions now living will never die if they take Pink pills,' referring to a remedy that was popular at the time."

Worse still, the faith of some of the brothers themselves was shaken. Some expected to go to heaven that year. This brought about siftings in the congregations, particularly in Alsace. Sister Anna Zimmermann writes: "Unjustified hopes brought about great testings. Many gave up."

Indicative of this testing was the question meeting held by Brother Rutherford during the Basel, Switzerland, assembly, which took place May 1-3, 1926. The report on this convention stated:

"Question: Have the ancient worthies returned?

"Answer: Certainly they have not returned. No one has seen them, and it would be foolish to make such an announcement. It was stated in the 'Millions' book that we might reasonably expect them to return shortly after 1925, but this was merely an expressed opinion."

A mistake had been made but, as Brother Rutherford stated, this was no reason to stop serving the Lord. Yet some did, and so that period marked further siftings in the French field. Figures published in the French *Watch Tower* show that in 1925 there were 93 present at the Memorial in the Mulhouse Congregation in Alsace, whereas in 1927 the Memorial attendance had dropped to 23.

FURTHER TESTS FOR FRENCH BROTHERS

In July 1925, for reasons of health, Brother Binkele, the manager of the Central European Office, was replaced by Brother Zaugg. The following year, Binkele turned against the Society and founded his own sect called "The Free Bible Students." Then, Brother Zaugg was replaced in 1926 by Brother Martin Harbeck, sent from Brooklyn by Brother Rutherford. Brother Zaugg dropped out of the full-time work and eventually left the truth.

Thus, within two years, the direction of the French work was twice decapitated in dramatic circumstances. News of this reached the brothers in France, which did nothing to help matters. Thus ended a long period of wartime trials and postwar sifting among the brothers in the French-speaking field.

EXPANSION AMONG THE POLES

For various political and economic reasons, the French government opened up the way for many Poles to come to work in French coal mines following World War I. Soon, mining communities began to spring up in which only the Polish language could be heard. The miners were quickly followed

by Polish bakers, butchers, grocers and Catholic priests. By 1923 there were about 100,000 Poles in northern France, and many more were arriving daily.

The French congregations in the north of France preached among these Polish miners and their families, and many became interested in the truth. In 1923 the first Polish congregation was formed, and the following year Brother Rutherford sent Polish-speaking American pilgrims from Brooklyn to show the Photo-Drama among the Poles. These pilgrim visits greatly stimulated the brothers and strengthened their ties with the headquarters organization.

The growth of the Kingdom work among the Poles was remarkable. Of the 1,138 who attended the Memorial in France in 1926, 518 were from among the Polish population. And of the 34 congregations in France that year, 12, in Alsace-Lorraine, were German-speaking, 12 were Polish-speaking and 10 were French-speaking. These Polish congregations were visited by Polish-speaking American pilgrim brothers sent by Brooklyn, such as Brothers Krett, Ludwig Kuzma and Rycombel. In 1926 a general assembly was held in Sin-le-Noble, with about 300 present at the French gathering, and 1,000 at the Polish! Brother Albert Kosmalski, who served as a pilgrim among the Polish congregations from 1928 to 1936, relates the following:

"When Brother Rutherford visited Bruay-en-Artois [in 1924], he told the Poles that Jehovah had taken them out of their country so that they could learn the truth in France and that they and their children should help the French also to get to know the truth. He added that a great preaching work

was still to be done and that Jehovah would raise up publishers for that work."

These words of Brother Rutherford proved true. The 1929 *Year Book* reports:

"The Poles are zealous; they do not content themselves with working in their neighborhood, but a number of classes have taken the responsibility upon themselves to reach distant territories. Seeking their own people in France many travel a hundred kilometers by bicycle and find the Poles not only in the mining sections but also in the country on farms, to give to them the message of the kingdom. Some of the Polish brethren have even begun to witness to the French and have had a marked success with the French 'Freedom' booklet. The Polish brethren are beginning to see the oneness of the Lord's work and the necessity for doing the work according to the Lord's method and organization. During the year 332 Polish brethren have symbolized their consecration by baptism."

THE FAITHFUL PRESS ON

Despite the trials, the French brothers in northern France pressed on with the preaching work. In 1927, Sunday house-to-house preaching with the books and booklets began in France. Brother Weber continued to visit the congregations and isolated groups. New ones were being added. A family in the big city of Lyons learned the truth from a relative in Germany. The three daughters of this Rocques family all eventually came into the truth, their names being changed through marriage to Fenouil, Boiteux and Blanck. These families provided the nucleus for the future Lyons Congregation. In 1927, the only office for the work in France was in Strasbourg, under the direction of the Berne office in Switzerland.

At this time, Italians in France began to be reached with the Kingdom message. The 1929 *Year Book* notes: "The Photo Drama has also been shown to Italians. . . . Mussolini drives good Italians out of his dominion and, behold, the Lord gives them the truth in France!" In 1928 there was a peak in publishers of 447 in France, including seven colporteurs, as pioneers were then called. There were 45 congregations.

AN OFFICE IS OPENED IN PARIS

In 1929 the office in Strasbourg was transferred to premises that the Society rented at 105, rue des Poissonniers, Paris 18. An Alsatian brother, Gustave Zopfer, was appointed manager of this new Paris office. The office was, of course, still under the jurisdiction of the Swiss branch in Berne, where Brother Harbeck was general manager.

There were approximately 40 publishers in Paris and the nearby suburbs in 1929. In the fall a convention was held at Lens in northern France, with some 1,200 present! About 600 participated in the field service and they placed more than 5,000 books and booklets. Of course, most of these were Polish brothers.

FOREIGN COLPORTEURS

In 1929 two English colporteurs (now called pioneers) crossed the Channel and worked in the Dunkirk area, and many more soon followed. Brother Harbeck, the manager of the Berne office, wrote:

"We prayed that the Lord might send colporteurs into France and our prayer was answered. Most of the colporteurs came from England and from other

countries, and without knowing the language, they are using the [testimony] cards and are having wonderful success. In 1930, eight times as much literature was placed in France by the classes as in 1928."

In 1930 the number of colporteurs jumped to 27. The work of these full-time preachers consisted mainly in covering large sections of territory and placing literature. Thus areas that had never heard the Kingdom message began to hear it. As further evidence that the work was moving ahead, a French branch of the Watch Tower Society was opened in 1930. By that time, the staff of the Paris office had increased to five, including the local manager, Brother Zopfer, who worked under the direction of Brother Harbeck in Berne.

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION IN PARIS

The first big convention in Paris was held at the Pleyel Hall, May 23-26, 1931; it marked a turning point in the history of Jehovah's Witnesses in France. *The Watch Tower* of August 1, 1931, reported:

"According to the best count that could be made there were attending the convention, to wit, 1,450 Germans, 778 English, 551 Polish, 200 French, and smaller numbers from many other countries. It was found in canvassing the convention that twenty-three nationalities were present but almost all of them understood one of the languages, English, Polish, French or German. Discourses were given in these languages, sometimes as many as three interpreters being on the platform at a time. . . . The president of the Society delivered several addresses, and these were interpreted in turn in French, German and Polish. . . .

"An enthusiastic spirit permeated the convention during the entire period, and when it was concluded everyone was heard to say: 'Surely this is the best convention yet'; and of course it was the best ever held in Paris, and probably no better had been held anywhere else. The time seems now certain for the widening of the work in France. . . .

"A new location for the office has been found where there is more room, and better light. In addition thereto the Lord has provided a home in which the office force can live reasonably and comfortably as one family and also provide some shelter for a few colporteurs that will be kept constantly in the city of Paris."

The field service was a prominent feature of the convention. It was all well planned, with each publisher being given directions and assistance. And it was a marvelous success, as *The Messenger* of July 25, 1931, reports:

"Each group had a couple of interpreters to aid the captain in placing his workers. Some parties went to their territory in big sight-seeing buses, which had been engaged for that purpose and which waited outside of the hall. Others who were assigned near-by territory went by trolley, taxi, or on foot. Practically 100 percent of those at the convention at that time engaged in the service. During that one morning of service, the workers placed 1,329 books and 14,557 booklets, making a grand total of 16,776 books and booklets placed in Paris during the entire convention."

A CALL FOR COLPORTEURS

A call for more colporteurs was issued at the Paris convention. This, along with the obvious manifestation of God's spirit, moved many to get into the full-time work. John Cooke, only a teenager at the time but who later served as a mis-

sionary in Spain and who is presently serving in South Africa, writes:

"What an assembly that was! I shall never forget it. It was thrilling for a young brother used to a small congregation to travel with hundreds of brothers from London to Paris. And it was more thrilling still to meet the larger contingent from Germany and brothers from several other countries. How exuberant and enthusiastic these continental brothers seemed to us staid English folks! . . . Everything seemed so well organized, so dynamic, and everybody seemed so happy.

"It was then I made the big decision that changed my life. I had already thought much about being a pioneer and had a desire to be one, but my father's opposition held me back. However, right at the first session, a sister to whom I was conversing said: 'A young brother like you should be a colporteur, why aren't you?' Several times various ones made remarks like that. Brother Rutherford said in his emphatic way: 'Nothing under the sun should stop you young folks from going into the colporteur work.'"

Another English brother, Eric Wilkinson, notes that 'anyone from any country was invited to come to France to share in the work.' Eric and a friend in his congregation in Lancaster, England, responded and soon were preaching the good news full time in France. Thus the pioneers in France rose from 27 in 1930 to 104 in 1931.

COLPORTEURING IN FRANCE

Brother Wilkinson tells about the colporteur work in France:

"We were assigned to work in the slum district of Paris. The janitors [concierges] were as determined that we would not work their buildings as

we were determined that we would. Often the police were brought and we were taken to the Commissaire, who usually was sympathetic and let us go. In the end, we made a kind of back apron of five pockets with straps that went over our shoulders. This was worn under our jackets, and would hold quite enough literature for one building. With this we could walk past the janitors (in their glass-walled rooms), keeping the rest of our literature in a case on our bikes. We were, of course, working with a testimony card, but my friend (who spoke French) was greatly surprised to find that, contrary to his expectations, I was placing more literature than he. He told them too much, there was no curiosity left by the time he had finished.

"Working in Paris was a great strain, especially to one bred in the country. To make it worse, in the district where we were working, we often found there was one toilet for from four to six apartments. These [toilets] were constructed in a corner of the stairs and would not have a water trap, just a straight pipe. You can understand the smell in the heat of the summer! We longed for the green fields, and as there was more of a need for pioneers in the provinces, we volunteered to go."

Samuel Nongailard, a French brother who was then living in the Paris area, relates an amusing experience of two of the publishers who had not yet learned much French:

"In Paris the greatest difficulty was to get past the concierges [janitors], who were real watchdogs. Two English sisters were working an apartment house in Paris when the concierge came up the stairs and asked them what they were doing and whom they had come to see. This concierge was quite aggressive, so the sisters had to quickly

find an answer. Noticing an enamel plate fixed on a door and thinking it was the householder's name, one of the sisters replied with a big smile: 'We have come to see Madame Tournez le bouton [Turn to enter].'"

EXEMPLARY ZEAL AND ENDURANCE

Those early pioneers were exemplary in their zeal and endurance. They gave up physical comforts, but they realized many rich spiritual blessings. Mona Brzoska, an English sister, wrote concerning her pioneering experiences in France in 1931 and the following years:

"Our accommodation was generally of a very primitive nature and one of the big problems was the heating in the wintertime. We were often obliged to make do with a freezing cold room where we had to break the ice on the water in the jug in the morning before we could wash. A little oil stove served to do our simple cooking. The camping equipment available today did not exist at that time. Our equipment was therefore rather primitive and our way of life was quite Spartan.

"We never saw other Bible Students; we were completely isolated. This was the biggest change in comparison with our own country where we had always been in contact with the brothers. We had to fight this isolation by regularly studying together the Society's publications. Since back in those days we did no back-calling or home Bible studies, in the evening we had time to write to our family and especially to other pioneers, to share our experiences and encourage one another. Some years we even had to take the Memorial together, just the two of us.

"We put in long days' work. We traveled 50 or 60 kilometers [31-37 mi.] on our bicycles each day. We had to start early in the morning, particu-

larly in winter, so as to take advantage of the daylight hours."

Although the majority of the early pioneers were English, other nationalities, including Germans, Swiss, Polish and French, were also represented. These pioneers often subsisted on meager provisions. A French brother told of visiting some foreign pioneers in Lyons who gave him the following recipe:

"In the evening, put a measure of wheat in a vacuum flask and cover it with boiling water. Pour it out the following morning and sweeten with sugar. The result was something that was eatable, no doubt nourishing, but not very appetizing." At least, not for a Frenchman!

MISSIONARIES EXPELLED, BUT THEIR WORK BORE FRUIT

In 1934, the Ministry of the Interior sent out an order for the police to deport all foreign missionaries working for the Watch Tower Society. This decree was executed by French politician Pierre Laval, who later became a traitor during World War II and was tried and shot. Thus, in 1934 and 1935, the majority of these foreign colporteurs were obliged to leave France.

Yet the work they accomplished enjoyed success. In 1935, Brother Zopfer, the manager of the Paris office, wrote: "The work accomplished by these from 1930 to 1934 was a sowing which has borne fruit. From all parts of France letters are continually received—expressions of joy that Jehovah's witnesses have visited them and that they have learned something of the truth."

Yes, not a few persons who have taken their stand for Jehovah first accepted literature from



(Background) Paris office from 1931 to 1940
(Foreground) Brother Rutherford with staff from French and Swiss offices

1931

these colporteurs back in those prewar years. For instance, Brother Daniel-Ovies wrote the Society's branch office a few years back: "Here, in the Narbonne area, some who are now manifesting interest received publications from the English pioneers before the war." Another sister observed: "Now and again one meets elderly brothers and sisters who first obtained the Society's literature at that time. Right now I am studying with a lady who took the *Creation* book during the thirties."

So all those zealous pioneers who worked in France before the war can be certain that their French brothers today recognize the great value of the work they accomplished. They were *real* pioneers—a wonderful example to the young members of the congregations today.

RADIO BROADCASTING

On February 15, 1930, the Society was able to make a contract with the Paris radio station VITUS, and by the summer of 1931 the station had broadcast 140 French, 35 English and 9 Polish Bible lectures. Brother Rutherford's public talk at the 1931 Paris convention was carried by this station. Giving an idea of the good effect the broadcasts had is the following letter received from a Parisian:

"I listened attentively to the lecture which was given yesterday over the radio station VITUS; and permit me to express my appreciation of the speaker, whose name I could not remember. Radio station VITUS will some day be proud for having been used for such a wonderful purpose and this at a time when religion and science, in spite of progress, are so inconsistent. Hurrah for VITUS!"

The 1932 *Year Book* reported: "Thousands of

people in Paris and its vicinity are hearing the message. Many of these have called at our office in Paris, which is now centrally located, and have obtained the literature there."

Among those who came into the truth through listening to the radio was the Queyroi family. They lived in Saint-Ouen, a suburb just north of Paris. Several members of this family eventually entered the full-time preaching work. One of the sons, Jean Queyroi, later went to Gilead and is still faithfully serving in the full-time service in the Paris area.

But there was another benefit of these broadcasts, as Sister Mona Brzoska, one of the foreign pioneers, explained: "The mere mention that such programs were broadcast was sufficient for the people to listen to us. They did not like to admit that they were ignorant of what was going on."

Over the years other French radio stations besides VITUS shared in broadcasting our Bible lectures. In addition, direct broadcasts from America were picked up in France. On Sunday, January 13, 1935, an experimental broadcast was made by radio stations in Schenectady and Pittsburgh. Brother Rutherford's talk "Universal War Near" was broadcast on shortwave and received in France. The success of this experiment led to the broadcast on June 2, 1935, of Brother Rutherford's talk "Government," which he gave during the Washington convention and which was relayed by Radio Philadelphia and heard in Paris at an assembly held in the Pleyel Hall.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

In April 1931, the Society's Paris office was transferred from the somewhat dark and cramped premises at 105, rue des Poissonniers, Paris 18, to



1932

About 100 motorcycles were used in France to spread the Kingdom message

more convenient and better situated premises rented at 129, rue du Faubourg Poissonnière, Paris 9. That same year, the Society bought a villa in Enghien-les-Bains, a suburb north of Paris, which became the first real Bethel home in France. The brothers lived here and traveled by train to Paris every day to work in the Paris office. Brother Gustave Zopfer was in charge, and his wife stayed in Enghien to look after the Bethel home.

Alice Berner, who now works in the Wiesbaden Bethel, lived at the French Bethel for a time in the early 1930's. She relates:

"It was a lovely place with a big garden. Of course, this also meant work for us. So on week-ends, we office girls spent hours cleaning up the garden and helping, too, with the ironing.

"In the morning after the daily text and breakfast, we used to run for the train bringing us to the North Paris station. It was a comfortable train and people would be reading their early morning paper. Sometimes we had an occasion to give a witness too.

"The locality at 129 rue du Faubourg Poissonnière served many purposes. It was our office and there was also a large table with literature for those who would come in to get books or magazines. The other section served as a storeroom, and somewhat hidden away was a little kitchen arrangement because we did not go home for lunch but had it at the office. We were about seven persons then, but sometimes brothers or sisters would come in to help with some rush shipment. So we were sometimes as many as 10 or 12 persons at the lunch table having a happy time together."

1931—THE NEW NAME

In 1931 the new name "Jehovah's Witnesses" was adopted, and many of the older French brothers mention what a stimulating effect this had on them. The October 1931 French *Bulletin* ("Kingdom Service") stated, under the title "A New Name": "How satisfying it is when someone asks you: 'Who are you, or what do you call yourself?', to be able to reply: 'I am one of Jehovah's Witnesses!'"

INSTRUMENTS FOR THE PREACHING WORK

In January 1932, a copy in French of the new booklet *The Kingdom, the Hope of the World* was sent to the president of the French Republic, cabi-

net ministers, senators, deputies, magistrates, army officers and clergymen, from the cardinals down to the local parish priests. The booklet was also distributed widely from house to house.

In October of the same year, *The Golden Age* reappeared in the French language. It was adapted to the French taste, and contained regularly the radio lectures of Brother Rutherford. The magazine was edited in Paris—Brothers Gustave Zopfer, Abel Degueldre and Emile Delannoy serving on the editorial committee—and it was printed by an outside printer in Paris. The following year the French *Watchtower* became a 16-page semi-monthly magazine, it having been only a monthly magazine up till then.

COVERING THE COUNTRY

In 1932 there were 85 pioneers in France, and altogether 796 publishers. These used 100 motorcycles, four cars and two big buses to assist them in spreading the Kingdom message far and wide. For the first time, in 1932, all France reportedly was covered by Kingdom publishers, with 965,808 books and booklets being placed.

BEGINNING OF DEPORTATIONS

Already in 1932, France began to force some foreign publishers to leave the country. These included a number of the Polish brothers, as well as Brother and Sister Alfred Rütimann from Switzerland. Brother Rütimann did French translating, and he continued in this work after he returned to Switzerland. After many years of faithful service, he died in 1959, while still a member of the Berne Bethel family. On January 21, 1971, Sister Rütimann, in a letter to the France branch,

observed: "Alfred worked with great love for the French-speaking brothers. He spared no efforts in helping in the French translating; it was as a burning zeal within him, and we pray that our efforts may have contributed a little to the magnificent increases that we are experiencing today."

SOCIETY'S BOOKS WIN GOLD MEDALS

In September 1933, the French brothers were invited to display the Society's literature at a Paris exhibition. Two weeks later the brothers received from the Exhibition Committee a diploma with gold medal for religious writings. This encouraged them to participate in another exhibition a few months later and this time the Society was awarded a diploma of honor with gold medal and cross of the City of Paris. The Exhibition Committee explained in a letter:

"The diplomas which have been awarded to you during the exhibitions of September and December, 1933, are in recognition of the high moral value of your work and of the undeniable honesty which your literature reveals. . . . The Watch Tower literature is a symbol of honesty, loyalty and courage."

TELEGRAMS SENT TO HITLER

By now persecutions of Jehovah's Witnesses had become severe across the border in Germany. So on October 7 of 1934 all the French congregations joined with their brothers world wide in sending telegrams of protest to Hitler and his government for their persecution of Jehovah's Witnesses. Some French post offices refused to send this telegram, but most of them did when the brothers insisted.

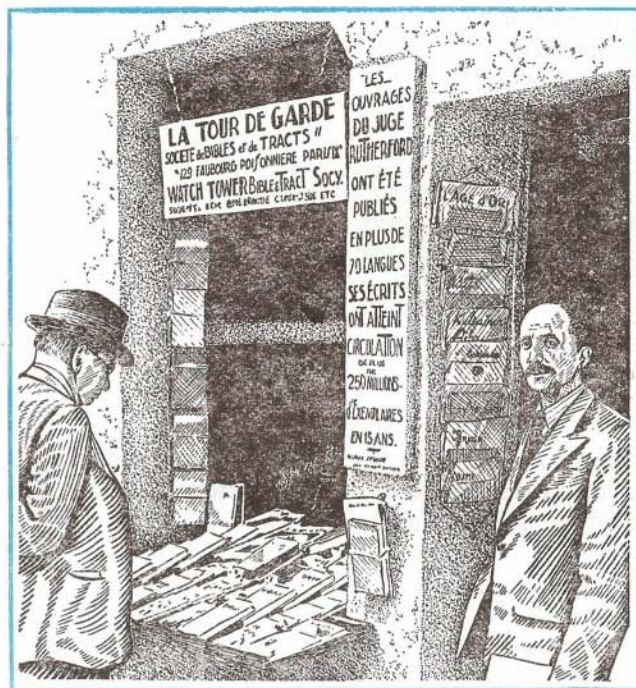
CLERGY OPPOSITION AND MASS DEPORTATIONS

As the work of Jehovah's Witnesses prospered in France, the clergy began to see a great "danger" to "their" flocks. In Paris certain Polish clergymen held a conference, and agreed to do everything to stop our activity among the Poles. They had our literature burnt in public in front of the church doors. In other places they posted signs on the doors of churches and schoolhouses warning against the purchase of our literature.

Then, in February 1934, a letter issued by the French Ministry of the Interior stated that our writings were "subversive," and ordered the police to expel from France all foreign missionaries. The decree also affected some of our Polish brothers who had learned the truth in France. In some places, whole communities of these devoted Christians were required to leave France within 48 hours. Thus, some congregations composed entirely of Polish brothers, not only in the north of France, but also in the mining towns and villages of central France, disappeared overnight. The 1935 Year Book of Jehovah's Witnesses commented about this:

"Many of these [Polish brothers] have been left without employment and with no means of support and with no money to return to their native land. A great hardship has been worked upon them. The French government also expelled Germans and English citizens who were there engaged in the pioneer service. This has made it difficult for the work to be carried on as successfully as had been hoped."

About 280 Polish brothers returned to Poland in 1935, and some of those who remained in France became discouraged through the difficulties



1933

The Society's stand at a Paris exhibition. In the thirties, several books won gold medals

encountered and gave up the faith. Thus the total number of publishers in France dropped from 1,054 in 1934 to 889 in 1935, and the number of pioneers fell from 62 to 41.

USE OF THE PHONOGRAPH

In 1934 and 1935 playing recorded Bible lectures in the homes of interested persons was a new means of spreading the Kingdom message. About

100 portable phonographs were being used in France during 1935. Reports show that 12,709 persons listened to the Society's recordings in France during 1936. Some of the brothers working in the coal mines used their phonographs to proclaim the Kingdom message to their fellow workers. In one mine a transcription machine was installed for several days, and all the records were played for the benefit of the miners.

In 1937 our use of the radio in France was stopped when the clergy managed to intimidate the owners of the stations into refusing to broadcast our message unless it was first submitted to a kind of censorship. Thus our use of recordings was stepped up, with the brothers starting to use the phonograph in the house-to-house work. Also, sound cars began to be used extensively. Brother Samuel Nongaillard relates:

"When we arrived in a village or town, we first drew the attention of the population by playing a musical record, generally a march, and then we played records such as 'Where Are the Dead?' after which we told the public that Jehovah's Witnesses would call at their homes."

Brother Jules Anache, from the Sin-le-Noble Congregation, tells the following amusing experience:

"In Picardy, in a village in the Somme Department, we produced a peculiar sound effect. We stopped our coach equipped with loudspeakers on the top of a hill overlooking the village, but hidden in a group of trees. Then we put the sound on full blast. The inhabitants first heard the music and then the lecture, and wondered if they were not hearing a message from heaven! We placed a great deal of literature in that village."

CHANGES AT PARIS OFFICE TO HELP PIONEERS

Due to the departure of so many foreign brothers, there was a slight drop in publishers from 889 to 822 in 1936. However, there were still 40 pioneers in France, most of whom were foreigners. For some time they had received little or no help from the Paris office in solving their problems.

Matters came to a head at the Lucerne, Switzerland, assembly in September, when the pioneers spoke to Brother Rutherford. The *1937 Year Book of Jehovah's Witnesses* reported on the matter: "It is exceedingly regrettable to here state that during the year the Society's local representative did not co-operate with the pioneers as he should; but this matter has been remedied and it is expected that conditions will be improved so far as this is concerned."

The above-quoted *Year Book*, by the way, was the first to appear in the French language. A French edition also was published in 1938 and 1939, but then the war came, and the *Yearbook* did not appear again in the French language until 1971.

Brother Zopfer was replaced in 1936 as manager of the Paris office by Fred Gabler, an English brother who had been in the full-time service for years, and Emile Delannoy was appointed as his assistant. Gustave Zopfer later abandoned the truth, and even collaborated with the Nazis during the war.

SECOND INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION IN PARIS

In 1937 the second international convention of Jehovah's Witnesses in Paris was held August 21 to 23 at the Maison de la Mutualité. This place contains some of the largest and most convenient

halls that could have been obtained for such a gathering. The speaker addressed the audience in the main auditorium in English, and the other halls were connected by wire. An interpreter in each of these halls translated the speech into the language of the audience. Thus the entire convention heard the same speech at the same time, each group in its own language. About 3,500 persons attended, with an additional 1,000 filling the halls for the main talk.

There were only about 100 persons at the time attending the meetings in Paris. How happy they were to have delegates visit them from around the world! Two trains came from England, and one came from Switzerland. The first international convention held in Paris in 1931 had been

1937

*Sin-le-Noble Congregation
publishers with the sound car
they used*



a great success, but there is no doubt that this 1937 convention was outstandingly well organized, giving a small preview of the present-day assemblies held by Jehovah's Witnesses.

After the convention, Brother Gabler was transferred to Brussels to oversee the work in Belgium, and Brother Charles Knecht, an Alsatian brother who for some time had been overseeing the work in Belgium, was put in charge of the Paris office. The Kingdom work went ahead well under Brother Knecht's direction. At the time there were 10 persons working in the Bethel in Enghien, and in the downtown Paris office. The sound work was rapidly expanding; the number of phonographs being used was 236, and the number of persons who listened to the Society's records rose from 28,412 in 1937 to 103,801 in 1938.

WHO SHALL PARTAKE?

The above was the subtitle in the April 1, 1938, French *Watchtower*. In that magazine the "other sheep," then often referred to as "Jonadabs," were directly invited to attend the Memorial, an invitation that had not been extended in previous years. The question of who should partake of the Memorial emblems was a confusing one in the minds of many of the brothers. But a talk by the manager of the Central European Office in Switzerland, Brother Harbeck, helped clear up the matter. Brother Louis Piéchota tells about Brother Harbeck's talk in Sin-le-Noble:

"Before beginning his talk, he asked the audience who among them thought they had received the heavenly call. Most of those present raised their hands. Then Brother Harbeck developed his subject and described the many blessings awaiting

humankind when paradise will be re-established. At the end of his talk, he put this question to the audience: 'Who among you would like to live in that paradise?' Many hands were raised. He added: 'If all your hopes are centered on living in that paradise earth, then you have not received the heavenly call.' "

Significantly, the number partaking of the Memorial emblems decreased, while the attenders increased. There were 1,510 present at the 1939 Memorial in France and only 631 partook.

STEPPED-UP ACTIVITY AS WAR NEARS

War clouds were gathering in Europe, and Brother Knecht foresaw that what was happening to our brothers in Germany could very well happen shortly to Jehovah's Witnesses elsewhere in Europe, including France. So he visited the zone assemblies and congregations in France and warned the brothers to begin preparing for the difficulties ahead.

In 1938 Brother Franz Zürcher from Berne Bethel published a book entitled "Crusade Against Christianity," giving a detailed report on the persecution of Jehovah's Witnesses in Nazi Germany. The following year the book was published in French. And Brother Zürcher came to the Alsatian town of Mulhouse and spoke on the subject in the Stock Exchange building before an audience of 600 persons.

Up to 1939 the activity of Jehovah's Witnesses consisted primarily of placing Bible literature. But that now changed; 8,739 return visits on interested persons were reported in 1939. This adjustment in the way of carrying on the work was providential, for it gave the brothers experi-

ence in a feature of activity that would be used extensively during the war years when literature supplies were very limited.

On France's national holiday, July 14, 1939, the first Kingdom Hall in Paris was dedicated by Brother Knecht. The building formerly had been a blacksmith's shop, but after several weeks' hard work the brothers turned it into a fine meeting place that could seat 375 people. Unfortunately, however, the brothers in Paris only met in it for a few months before France declared war on Germany on September 3, 1939, and the work soon afterward was forced to go underground.

Those prewar years ended with 84 congregations in France. Of these, 13 were German-speaking in Alsace-Lorraine, 32 were Polish-speaking, mostly in northern France, and 39 were French-speaking. In all, there were 1,004 publishers, which represented a 19-percent increase over the previous year.

Interestingly, during the 12 years preceding the war, 503,801 books, 1,451,523 magazines and 5,798,603 booklets were placed among the French public, making a total of 7,753,927 pieces of literature! Had the work stopped then, the French people could never have said that there had not been a prophet "in the midst of them." (Ezek. 2:5) But the work was far from finished in France, despite the difficult times that lay ahead.

THE ORGANIZATION IS BANNED

In mid-October 1939, about six weeks after the beginning of the war, the organization of Jehovah's Witnesses was banned in France. But Brother Knecht had foreseen this possibility and had warned the brothers. So most of the congregations

had time to disperse their stocks of literature to various safer locations, even as had been done just prior to the seizure of the Society's Paris office. The Bethel home in Enghien-les-Bains was also searched, but Brother Knecht already had removed the stencils with the addresses of all the *Watchtower* and *Consolation* subscribers, as well as all other important files.

By this time, Brother Knecht was seriously ill with pneumonia. The last letter he sent to all French congregations as overseer of the work in France was dated October 24, 1939. It read:

"Dear Brothers,

"This is to inform you that by order of the Ministry of the Interior, the Association 'La Tour de Garde' and the Association of Jehovah's Witnesses in France are no longer authorized to exercise their activity, and that as a result the Watch Tower office situated 129 rue du Faubourg Poissonnière in Paris has been closed and the premises must be vacated.

"We will do all we can to defend our cause and our work and to justify the activities of Jehovah's Witnesses, particularly because of the present tendency to consider us as communists.

"Henceforth, these two associations no longer exist. From now on, each witness of Jehovah must carry his own responsibility before God and men. You will undoubtedly be encouraged and comforted by the fact that this persecution has come in accordance with the Lord's words at Matthew 24:9, which must be fulfilled before all the events foretold in Bible prophecy come to pass.

"Brothers, be of good courage.

"With our warm greetings and with Isaiah 43:12; 2 Chronicles 20:15 and Matthew 10:28.

[Signed] Charles Knecht"

A few days later, on November 2, 1939, Brother

Knecht died, at the age of 41. For years he had faithfully served Jehovah in the full-time service. He was greatly loved by the brothers in France, all the more because practically all those who had been in charge of the work in France up to that time (Lanz, Freytag, Binkele, Zaugg and Zopfer) had proved unfaithful. If any general lesson can be drawn from the history of the work in France, it is certainly that Jehovah's work does not depend upon any one man.

Brother Charles Zutter was sent from Switzerland to look after the interest of the Society in France. Also, Fred Gabler was dispatched to Paris from England, where he had gone after leaving Belgium just prior to the war.

THE "PHONY WAR" PERIOD

During these early months of the war, from September 1939 to May 1940, little military activity was going on between the French and the Germans. It was the period called the "Phony War," the beginning of a time of real tests for the brothers. Many, especially in northern France, and also in Alsace, were put in prison.

Louis Piéchota, who after the war served as a circuit and district servant, along with five other brothers, was arrested. They were held in prison for 24 days. As this was just before Brother Knecht fell ill, he visited these brothers in Dieppe prison. Brother Piéchota writes: "He exhorted us to endure like the apostle Paul. He had tears in his eyes when he left us, and we too."

During those early years of the war there were numerous examples of Jehovah's protection. Brother Georges Delleme, congregation servant in Wattrelos, a town on the Franco-Belgian frontier, relates:

"One day I was stopped by a Customs Officer who searched me very thoroughly. He found a 'Watchtower' in my pocket and said: 'And this, what is it?'"

"I replied: 'It's a "Watchtower" magazine.' I held the magazine in my hand with my arms raised while he continued to search me. When he stooped to search my shoes, I put 'The Watchtower' back in my pocket.

"When he stood up he said: 'All right, you can go.' What a surprise! Voluntarily or involuntarily he had forgotten the banned magazine."

The assignment of Brothers Zutter and Gabler was to do what they could to protect the Society's property in Paris. There were the record-manufacturing workshop, containing some expensive equipment, the Paris office at the rue du Faubourg Poissonnière, and the Bethel home in Enghien-les-Bains. The Paris office building had been rented, so there was no real problem there. And the Bethel home in Enghien had wisely been placed in the name of Hugo Riemer, an American citizen, so it was safeguarded and continued to be used by the brothers throughout the war.

In the end, the only property seized by the authorities was a small automobile and some household furniture. So having accomplished their mission, Brothers Zutter and Gabler returned to their respective homes in Switzerland and England, getting out of France just before the Germans invaded in May 1940. Shortly prior to this, Brother Harbeck, the manager of the Society's office in Berne, Switzerland, requested that Brother Henri Geiger go to Paris to help wind up the Society's business there and to organize the work underground. Brother Geiger, you may recall, had long played a leading role in

the work in Strasbourg and throughout Alsace. Brother Emile Delannoy was appointed as his assistant.

LEAVING FRANCE JUST IN TIME

In the spring of 1940 the course of the war changed suddenly and tragically for France. Hitler's Panzer divisions, after successfully mopping up Poland, suddenly swung around and the blitz against western Europe was on. The rapidity of their advance was amazing! John Cooke had stoically stayed on in France, being the lone English pioneer left in the country. He was reluctant to leave the new group of interested ones that he had been helping around Bordeaux. But the British Consul warned all British subjects to leave without delay. John explains:

"I realized that to stay would probably mean being put in a concentration camp where I could do nothing. The next time I passed the consulate it was deserted and a notice on the door said that any one left behind should proceed to Bayonne, a port further south, where a ship would be available. The latest news was that the Nazi advance units were only 50 kilometers [31 mi.] away. This was now June 1940, and the Dunkirk evacuation was on. So I decided I had better go.

"I spent the last day settling up affairs and arranging for Joseph, the Swiss brother, to carry on the studies and meetings. When I went to the station to get a ticket for Bayonne, it was like a camp with people sitting and sleeping everywhere waiting for a train. So I decided to use my bicycle, and set off with practically nothing with me.

"I heard later that the German Panzer units entered the city the next day. The 175-kilometer [110-mi.] ride to Bayonne was uneventful. The main wave of refugees had swept before me, ob-

viously in some confusion since every now and then there was a car in the ditch at the side of the road, abandoned. When I got to Bayonne it was impossible to find accommodation or food, so I slept in an uncompleted building without supper. The next day a huge crowd formed at the docks where a ship bound for England was berthed. But I never got on. After a while the order was given: 'Women and children only.' It was loaded heavily when it pulled out. Rumor has it that it was sunk by a German submarine before it reached England.

"The rest of us were taken by train to the fishing village of Saint-Jean-de-Luz, down near the Spanish border and there, at dead of night, with strict blackout for fear of an air raid, they took us out on the fishing boats to vessels anchored off the coast. Refugees were just streaming there from all southern France. People had left homes, businesses, everything to get away from the Nazis. After a couple days riding at anchor the refugee convoy zigzagged its way to Plymouth, England. I went straight to the London Bethel where I received a warm welcome and was provided with clothing, since I had lost all my belongings."

FRANCE CUT IN TWO

As the German Panzer divisions advanced through France, the roads leading south were lined with refugees fleeing before the invading armies. Some of the brothers stayed where they were, while others fled south. Brother Geiger left Paris and returned to his wife and son in the Dordogne Department, in southwest-central France. On June 22, 1940, Catholic Marshal Pétain signed an armistice with Nazi Germany.

France was divided into two zones: the northern half and a strip down the western coast were occupied by the German armies and administered by them, whereas the rest of France was unoc-

cupied but governed by the pro-German Vichy government, with Marshal Pétain as Head of State and Pierre Laval as head of government.

Commenting on this situation, a report sent to Brooklyn from the Central European Office in Berne, Switzerland, stated:

"Since the time France was subdued by the Germans we have lost all connection with the brethren in Paris and of the occupied territory generally. Not a single letter or card, nor any other sign has reached us.

"As regards the unoccupied French territory, we exchange more or less regular correspondence with the brother [Henri Geiger] who formerly represented the Society in Alsace. He too reports that he has no news whatever of the brethren who previously worked in Paris and lived in the house in Enghein.

"It is also entirely impossible for Swiss brethren to obtain a visa either for the occupied or for the unoccupied French territory."

ORGANIZING THE WORK AFTER THE ARMISTICE

Following the signing of the armistice in June, many French civilians who had fled ahead of Hitler's armies returned to their homes. Brother Geiger returned to Paris. He lived with his wife and son in an apartment, and worked secularly with an Alsatian engineering firm during the day, while spending his evenings and weekends organizing the witnessing work and visiting the brothers. Telling about organizing the underground work in northern France in September 1940, Brother Geiger wrote:

"All letters were opened by the Gestapo. It was therefore necessary to visit each group and isolated brother personally. The brothers met together in

small groups for their 'Watchtower' studies and service meetings. They continued preaching the good news from house to house with just the Bible. When they found interested persons, they called back with publications and conducted studies."

In Paris, the literature supplies had been saved at the time of the ban and were stocked at various addresses. Brother Delannoy organized the distribution of the literature among the brothers and also visited the various groups to encourage them. Sister Renée Gendreau and Sister Hilda Knecht stayed at the Bethel home, but then Sister Knecht died, about a year after her husband's death. Right there in Bethel, under the nose of the Germans, Sister Gendreau typed up *Watchtower* manuscripts that had been translated into French, as well as stencils for mimeographing *Watchtower* articles!

But how did the brothers manage to get copies of *The Watchtower* in order to translate them into French, German and Polish? And when once translated and typed up, how were the mimeographed copies transmitted from one zone to another? For not only was France then divided into the occupied and unoccupied zones, but the zones were subdivided, and travel was restricted from one area to another.

COURAGEOUSLY DISPENSING SPIRITUAL FOOD

Sister Marthe Ebener, who had been a member of the Bethel family in Enghien-les-Bains, had gone to live with her brother in Clermont-Ferrand, a town in central France. She was a subscriber for the English *Watchtower*. After the German invasion of France, Clermont-Ferrand was in the unoccupied zone, under the Vichy government. Providentially, Sister Ebener continued to receive

the English *Watchtower* magazine from Brooklyn up until November 1942, when the Germans occupied all of France. But how was this English magazine smuggled to Brothers Geiger and Delannoy in Paris?

The instrument Jehovah used for this was a humble, unpretentious brother, Henri Germouty. He relates:

"The town of Moulins was on the demarcation line between the occupied and unoccupied zone. This demarcation line was guarded by German sentries who would fire on any unauthorized person who tried to pass. But the demarcation line at this point went through the middle of town, where a Polish sister lived who spoke German. I would call at her house, and then she would leave the house before me and divert the attention of the sentry while I passed over the line.

"Then I would catch a train, but before it arrived in Paris all the passengers were searched, the men by men and the women by women. But I knew at what point they began making this inspection, so before we arrived there I would jump from the train at a place where it slowed down. I used to travel at night and after I had jumped from the train I would hide until daybreak and then finish the journey on foot."

Once in Paris, *The Watchtower* was translated, and then Sister Gendreau would type stencils so that the manuscript could be mimeographed. Then copies were taken to the brothers in the provinces. Brother Samuel Nongaillard tells how the magazine was smuggled into northern France:

"Whenever possible, a brother from Paris would take a train as far as the town of Péronne, through which the demarcation line between two German military zones passed. Another brother would travel

down to this town from the north and the magazines would be passed from one to the other on the platform of the Péronne station."

Naturally, with paper supplies limited and means of communication so perilous, it was not possible to mimeograph and send out a copy of *The Watchtower* for each publisher. The brothers who acted as couriers, at the risk of their lives, could hide only one or two copies on their persons. This meant that when one copy of a *Watchtower* article reached a certain area, a lot of copying was done so that each small group of publishers had at least one copy containing the vital spiritual food. Sister Dina Fenouil, who then lived in the Lyons area, explains:

"I was assigned to type 10 copies of 'The Watchtower.' I was able to type five copies at a time, which meant typing each 'Watchtower' twice. Since each issue was about 14 pages of single-spaced typing, I had to type 28 pages each time. I would hardly have finished typing one issue when the following one arrived. I did this right throughout the war. Each group had one copy of the 'Watchtower' articles."

Illustrating the danger often faced in getting these manuscripts to the brothers is the experience of Brother Stanis Sikora, who was in charge of a group of Polish-speaking brothers in Saint-Denis, a suburb north of Paris. He relates:

"One morning I was taking a handwritten copy of 'The Watchtower' to another group when I saw a group of German soldiers ahead who were stopping everybody and searching them. I kept on my bicycle and decided to continue riding slowly on. I drew parallel with the first group of soldiers and they did nothing to stop me. I kept going very

slowly and the soldiers at the barrier let me go through. I cycled on at the same slow speed until I could turn into another street, and then I speeded up considerably! Jehovah protects his work."

OTHER CHANNELS OF DISTRIBUTION

When the Germans occupied the rest of France in November 1942 the English *Watchtower* was no longer being received in France or Switzerland. However, the Swiss branch succeeded in obtaining a copy of *The Watchtower* in Swedish. Sister Alice Berner quickly learned enough Swedish to translate the *Watchtower* articles into German. These German translations were introduced into France and were translated into French.

Brother Frédéric Hartstang was in charge of the work in Belgium during the war years and he organized a system of getting spiritual food delivered between Belgium and France. The borders were closed, but brothers who worked for the railway and whose work required them to travel between the two countries delivered these precious publications. Thus spiritual food circulated in this way throughout the entire war.

IN TO AND OUT OF ALSACE-LORRAINE

After Pétain signed the armistice with Germany in June 1940, Alsace-Lorraine was annexed to Germany. It was not considered "occupied territory," but, rather, an integral part of the German state. This meant that a real frontier, or border, was established between Alsace-Lorraine and the rest of France. So the brothers in Alsace-Lorraine were completely cut off from the underground office operating in Paris. How were they provided spiritual food during the war?

When the Nazis occupied Alsace, the brothers

there would obtain copies of *The Watchtower* in the Vosges mountains that separated France from Alsace-Lorraine. How would they get the magazines in the mountains? Well, Brother Zinglé from Mulhouse, who was an excellent mountaineer, went to live at Saint-Maurice in German-occupied France. He would receive the French *Watchtower*, which, on the first Sunday of each month, he would take up to a mountain pass. He took a very steep and rocky route so as not to meet any border guards. On the Alsace side, brothers dressed up like hikers would go up into the mountains to pick up *The Watchtower*. The magazine would then be translated from French into German by the local brothers, who did this work in the greatest secrecy. Copies afterward were mimeographed by Brother Marcel Graff for the brothers in Alsace, some copies eventually reaching even the German concentration camps.

Although this mountain pass delivery route was a means of getting *The Watchtower* into Alsace from France, later in the war publications that the French brothers did not have were delivered by this same route from Germany into France. However, things did not always go as expected. Brother Marcel Graff tells:

"One day we left at dawn with our wives to go up into the mountains. The weather was marvelous. But when we got to the top, not far from the border, we suddenly heard, 'Heil Hitler!' It was a German border guard, who asked: 'Where are you heading?'"

"I replied: 'We are just hiking in the mountains.'"

"He looked at us suspiciously and said: 'Don't you know you are very near the border?'"

"'Are we really?' we answered, acting innocently."

"He added quickly: 'If you intend to go across to the French side, I am warning you that our guns are loaded with real bullets!'"

"We walked on in the direction of the chosen spot. Just as we got out of sight of the border guard, we found Brother Zinglé and his wife waiting for us. We greeted each other joyfully, exchanging a few words and also the publications we were carrying. Then, after a prayer, we parted company."

When she was only 13 years old, Sister Simone Arnold was used to carry precious manuscripts, which she hid inside her girdle. Once, while she was accompanying Brother Adolphe Koehl, they experienced a close call, as Simone relates:

"A customs guard intercepted us and ordered us to follow him to the nearest farm. I was so scared that I literally had an attack of colic. Thanks to this, I was given a hot drink at the farm and allowed to go and lie down in the hay, still with my 'Watchtower' hidden. Brother Koehl and my mother were searched, but they had nothing on them, so we were simply accompanied to the nearest railway station."

Surely these brothers and sisters who served as couriers showed great courage and love for Jehovah. But so did those who were involved in mimeographing the literature so that it could be distributed to the brothers. Under what circumstances was this done?

PREPARING THE LITERATURE FOR DISTRIBUTION

Brother Adolphe Koehl had a barbershop situated on the main street of Mulhouse, in Alsace, near the central station. The shop was located on the ground floor of a five-story apartment building, and he and Brother Graff each had

apartments in this building above the shop. The mimeographing was done upstairs, even as soldiers and policemen were having their hair cut by Brother Koehl downstairs! There were some close calls, as Brother Graff describes:

"I remember when the Nazis confiscated the radios of all those who did not 'collaborate' with them. I had sold an old icebox to our milkman, and he said he would call to pick it up the next day. The following morning I was proofreading some stencils while my wife was busy in the kitchen. Suddenly there was a knock at the door. Since we were expecting the milkman, my wife opened the door. 'Police!' one of the men said. 'You possess a radio and we have to confiscate it.'

"After my wife had recovered from her surprise, she called out: 'Hurry up!' Then she told the three policemen that I was sick and would get dressed as quickly as possible. This gave me time to gather up the stencils and put them under the bed. I had barely done this when they pushed my wife aside and entered the room, saying 'Heil Hitler!' When they left with our radio, we fairly exploded with joy and thanked Jehovah God for once more having protected us."

One day, a friendly Gestapo man, who came regularly to Brother Koehl's barbershop to have his hair cut, suddenly asked him: 'Herr Koehl, are you still studying the Bible?' But before he could answer, the Gestapo man warned him to be careful because he was being watched. He advised Brother Koehl that if he still had any banned publications to get rid of them in a hurry.

Acting on the warning, Brother Koehl took up the parquet flooring in his barbershop and hid *Watchtowers* under the floor. Little did the Nazis

who came to get their hair cut realize that they were walking just a few centimeters above stocks of banned *Watchtower* magazines! But the time came when all the space under the floor was filled up. What then?

Brother Koehl had a brilliant idea: The shop window would be a good place to hide things. So stencils were hidden behind the sidewalls of the shop window, and *Watchtowers* were hidden inside the cardboard advertisements that were exhibited in the shop window. Thus, throughout a good part of the war, Nazis gazed into this shop window without realizing that the papier-mâché advertisements contained banned *Watchtower* magazines!

COURIERS WHO PAID WITH THEIR LIVES

While Brothers Graff and Koehl succeeded in eluding the Gestapo, other brothers were less fortunate. In 1943 the brothers in Mulhouse were regularly receiving copies of *The Watchtower* from Germany, delivered by two brothers from Freiburg im Breisgau. Suddenly, no more *Watchtowers* arrived from that quarter. Brother Marcel Graff traveled to that German town, and learned that the two German couriers had been caught by the Gestapo and beheaded with an ax. From then on the brothers in Mulhouse, who were also receiving copies of *The Watchtower* from France, produced extra copies of the German *Watchtower* and took them into Germany. Thus, when one source of spiritual food was cut off, another opened up, and so on throughout the war.

UNDERGROUND MEETINGS IN ALSACE-LORRAINE

Small meetings were held regularly, and overseers would provide publishers with copies of *The*

Watchtower and would comfort them. Those who did not have the courage to come to these meetings were not given any literature, because they were considered unreliable. Brother Jacques Daner relates:

"Meetings were held each week, on different days, at different times and in different places. Depending on the time of the year, we would meet in the forest, in a meadow or in a home, often around a table set for serving coffee, and the sisters had knitting with them to serve as an alibi. The Gestapo never took us by surprise during these meetings. The brothers accepted their responsibility and meeting attendance was good. When the meetings were held in my home, we would leave our youngest child down in the yard, and if the police came she would cry out 'Mother,' and those present would go out through the back garden."

INTO CONCENTRATION CAMPS

In September 1941 several brothers in and around Mulhouse were arrested by the Gestapo. Among these were Brothers Franz Huber, who had been congregation servant in Mulhouse since 1938, Adolphe Arnold, Fernand Saler, Eugène Lentz and Paul Dossmann. By the end of 1941 all five of these had been sent to the Dachau concentration camp near Munich, Germany.

There they were put into the punishment block, where they joined German, Czechoslovak, Yugoslav and Belgian Witnesses. By April 1942 Brother Franz Huber was growing weaker under the bestial treatment. Brother Arnold wrote:

"Brother Franz Huber was 64 years old and his strength was leaving him. But he never failed to express the hope that was holding him up, which was a marvelous witness. One day, barely a week

before he died, he took hold of both my arms and looking at me straight in the face, he said: 'In spite of all, we have conquered!' And his eyes were shining!"

Brother Arnold was taken to the camp commandant's office and told that his expertise as a silk-screen printer would be put to good use in the camp and his wife and daughter would be cared for if he renounced his faith. But if he refused to do this, he was warned that his wife would be arrested and his young daughter sent to a reformatory. Naturally, Brother Arnold refused. So he was handed over to the camp doctors who used him as a human guinea pig for testing malaria and typhus germs. He survived, but he attributed this to his receiving food parcels from his wife. These contained a special treat, as he explained:

"One day, while eating something from one of the parcels, I bit on something hard. It was a tiny roll of paper wrapped in cellophane. The paper was covered with very small writing. It was a 'Watchtower' article in condensed form. Naturally, my wife was risking her life doing this. After she was arrested and deported, my sister-in-law, Sister Walter, continued this dangerous correspondence with the help of Brother Koehl in Mulhouse. Thus these food parcels contained spiritual vitamins!"

CHILDREN PUT TO THE TEST

What happened to children during these terrible days of persecution? Could they be expected to remain faithful under the severe tests that the Nazis brought against them?

At the beginning of each school session, the German national anthem was sung, a prayer was said for the Führer and the children were required to say 'Heil Hitler!' with their right arm stretched

upward. But Witness children, such as eight-year-old Ruth Danner, refused. She was taken before the headmaster and all the other teachers and questioned, but she would not betray her parents. Brother Jacques Danner explains: "Each day, before she left for school, we said a prayer together and we counseled her to quickly ask Jehovah for his spirit and his help before she was questioned." Ruth later was deported with her parents and interned in six different German camps. After the war, she became a pioneer and graduated from the 21st class of Gilead missionary school in the U.S.A.

Also, Brother Arnold's daughter, Simone, was expelled from high school because she refused to say 'Heil Hitler!' She was sent to another school, where she was soon in trouble again because the children were required to bring to school each week old scrap metal to be used for making munitions. Eventually she was tried before a juvenile court and sent off to a reformatory school in Constance, Germany, where she was submitted to Nazi indoctrination for 22 months. But she maintained her integrity! Later, she also pioneered, graduated from Gilead, served as a missionary in Africa and married Max Liebster, at the time a member of the Brooklyn Bethel family.

NEUTRAL UNTO DEATH

In August 1942, the young men in Alsace-Lorraine were called up for service in Hitler's armies. Some Witnesses, including Brothers Freyermuth, Hofer and Sutter, paid for their neutrality with their lives. A few hours before he was beheaded with an ax in Torgau prison, Germany, 23-year-old Marcel Sutter wrote the following letter:



1945

The reunion of Emma, Adolphe, and Simone Arnold after years of separation during the second world war

"My dearly beloved parents and sisters,

"When you receive this letter, I will no longer be alive. Only a few hours separate me from my death. I ask you to be strong and courageous; do not cry, for I have conquered. I have finished the course and kept the faith. May Jehovah God help me until the end. Only a short period of time separates us from the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. Soon we will see each other again in a better world of peace and righteousness. I rejoice at the thought of that day, since then there will be no more sighing. How marvelous that will be! I am yearning for peace. During these last few hours I have been thinking of you and my heart is a little bitter at the thought of not being able to kiss you good-bye. But we must be patient. The time is near when Jehovah will vindicate his Name and prove to all creation that he is the only true God. I now wish to dedicate my last few hours to him, so I will close this letter and say good-bye until we meet again soon. Praise be to our God Jehovah! With my warm love and greetings,

Your beloved son and brother,
Marcel"

SISTERS ALSO THROWN INTO THE CAMPS

In 1943 the sisters in Alsace-Lorraine began to be arrested and many were sent to the Schirmeck-Vorbruck concentration camp in Alsace. Sister Arnold managed to smuggle in a Bible, as she relates:

"Since I was expecting to be arrested, I had a special corset made for a fallen womb which included a pocket meant to be inflated with air. I hid a tiny Bible in this pocket. When they took me to prison I was told to undress, but when the inspector saw this complicated corset she said: 'Oh, dear! We haven't time to take all that off.' Thus, thanks to Jehovah I was able to introduce into the

Schirmeck concentration camp the only spiritual food we were to get for months. I divided this little Bible into as many parts as there were sisters in the camp."

A number of the sisters were transferred to concentration camps in Germany, including the dreaded Ravensbrück concentration camp. Thus many brothers and sisters, young and old, proved their integrity under severe trials, some sealing their faithfulness with their lives. Indeed, it can be said that the modern history of Jehovah's Witnesses in Alsace-Lorraine is a record that honors Jehovah's name.

OTHERS ENDURE SEVERE TESTS

The brothers in the rest of France were also maintaining their integrity. Early in the war, French authorities arrested several Polish brothers and sent them to Le Vernet internment camp in southern France. Here they were beaten for refusing to salute the flag, and one of them, Brother François Baran, died. Many of these fearless Polish brothers ended up in Nazi concentration camps. One of them, Brother Louis Piéchota, who had been in one prison or camp after another, relates:

"We were transferred from the Vught camp to Sachsenhausen in the spring of 1944. Here we had the great joy of meeting German brothers, some of whom had been detained since 1933. They gave us precious help both spiritually and materially. As soon as a convoy arrived in the camp, the German brothers would inquire of the new arrivals if there were any Witnesses among them. If there were, they immediately helped us. Sometimes it would be warm underclothing or a pullover, or maybe some leftovers from the guards' meals, since

some of the brothers worked in the kitchens. One day a brother gave me a Bible. Just imagine, a French Bible in a German concentration camp! I never did learn how he obtained it. It made me very happy. The brothers regularly received 'The Watchtower.' Since they were spiritually fed, they were spiritually strong.

"Later I was assigned to work in the camp bakery. The German brothers encouraged me not to bring out any bread unless it was allowed. They said it would be preferable to die of hunger rather than to bring reproach on Jehovah's organization. This counsel greatly impressed me."

Brother Jean Queyroi, who had become a pioneer in 1938 and then served in the Paris Bethel in the shipping department, also was in various prisons and German camps. He was able to maintain his spiritual strength in these places of confinement, as he explains:

"In whatever camp I found myself, I did my best to give a witness. For example, in a camp in East Prussia, there was a notice board used for giving instructions to the prisoners. In a corner of this board, each day I would pin a piece of paper upon which I had written a witness on some Bible subject. Those prisoners who were interested came to see me, and each evening I would hold a little meeting with six, eight or even 10 prisoners.

"I was not left without spiritual food. My sister would type 'Watchtower' articles on very thin paper which she would roll up and hide inside macaroni. These parcels were inspected by the guards but they never noticed what was going on. I even received the 'Children' book this way."

Thus, although to a lesser extent than their brothers in Germany and in Alsace-Lorraine, the brothers in France had their share of persecution.

HELP DURING THE OCCUPATION

In spite of the ban and the German occupation, the brothers continued to preach with just the Bible, visiting a few homes on one street, and then a few on another. If anybody showed genuine interest, they would return with literature. But care had to be exercised, and Jehovah's angels were helping, as indicated by Brother Albert Kosmalski's experience:

"A Monsieur Heinrich ordered the two books 'Deliverance!' and 'Creation' in German. When I knocked at his door as promised, he asked me to come back in one hour because he had visitors. So I went down to the next floor to visit another interested person. He asked me if I had been to the floor above, and if I knew who Monsieur Heinrich was. I told him that he was an Alsatian and that he was interested in the truth.

"'No, he belongs to the Gestapo, and he plans to arrest you today,' the man answered. 'He told the concierge [janitor] not to let you leave the house.'

"This gentleman took me quietly down and let me out of the house through the back door. I thanked Jehovah for having delivered me from that situation. Toward the end of the war Heinrich was shot in the street by members of the French Resistance."

Actually, the French authorities generally were very lenient toward Jehovah's Witnesses during the Nazi occupation. They even helped at times, as Auguste Blas of Denain reports:

"Somebody told the German commandant that there was a stock of literature in my home. As a result a search was ordered, which was to be carried out by the German authorities led by the local French police chief and an interpreter. The

police chief knew that the literature was in my home. So instead of leading the Germans to my house, he took them to the home of our congregation servant, Marius Nongaillard, where they found nothing. This friendly French police chief thus saved me from being sent to a concentration camp."

To cite a similar example: When the Germans arrived in Sin-le-Noble, they requisitioned the Kingdom Hall for their use. However, the immersion tank under the platform was filled with literature, including the book *Crusade Against Christianity* in German! So the brothers went to see the mayor of Sin-le-Noble, explaining the situation and saying that if the Germans found this literature it would create bad relations between them and the local authorities. So the mayor told the Germans he needed this hall for the local school. Thus the hall became a classroom and, wonder of wonders, a Witness schoolteacher was appointed to work there as a teacher!

The local French authorities often came to the aid of the brothers in such ways as this. To give one more example: A brother in the north of France, who was carrying a carton of *Fascism or Freedom* booklets on his bicycle, was stopped by a French police inspector. The inspector asked him what he was carrying.

"Open up the carton and look," the brother replied.

When the inspector saw what was inside, he asked the brother: "What are you going to do with these?"

The brother gave him a good witness, after which the inspector told him to get going, but to be careful not to be stopped by somebody else!

UNDERGROUND PRINTING

One of the notable exploits of the French brothers during the war was the underground printing of the *Children* book. Since Brother Samuel Nongaillard was in business, he was able to obtain some paper, which was rationed during the war. Arrangements were made for the printing by a printery at Chennevières-sur-Marne, a small town a few miles east of Paris.

"The day I went to fetch the *Children* books, the police stopped me on my way back," Samuel reports. "It was in May 1943. They asked what I had in the truck. I told them I was carrying books. They inspected them and asked what the book was about. It happened to be the time when Catholic parents were taking their children to First Communion. So I replied, 'A book to explain Jesus to the children.' This explanation apparently satisfied them, for they let me go."

FIELD SERVICE REPORTS

During the war years in France, the brothers made efforts to send in field service reports. However, contrary to instructions, an elderly sister sent a report on a postcard using the usual abbreviations. This intrigued a member of the German secret service. Brother Robert Jung explains:

"One day, while Brother Auguste Charlet, my fleshly brother and I were eating our evening meal, the doorbell rang. It was a French secret police agent. No doubt he took us for members of the Resistance movement. Anyway, he asked us to help him send in a report on this matter which would satisfy the German security police and avoid us having any trouble. He offered to come back the next day so that we would have time to think up some explanation.

"As agreed, he returned early the next morning and read the explanation we had prepared. We said it was a Bible game played by mail and that the abbreviations and the numbers stood for Bible books and verses where the answers were to be found. He seemed very satisfied with this explanation and thanked us for helping him carry out this mission. He left us and we never heard any more about the matter."

The field service reports were all eventually sent to three addresses in or near Paris—to Brother Geiger, to Brother Delannoy, or to Sister Renée Gendreau living at the Bethel home. But every so often brothers, or people who had our literature, wrote to the Paris office that had been closed down by the police in October 1939. So Sister Gendreau would drop in to see the janitor there and this lady would give her any mail that had arrived for the Society. When the Gestapo inquired about the Witnesses, this janitor would tell them that she only knew the man in charge (Brother Knecht) and that he was dead. Thus, this good woman risked her life throughout the war so as to protect the Society and the brothers.

WARTIME ASSEMBLIES

Beginning in 1942 and throughout the German occupation, small regional assemblies were held. These were served by Brother Geiger or Brother Delannoy. Brothers Auguste Charlet and Robert Jung also visited the isolated congregations and publishers in southern France. During these assemblies and special visits, baptism services were held.

In 1943, an underground assembly was held in Vénissieux, a suburb of Lyons, with an attendance of about 100. Needless to say, such occasions were

a source of comfort and strength to the brothers. All these activities, of course, were carried on with great risk.

A U.S. SOLDIER MAKES DISCIPLES

In 1944 the liberation of France began. This was good news for the French brothers, although the fighting across France brought fresh difficulties. Nevertheless, the preaching work continued, oddly enough, even by at least one of the liberators.

Suzanne Perrin of Vittel in northeastern France was sitting at her window one evening in September 1944, when an American soldier stopped and asked in bad French: "Do you love God?" Suzanne replied: "I love God, but not religion." The soldier asked if he could call back to see her husband, which he did.

"Thus it was," Sister Perrin explains, "that Richard Boeckel (who had learned the truth six months before being mobilized) brought us the truth. He preached in uniform, but refused to salute the flag, which meant that he was continually punished. He preached zealously in the entire town of Vittel, distributing books such as *Creation*, *Deliverance!*, *Light*, *Enemies* and *Jehovah*. Richard put us in touch with the congregation servant of Nancy, Brother Emile Ehrmann, who afterwards visited us with his wife."

NEWS GETS THROUGH TO BROOKLYN

Evidently news got through to Brooklyn in 1944 about theocratic activities in France. Nothing had been heard for several years. Thus Brother Knorr wrote in the 1945 *Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses*:

"Word came to hand that 'the whole family in Paris is well and busy in their Father's business'. . . . The brethren are looking forward to the time when communications between them and the head office will be open to the fullest extent, so that the message of truth may have free course throughout all of France."

REGROUPING AFTER THE WAR

The year 1945 saw the collapse of the Nazi regime and the end of the war. Living conditions in France were extremely difficult, with the necessities of life being scarce at their official prices, and excessively expensive on the black market. The enemy robbed the land of its wealth, destroyed its roads and railroads, and disrupted its communications facilities. It was amid such conditions that physically weakened, but spiritually strong, brothers and sisters began returning from concentration camps.

To add to the difficulties, the work of Jehovah's Witnesses in France was still under a government ban. But with the Germans gone, travel and postal communications became easier. This meant that better contact could be established between the congregations and the underground Paris office managed by Brother Geiger. Brothers Geiger and Delannoy made long trips throughout France visiting the congregations.

In 1945 the Bethel family consisted of five members, including Brother Geiger and three sisters and another brother. In addition, Emile Delannoy lived in his home in Arcueil, just south of Paris. The literature supplies were hidden in another Paris suburb, and it was there that the shipping department operated.

The Watchtower was being published under the

name of *Etudes bibliques* (Bible Studies) by an outside printing firm. There were 2,300 copies being printed in French, 1,200 copies in Polish and 500 copies in German. This saved the brothers much precious time in copying the articles by hand.

In 1945 Brother François Wisniewski, a Polish miner, had a significant experience. During a meal break at work one day he was surprised to see a young man take off his protective leather helmet to pray before eating. So he witnessed to him and the man accepted the truth quickly. His name was Léopold Jontès, and he later became the branch servant of France.

BROTHERS KNORR AND HENSCHEL VISIT

The French press, both in occupied and unoccupied France, had carried a news dispatch in January 1942 announcing the death of Brother Rutherford. The news of his death and of his being succeeded by Brother Nathan H. Knorr had even reached the Dachau concentration camp by 1943. But who was Brother Knorr?

The French brothers were able to have their first personal contact with him on November 17, 1945, when he and his secretary, Brother Milton Henschel, made a brief stopover in Paris. This visit lasted only a few hours, but it provided some opportunity to discuss reorganizing the work and getting it on a legal footing. However, that night Knorr and Henschel had to catch a train for Berne but promised to return.

Eleven days later, on the morning of November 28, Brothers Knorr and Henschel and their interpreter, Alfred Rütimann, arrived at the Paris East train station and were met by Henri Geiger and

his son. A visit was made to the American embassy, the American Chamber of Commerce in Paris, and finally a lawyer. As you may recall, in October 1939 the work had been prohibited in France by order of the Ministry of the Interior. So this matter needed handling through proper channels in order to obtain legal recognition of our work.

That evening Brother Knorr spoke to 21 brothers and sisters in Paris through an interpreter for an hour and three quarters. All were very enthusiastic and expressed their joy in their privileges of service. Brother Knorr promised to have clothing sent to them. He had seen the brothers' great need for such material assistance, as their clothing was old and worn out. Of the eventual arrival of this clothing, Brother Geiger wrote:

"This promised sending—eight tons of clothing for men, women and children—came in in 75 cases and has been distributed among the brethren. Numerous were those whose eyes became humid when holding their gifts in hand, and all wholeheartedly thank their American brethren for this true Christian gift. So, numerous brethren were better equipped for the gospel-preaching work during the coming winter."

A DECREASE DURING THE WAR YEARS?

You may remember that back in 1939, when the war began, a peak of 1,004 Kingdom publishers had been reached in France. Surely there must have been a decrease during those difficult war years. Not at all! *The number of publishers doubled to 2,003 in October 1945!* And, as you realize, these new publishers started preaching at the risk of their liberty, and even their lives!

The Memorial attendance also rose, from 1,510

in 1939 to 3,644 in 1945. Thus, whereas it had taken nearly 40 years of activity to reach the total of 1,004 publishers in 1939, it took only six years—the difficult years of the second world war—to double this figure. This is an outstanding fact in the modern history of Jehovah's Witnesses in France, a fact attesting that Jehovah protected and blessed his people.

THE BAN—WHAT WAS DONE ABOUT IT?

Although the ban was still in force in 1946, the preaching work continued to go ahead. At first the brothers worked from house to house with only the Bible. To assist them, the circuit work was also organized in 1946. At that time, there were just two circuits, served by two brothers who had both been in German camps, Brothers Paul Dossmann and Jean Queyroi. The brothers greatly appreciated these visits by the two "servants to the brethren," as the circuit overseers were then called. Yet what could be done to be relieved of the ban?

During his visit in November 1945 Brother Knorr had seen an influential French lawyer, Maître Pierre Gide. However, the efforts of this lawyer had proved fruitless. So the French brothers decided to see what they could do themselves. In the autumn of 1946 they made repeated efforts to see the responsible people in the various government offices that were holding things up and preventing the legal recognition of the work. However, matters were still bogged down in various French governmental offices in 1947.

But then the brothers in Paris learned that the well-known French politician Léon Blum, the founder of the modern French Socialist Party and

of its newspaper *Le Populaire*, had been with some Jehovah's Witnesses in a German concentration camp during the war and had expressed his admiration for them. Although Léon Blum had retired from active politics, he was considered one of France's most respected elder statesmen. So the brothers endeavored to enlist his support.

They learned, however, that he was ill and could not receive any visitors, and that his address was kept secret to avoid people writing to him. But the brothers found out that Léon Blum's chauffeur came each day to the offices of *Le Populaire* to pick up his mail. A letter was written to Monsieur Blum, explaining the Society's problem, and it was given personally to his chauffeur. A few days later the brothers in Paris received a letter from him stating that he was willing to help, and that he had already written to the government recommending that the ban on our work be removed. As a result, on September 1, 1947, the work of Jehovah's Witnesses was again legally authorized in France!

A NEW BETHEL HOME AND OFFICE

To facilitate the organization of the work, Brother Knorr instructed that the house in Enghien-les-Bains be sold and that the money be used to purchase property in Paris that would be big enough to house the Bethel family and the office. Brother Geiger found a suitable house in a quiet residential section of Paris, located at 3, Villa Guibert, 83, Rue de la Tour, Paris 16. Thus, on October 1, 1947, the official address of the French association was transferred here. To begin with, a total of eight persons, including Brother and Sister Geiger, served at this new Bethel.

ASSEMBLIES WITH BROOKLYN VISITORS

For the eight years since the ban was imposed, no regular public assemblies could be held. Thus, 80 percent of the brothers had never attended such gatherings, since most of them had accepted the truth during and after the war years. Therefore, how marvelous it was to see a total of 6,500 freely come together in the cities of Lyons, Strasbourg, Paris and Douai for assemblies in 1947. And it was a special treat to have visiting speakers from the Brooklyn headquarters, including Frederick Franz, Grant Suiter, Hayden Covington, as well as Brothers Knorr and Henschel.

THE DEATH OF TWO FAITHFUL SERVANTS

When arrangements were made to receive the regular *Watchtower* magazines again in France, Brothers Dossmann and Queyroi, who had been visiting the congregations, were called into Bethel to help to organize a shipping department. Thus, Emile Delannoy was sent out to visit the congregations, as he had often done in previous years. But this proved to be his last trip, for he fell sick and died on August 5, 1948. Brother Delannoy, along with his wife, Marie, had faithfully served Jehovah in France for some 40 years.

Just the year before, Adolphe Weber had finished his earthly course faithful to Jehovah. You will remember that he was the Swiss brother who had started the work in France about half a century earlier. On several occasions he had helped the French brothers to weather the storms of testings that had shaken the French-speaking field. All the brothers in France who knew Brother Weber speak of him warmly and recognize the important part he played in the development of the work in France.

UNDERGROUND MEETINGS RESURFACE

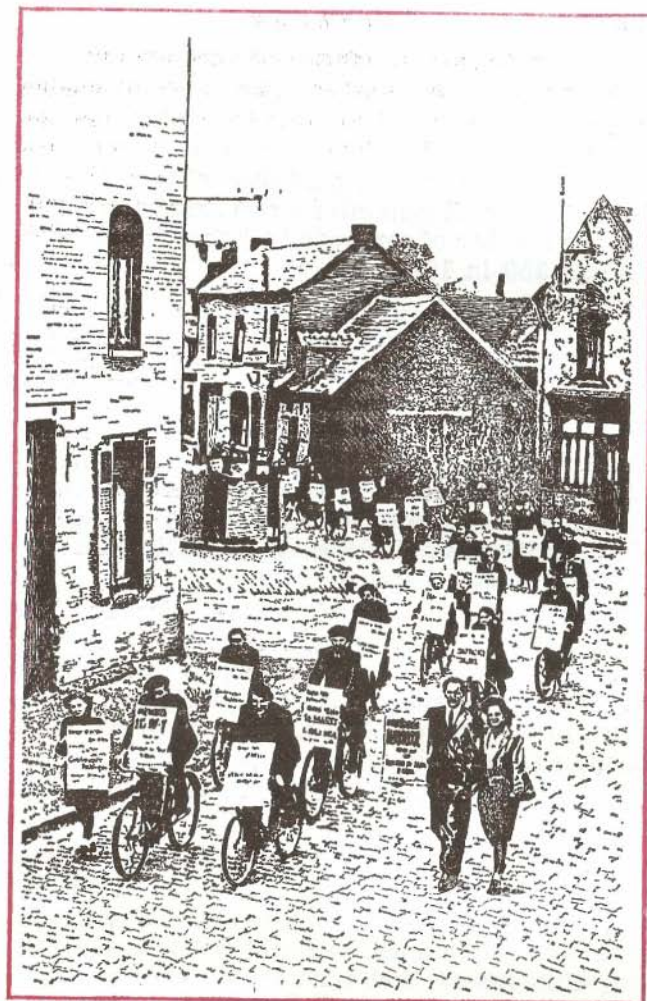
Since 1939 the brothers had met in smaller family groups, but beginning in 1947 congregations rented halls for their meetings. By then Paris had three congregations. With the resuming of meetings in Kingdom Halls, there were some surprises. Sister Marcelle Malolepszy relates what occurred in Besançon, in eastern France:

"The work was now free again. How happy we were! At the first meeting people met ones at the Kingdom Hall and learned for the first time that they were Witnesses. A grocer, for example, discovered that some of his customers were his brothers. A gendarme's daughter met her ex-Sunday school teacher at the hall. It is impossible to describe the joy we felt when we met together for the first time. There were about 80 of us present at that first meeting."

PIONEER WORK OPENS UP AGAIN

Although there were 2,380 publishers and 104 congregations in 1947, there was not a single pioneer in France. As noted before, the work had been granted legal recognition only since September 1947. So the December 1947 French *Informant* (*Our Kingdom Service*) carried an appeal for pioneers, and the following year saw a fine response.

In January 1948, eight zealous Witnesses, including Sister Simone Arnold, began pioneering. By August there were a total of 96 pioneers, including 20 vacation pioneers. Together they formed a happy and valiant combat army of Witnesses—brothers and sisters, young and old, single and married—all bearing witness despite many difficulties. In 60 departments out of the 90 that then made up France, there was not one witness of Jehovah! So the pioneer service was vital to



1948

Placard witnessing on bicycles
advertising public talks

opening up the work in many parts of the country.

In 1948 the pioneers worked in 49 different towns, some where there were no Witnesses. Many were sent to places where there were just isolated groups of publishers. Thus, largely through their diligent efforts and Jehovah's blessing, the number of congregations rose from 104 in 1947 to 150 in 1950.

CIRCUIT WORK BEGINS

During early 1948, no "circuit servants" were visiting the congregations in France. But the need for them was evident. So five zealous young pioneers all in their 20's—Léopold Jontès, Antoine Skalecki, François Bacinski, Raymond Tomaszewski and Thaddée Mlynarski—were called to Bethel and acquainted with the duties of this service. On October 1, 1948, they started serving congregations.

These young brothers had large circuits. And since most of the Witnesses in France at that time were poor and lived in tiny dwellings, they had to be prepared to "rough it." They rarely had a bedroom to themselves. And none of them could afford an automobile or even a motorcycle.

MEMORIAL AND ASSEMBLIES

The Memorial celebrated in France in 1948 was the first one to be held publicly since the one of 1939. The brothers in the Paris region all met together in a large hall rented in the southern suburb of Kremlin-Bicêtre. About 500 were present, although at that time the 10 congregations in greater Paris had less than 300 publishers. In all France, there were 5,912 in attendance, with 407 partakers.

Ten district assemblies were organized in 1948.

A total of 9,235 attended the public meeting. The book "*Let God Be True*" was released in French, and it proved to be a wonderful instrument for freeing the French Catholics from bondage to false religion. For many years the majority of those who took their stand for the truth did so after having studied this Bible aid.

Also, the French *Watchtower* magazine again began to be received in France during 1948. The first postwar *Watchtower* campaign was organized, and 6,043 new subscriptions were obtained throughout the year.

FURTHER POSTWAR ORGANIZING

Beginning with the January 1948 issue, the French *Awake!* published lessons from the English textbook *Theocratic Aid to Kingdom Publishers*. This infused new enthusiasm into the Theocratic School, which had been functioning for some time with the booklet *Course in Theocratic Ministry*.

In 1948, following the lifting of the ban the previous September, public talks began to be given in the congregations. These were the first such public meetings since 1939.

Then, in 1949, four Gilead graduates arrived in France to help. Two of them were sent as missionaries to the transatlantic seaport of Le Havre, in Normandy. One reports a consequence of not understanding French very well:

"I would often see the notice 'Chien méchant' [literally, Wicked Dog—in English we would say, 'Beware of the Dog']. However, I confused 'méchant' with the English word 'merchant' so to me this notice meant 'Dog Merchant' or 'Buyer and Seller of Dogs.' I often remarked to myself how many there were who had this trade in Le Havre! So quite oblivious of any danger, I would push

open the gate with the dog barking at my heels. The householder would often be surprised to see me there in front of the door, calm, and with the dog by my side. I was never bitten once! No doubt they wondered what charm I had on their dogs. Little did they know that the reason was lack of knowledge of the French language!"

The other two Gilead graduates were sent to the Paris branch, their particular purpose being to help Brother Geiger organize the preaching work in France, as well as the operation of the branch office. The Bethel family was then made up of 12 members. All desired to cooperate with the suggestions made so that things would be done the way the rest of God's people were doing them throughout the world, as directed by the "faithful and discreet slave."

Thus, for the first time circuit assemblies were held in France. These followed closely the pattern of the programs provided by the Brooklyn office. The *Kingdom Service Song Book*, then recently published in French, was first used at these 1949 circuit assemblies.

Another big help to the publishers was the printing of a French edition of the booklet *Counsel on Theocratic Organization for Jehovah's Witnesses*. This, together with the help now being given by the circuit servants, did much to unify the methods of preaching and of organizing the congregations throughout France.

THE WORK SURGES AHEAD

All the efforts put forth in 1949 to organize the work in France theocratically produced abundant fruitage in 1950. The number of Kingdom publishers in 1949, 3,236, leaped to 4,526 in 1950, an

increase of 40 percent! A peak was even reached of 5,441 publishers, more than double the average number of publishers in France two years previously!

To meet the needs created by this tremendous increase, the number of circuits was increased to 10. The circuit servants were greatly helped during this year by two American Gilead graduates of Polish or Ukrainian origin, Stephen Behunick and Paul Muhaluk, who had been deported from Poland and who, before returning to the United States, spent several months in France accompanying the circuit servants. These worked particularly in the northern circuits where there were many Polish brothers. Also, in 1950 the special pioneer work was opened up in France.

The year 1950 was memorable for several other reasons: The first three French brothers went to

1951

PARIS—First postwar international assembly. 10,456 attended from 28 lands



Gilead. They graduated in the summer of 1950 at the Theocracy's Increase Assembly in Yankee Stadium, New York. Then seven others from France attended the 16th class of Gilead, which began in September 1950.

Including the brothers invited to Gilead, 20 delegates from France attended that memorable Theocracy's Increase Assembly in Yankee Stadium. Echoes of this wonderful convention reached the brothers in France at the district assemblies held later that year. Some of the French delegates gave animated reports at these assemblies on the wonderful things they had seen and heard in New York. They had been particularly impressed by their visit to the Brooklyn headquarters.

FIRST POSTWAR INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY

The big event in 1951 was the first international gathering held in Paris since 1937, the Clean Worship Assembly. Delegates came from 28 lands, including faraway places such as Australia, New Zealand, the Philippine Islands, India, South Africa, Venezuela and North America. The convention site, the Palais des Sports, stood only a block from the beautiful Seine River and a few blocks south of the skyscraping Eiffel Tower. A convention of the magnitude planned had never been held by Jehovah's Witnesses in France.

"The assembly was like a big experiment," observed *The Watchtower*. "This was the first time a hot-meal cafeteria had been organized, the first time magazine bags had been made, distributed and used, the first time special trains had been arranged. But the big job was undertaken with faith, obstacles were surmounted and God Al-

mighty imparted his blessing and help. Result: grand success! . . . the attendance shot up from 6,188 witnesses to 10,456 present for the announced public lecture."

During the convention Brother Knorr explained that after many years of faithful service, Brother Henri Geiger, for health and other reasons, was being replaced by Brother Léopold Jontès as branch overseer. The French applauded their appreciation of both the outgoing and the incoming branch servant.

A PERIOD OF REMARKABLE GROWTH

In 1951 a period of remarkable postwar expansion was concluding. Since 1947 the number of publishers had increased by leaps and bounds. There was a 10-percent increase in 1947 over the year before, and the only reason it was not much higher is because many of the Polish brothers in the north of France accepted an offer by the Polish government to return to Poland. Then in 1948 there was a 20-percent increase, followed by a 23-percent increase in 1949, 40-percent in 1950 and 34-percent in 1951.

During a four-year period the number of publishers tripled, rising from 2,380 in 1947 to 7,136 in 1951. In the 1951 service year alone, the Greater Paris Congregation grew from 650 to 1,085 publishers; 1,065 persons were baptized during the year, which was one out of every seven publishers in France!

This meant that the majority of the publishers in France were spiritually young "lambs," needing help to acquire maturity. So the following period in the history of Jehovah's Witnesses in France, from 1952 to 1956, was marked by a slowing down

of the expansion, and a building up of the Christian maturity of ones already within the congregations.

"WATCHTOWER" BANNED, BUT PREACHING SPREADS

Starting with its January 8, 1952, issue, the French *Awake!* magazine became semimonthly. Also, street witnessing was engaged in with the magazine bag, and 285,837 *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines were placed in France that year, more than at any previous time in the history of the work in France. But then, like a bomb-shell, at the end of December in 1952, the public press dropped the news that the *Watchtower* magazine had been banned.

The Minister of the Interior, acting on advice from the head of the Security Police, prohibited the distribution and sale of *The Watchtower* throughout France and the French territories. The reason for the ban was that *The Watchtower* supposedly incited young men to refuse military service. But certain French newspapers expressed the view that this was merely a pretext, and that the real reason was that *The Watchtower* printed articles that showed the duplicity of the Roman Catholic Church.

Despite the ban, 1952 was a good year for the Kingdom work. A particular reason is that the brothers began making a concerted effort to reach areas in France where no Witnesses lived. The March French *Informant* (*Our Kingdom Service*) encouraged the Witnesses to preach during the summer months in territory not assigned to congregations. Most of France's publishers then lived in the mining region of the north, where large congregations worked their territory every few

weeks. Yet in large towns in nearby departments no preaching was being done. This was also true of the Mediterranean island of Corsica, which is part of France, lying about 160 kilometers (100 mi.) from the Riviera. So in 1952 two special pioneers began the Kingdom work in Corsica.

CONSOLIDATING THE WORK

In 1953 and 1954, the work continued to make steady progress, a 9-percent increase in publishers being realized each of these years. Also, 1,657 persons were baptized in those years. In January 1953, the circuits were reorganized and increased to 11. At the same time, the number of congregations visited by each servant was reduced from 24 to 18 or 20, making possible more frequent visits. In addition, the number of congregation book studies greatly increased, enabling more persons to attend and permitting the conductors to give better assistance to ones needing help.

A further consolidating factor in 1953 was the New World Society Assembly, held in Yankee Stadium, New York, in July. Seventy-two delegates from France attended this wonderful assembly and had the opportunity of visiting the Brooklyn Bethel and printing factory. They were like so many Queens of Sheba who discovered they "had not been told the half."

Also in 1953 the first full-time district servant was appointed in France, Brother Skalecki. Up to that time, the circuit assemblies had been served by Bethel brothers on their weekends off from regular work. The following year Brother Skalecki began showing the film "The New World Society in Action," throughout France. This film gave insight into the operations of the Brooklyn

Bethel home and factory, and this helped to unite the brothers in France with the headquarters organization.

FURTHER CONSOLIDATION

The 1955 service year in France was another year more for consolidating past gains rather than rapid growth. There was a 6-percent increase in the average number of publishers, which meant an average of 456 more than in 1954. But very significantly, 1,246 persons were baptized. This shows that many of those who had been publishing had not yet taken an open stand for Jehovah, dedicating their lives to him and symbolizing this by water immersion. So this high baptism figure for 1955 is proof that Jehovah's organization in France was being consolidated.

Another remarkable feature of the work during the year was the great increase in the number of magazines put into the hands of the French public. In 1954, 288,902 magazines were placed, but in 1955, the number of magazines placed shot up to 513,236! This year marked a turning point in magazine distribution, as the number placed regularly increased by several hundred thousand each year for many years. Of course, all these were *Awake!* magazines, since the ban on *The Watchtower* continued.

ANOTHER INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY IN PARIS

The big event in France during 1955 was the Triumphant Kingdom Assembly held in Paris August 3-7. In 1951 the first international post-war convention in France had been held in the same Palais des Sports. At that time 10,456 attended the public meeting and 351 were baptized. How would the 1955 assembly compare?

Opening day saw 9,701 persons thronging the building, filling the ground-floor arena in front of the platform and sitting on the tiers of seats on the sides of the bowl, some even being in the top gallery away up above. Two days later, 774 candidates answered with a firm "*Oui!*" to the questions put to them by the French speaker on baptism. And for the public talk on Sunday given by Brother Knorr in English and translated into French, 16,500 persons fairly overflowed the assembly place! Brother Jontès wrote:

"How grateful to Jehovah we are that such an assembly was possible! And how thrilled we were to see the news cameramen filming the immersion service and also the vast audience for the public talk! Hundreds of thousands of people were able to see these films throughout France the week following the assembly. Jehovah's witnesses were in the news."

PREPARATIONS FOR GREATER GROWTH

In 1956 the average number of publishers rose to 8,867, just 355 more than the previous year's average, only a 4-percent increase. Yet 951 persons were baptized, and 12,801 persons attended the Memorial, with 232 partakers. Also, the number of magazines placed rose from 513,236 in 1955 to 869,841 in 1956! This fine activity portended greater growth ahead.

The congregations were moving out to reach as many of the French people with the Kingdom message as possible. Over 100 congregations requested unassigned territory and visited towns and villages that had not received a witness since before the second world war, if then. To help in reaching these people, special pioneers were increased from 33 in 1955 to 64 in 1956. They went into regions,

such as Brittany, that had been barely touched before. In 1956 there were 15 Gilead graduates active in France. The 194 French congregations were divided into 12 circuits and, for the first time, into two districts.

Already the Villa Guibert house, purchased in 1947 to accommodate the Bethel home and branch office, was too small, and the prospects for further growth meant that obtaining larger quarters was urgent. So on July 18, 1956, a 660-square-meter (7,100-ft.²) plot of land was purchased in Boulogne-Billancourt, an industrial suburb just west of Paris that is known the world over as the home of the gigantic Renault automobile factories. A five-story building was planned, big enough to house the family, the office and a small printery. The work in France was getting ready for greater expansion.

PERIOD OF MORE RAPID INCREASE BEGINS

For the first time the 10,000 mark of Kingdom publishers was reached in 1957, with a new peak of 10,954 publishers. That was a 12-percent increase over 1956. And both the number of hours spent preaching and the number of magazines distributed went over the million mark! Also, over 1,100 persons were baptized, and 14,488 persons attended the Memorial. During the year a refresher course was held for all the district and circuit servants who served the 212 congregations, which were divided into 14 circuits and two districts in France.

In the meantime, attempts to start construction on the new Bethel were stalled. Finally, the necessary building permit was granted on May 20, 1957, 10 months after the land had been purchased. Excavation began June 12, and by October 2, 1957,

the foundations were laid. But another year and a half passed before the building was completed.

TWO IMPORTANT EVENTS MARK 1958

The first of these was a political one, but it directly affected the stability of the Kingdom preaching in France. Due to the crisis created by the Algerian War, a state of emergency was declared in France and all public meetings were forbidden. It was feared for a time that a military junta might take over the country, but on June 1 it was learned that General Charles de Gaulle had agreed to become head of government and then Head of State. His return to power brought to France a period of governmental stability that it had not known for decades.

Since there is no law in France granting exemption from military service to ministers of religion, some young Witnesses had been in prison for nearly 10 years. General de Gaulle arranged for the release of those who had been in prison for five years or more. Later his government reduced the prison sentences that our brothers received to twice the length of obligatory military service. This meant that if young Frenchmen were called up for 18 months' military service, our brothers would serve a three-year prison sentence. This was far better than the previous situation where they went to prison at the age of 20 and had no idea when they would be free again.

The political stability was a factor in another fine increase of 11 percent in Kingdom publishers, with a peak of 12,141. Twenty-three new congregations were formed, and many isolated groups of publishers were established when zealous Witnesses with the pioneer spirit moved out to serve

in places where the need was greater. The branch office directed these, as well as the nearly 100 special pioneers, first to the cities of 50,000 inhabitants or more where there were no Witnesses, and then, as these cities began to be worked, to the towns with a progressively smaller population.

Thus the work began to develop in smaller cities like Poitiers, Dijon, Annecy, Limoges and Rennes, the former capital of Brittany. One remarkable case was that of Caen in Normandy. Within a few years, in that city a tiny congregation composed of a handful of publishers became a large congregation and finally mothered many congregations in the surrounding area. Thus, instead of being concentrated in certain areas, particularly the mining regions of the north of France, the work began to spread out all over France.

The other big event in 1958 was the eight-day Divine Will International Assembly in New York during July and August. There were 641 French delegates present—551 of whom traveled by air and 90 by boat—nearly nine times as many as attended the 1953 New York assembly. Thus nearly one out of every 20 French publishers was in attendance—a remarkable figure! This had a very strengthening and uniting effect on the work in the French field. These delegates heard Brother Knorr announce the creation of training schools in many branches, as well as the progress of the building of the new Bethel in France.

Strong echoes of this wonderful convention reached the rest of the French brothers at five district assemblies held in France in September 1958. A total of 677 new brothers were immersed at these assemblies. The powerful Resolution adopted in New York was also adopted at these

assemblies, and then, during the month of December, 1,670,000 tracts entitled "How Has Christendom Failed All Mankind?" were distributed throughout France. What a powerful witness that was!

NEW FRENCH BETHEL

In the early spring of 1959 the new Bethel was completed. Then on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, April 17 to 19, the office and home were transferred from Villa Guibert to the new quarters at 81, rue du Point-du-Jour, Boulogne-Billancourt. The following Monday the new Bethel began to function.

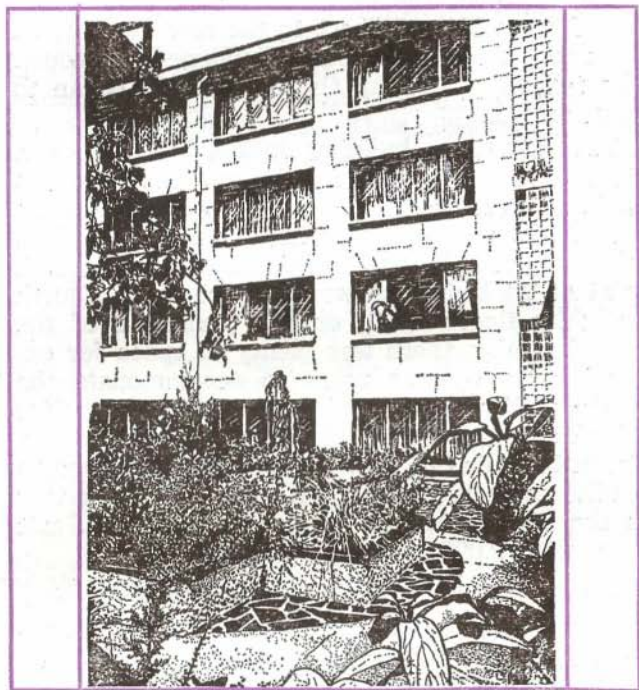
The five-story building included a basement large enough to house a printery. The Kingdom Hall and an office were on the ground floor. On the second floor were the dining room and kitchen, with further office space available on that floor. A total of 24 bedrooms were on the third, fourth and fifth floors. With only 17 members of the Bethel family, there was plenty of space for expansion, as well as room to accommodate the Kingdom Ministry School that Brother Knorr first talked about at the 1958 international assembly. Toward the end of May Brother Knorr visited to see the new quarters, and on June 1 he gave a talk in the Pleyel Hall to the brothers of the Paris area, with 2,026 in attendance.

AN IMPORTANT LEGAL VICTORY

Two days later, on June 3, Brother Jontès received important news from a Paris lawyer. Back on July 2, 1957, Brother Jontès had been summoned to appear before an examining magistrate. He was accused of inciting young men to refuse military service, a charge that could have meant

prison sentences for him and for the brothers making up the board of directors of the Society's French Association. Also, the French Association of Jehovah's Witnesses was in danger of being banned.

The judicial inquiry of the matter continued through 1957 and the whole of 1958. Finally, the case was brought into court on February 16, 1959.



1959

*New Bethel completed in
Boulogne-Billancourt*

Brother Jontès was able to give a good witness. On March 2, 1959, a verdict of not guilty was rendered. However, the public prosecutor appealed this judgment, and the case came before the Eleventh Appeal Court on May 20, 1959. Then, on June 3, the Society's lawyer phoned Brother Jontès informing him that the accused were again found not guilty. This was a wonderful theocratic victory, leaving the door open for further preaching of the Kingdom good news in France.

There was a fine increase of 17 percent in the average number of Witnesses in 1959, with a peak of 13,935 publishers. Also, the number of congregations rose from 235 to 254, including new congregations in Bastia, on the island of Corsica, and Rennes, in Brittany. The remarkable number of 2,106 persons were baptized, 525 of them at the six French district assemblies.

EXPANSION IN 1960

"The 1960 service year has been one of the most remarkable ones ever known for our brothers in France," wrote the Society's president Nathan H. Knorr. First of all, getting the new printery into operation, with its linotype, printing presses, folding and stitching machines, was a real milestone for the work in France. The first copies of *Kingdom Ministry (Our Kingdom Service)* came off the France branch presses in March 1960. From then on, all outside printing stopped; the Society's local printery has taken care of the needs of the brothers, except for magazines, books and booklets, which are printed either in Brooklyn, in Switzerland or in Wiesbaden, Germany.

Continued expansion was enjoyed in other areas. The average number of Witnesses increased by 10

percent, reaching an all-time peak of 15,439. The Memorial attendance shot past the 20,000 mark for the first time, to 23,073. Thus, 26 new congregations were formed, bringing the number up to 280. By the end of the year there were just three towns in France with a population of over 20,000 that still remained virgin territory.

HIGHLIGHT OF 1961

—UNITED WORSHIPERS ASSEMBLY

The Parc des Princes Stadium at the western limits of Paris was engaged for the United Worshipers Assembly, August 3-6. However, just three months before, a military putsch in Algeria threatened to throw France into a horrible civil war. A right-wing terrorist campaign of bomb explosions throughout the country created a climate of apprehension. All large gatherings were banned by the government. Thus the contract for the Parc des Princes Stadium was canceled only a few weeks before the assembly was to begin. However, a special permit finally was obtained to hold the convention in the Colombes Stadium, just outside Paris.

This precarious situation, with such uncertainty regarding where the convention might be held would have made it hard even for experienced convention organizers. But this was France's first outdoor assembly, and the first one for which the cafeteria arrangements (tents, tables, boilers, steam kettles, ovens, tray-washing machines, and so forth) were constructed and installed by the brothers. Finally, with the cooperation of all and the backing of God's spirit, everything was set up and ready in time for the convention's start.

It proved to be a remarkable gathering. Some 800 brothers arrived from Spain, where our work

was banned at the time. They were able to enjoy the meetings in their own language, and in freedom! Also, 80 people came from Portugal. Lectures were given simultaneously in French, Polish, Spanish and Portuguese.

Since no advertising was permitted, and the assembly site was outside of Paris, the brothers wondered if the attendance would surpass that of the 1955 international assembly in Paris. Well, it did, as 23,004 gathered to hear Brother Knorr's public address "When All Nations Unite Under God's Kingdom." Remarkably, over 5 percent of those in attendance were baptized at the assembly, that is, 1,203!

Another 10-percent increase in the average number of publishers was realized in 1961, with a peak of 17,108 Witnesses being reached. And that year saw the inauguration of the Kingdom Ministry School in France, with the first class composed of circuit and district servants, being held in the French Bethel from March 13 to April 8. Then, over the years, French, Belgian and Swiss congregation servants and also brothers and sisters who were special pioneers attended this course.

100-PERCENT INCREASE IN SEVEN YEARS

In seven years' time the average number of publishers in France more than doubled, from an average of 8,512 publishers in 1955 to an average of 17,299 in 1962. A marvelous ingathering of the "other sheep" had taken place! All towns of over 20,000 population by now had publishers in them. Also, 324 overseers and special pioneers had already attended the Kingdom Ministry School.

Brother Henri Geiger, who was baptized and began active service in 1920, lived to see this mar-

velous growth from the few dozen who were preaching in 1920. After Brother Jontès was appointed to replace him as branch servant in 1951, Brother Geiger continued working at Bethel for a while. Then, as his health declined, he and his wife went to stay with their son. There, on August 29, 1962, he finished his earthly course. His life story appeared in the December 15, 1962, issue of *The Watchtower*.

SPECIAL PIONEERS ASSIGNED TO PARIS

Oddly enough, while the work was spreading rapidly throughout France, the increases in the French capital of Paris were not keeping pace. So it was decided to open a missionary home at 11, rue de Seine, Boulogne-Billancourt, not far from Bethel. The house there was purchased, and then enlarged and fixed up by pioneer brothers who were brought into Bethel for this purpose. On December 17, 1962, this missionary home began functioning, with special pioneers who lived there working in and around Paris. This large building also became a Bethel annex. The Society's shipping department, which had been located in a warehouse in another part of Paris, was transferred here.

1963 TO 1966—JEHOVAH'S BLESSING CONTINUES

Over the next few years, there continued to be abundant evidence of Jehovah's blessings on his people in France. First, there was the around-the-world series of "Everlasting Good News" Assemblies in 1963. Although France did not host one of these conventions, it was marvelous to see some 11,000 French brothers—more than half the publishers in the country—attend one of these assemblies either in Milan, Italy, or in Munich, Germany.

Many special trains were organized to transport the delegates. And what fine spiritual treats they received, including the French-language release of the *New World Translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures*.

For the first time the number of Witnesses in France rose above 20,000 in 1963. And then in 1964 a 9-percent increase in publishers was realized, with over 2,000 persons being baptized! Also, the distribution of *Awake!* surpassed the 3,000,000 mark for the first time in 1964, and nearly 1,100 pioneers, including vacation (auxiliary) pioneers, had a share in placing these journals with the public.

In 1965 the Memorial service was attended by 34,862 persons, as the publishers reached a new peak of 22,933. The distribution of *Awake!* continued to skyrocket—over 3,500,000 being distributed among the French public that year. There were now 380 congregations and 92 isolated groups in France, but still 94 towns with between 5,000 and 12,000 inhabitants had no Witnesses living in them. However, the witnessing work was progressing nicely in the large cities. There were 11 congregations in Paris, seven in Lyons and four in Nice and in Mulhouse, with several other large cities having three congregations.

An outstanding feature of 1966 was the organizing of 62 new congregations, bringing the total number for the country up to 442. These were divided into 30 circuits, and 3 districts. Also, five district assemblies were held that year, with a total attendance of 22,153 at the public meeting. At the Bordeaux assembly, the French brothers had the privilege of playing host to their brothers from Portugal. Since most of these brothers could

not afford to pay for accommodations, and there was not enough room for all of them in the brothers' homes, a cinema was rented and converted into a big double dormitory for men and women, equipped with showers, washbasins, and so forth. They greatly appreciated the love shown by their French brothers. District servant Brother Marian Szumiga reported: "Many of them had tears in their eyes when the time came for them to leave."

'SPEEDING IT UP IN ITS OWN TIME'

Although the ingathering of the "other sheep" had made steady progress from 1963 to 1966, it can be said that Jehovah now really began 'speeding it up in its own time.' (Isa. 60:22) Not only was there a 10-percent increase in publishers in 1967, but the Memorial attendance jumped to a remarkable 41,274, with 143 partakers. As further indication of even greater increases ahead was the average number of 19,327 home Bible studies being conducted each month, a rise from 15,964 the year before. And the placements with the public of *Awake!* leaped to over 4,000,000 copies, and 55,446 new subscriptions were taken.

That summer nine "Disciple-making" District Assemblies were held in France, with a total attendance of 27,009. The Biblical dramas were particularly appreciated at these assemblies. As evidence of the speeded-up growth, 2,269 new disciples were baptized during the year, 960 of them at the district assemblies.

POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CRISIS IN FRANCE

France was shaken by a very serious political and social crisis in the spring of 1968. The trouble started with student demonstrations, at first in Paris, at the famous Sorbonne and other univer-

sities in the Paris area, then later the trouble spreading to universities and high schools throughout France. For a time, the Latin Quarter in Paris became a regular battleground. The students fought the police, who were trying to maintain order. Paving stones were torn up by the students and thrown at the police. Some of Paris' famous boulevard trees were cut down by the students to form barricades, cars were burned and shop windows smashed. There were hundreds of injured on both sides.

Then the workers' unions joined in, with their own demonstration marches, and with orders to the workers for a general strike. Thus, during May and June 1968, France was virtually paralyzed. There were no mail and no trains; the wheels of industry ground to a stop. Even air traffic was stopped. For a time, it looked as if the Gaullist regime would topple, but the communist and the noncommunist trade unions were divided, and also there was no cohesion between the workers and the students. So finally, after the government and the employers had made some spectacular concessions, the violence and the strikes came to an end. Elections were held at the end of June, and the Gaullist party came out with a large majority.

For about a month it was impossible for the branch to exchange correspondence with the congregations. But the brothers faithfully carried on their activity. Better still, the brothers took advantage of the time they had on their hands, due to the complete cessation of secular work, to put more time in the field service. For the first time in France the average hours per publisher rose to 12.

PROVISIONS FOR SPIRITUAL STRENGTHENING

On May 7-12, 1968, just at the time of the worst student demonstrations, Brother Milton Henschel visited the France branch. His visit was most up-building, as he devoted much time to the family as a whole, giving a word of encouragement to each one, warming their hearts. He left Paris just in time, since a few days later air travel was paralyzed by a general strike. Brother Knorr was scheduled to visit the branch in June, but due to the situation, he could not get into the country.

Therefore, Brother Jontès and his assistant, Brother Jean-Marie Bockaert, met Brother Knorr in Belgium to discuss increasing the flow of spiritual food to the French brothers. As noted before, *The Watchtower* was banned in France. However, upbuilding articles were being provided in a 64-page monthly booklet. But now it was decided to publish a 48-page booklet twice a month. From January 1, 1969, onward this was done, meaning that the French brothers began receiving 96 pages of translated material each month rather than the 64. Brother Knorr authorized the purchase of a fourth printing press for the France branch to care for this extra work.

GETTING THE FRENCH "TRUTH" BOOK READY

The political events in May and June of 1968 had other unforeseen consequences for the Kingdom interests in France. Many may remember that it was in 1968 that the book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life* was published. It is now, next to the Bible, the most widely distributed book in the Western world, with over 95 million copies being distributed in 112 languages. Well, it was arranged to supply certain foreign-language

branches with early press proofs of the *Truth* book, so that they could get them translated into their respective languages. In this way the book could come out simultaneously in some of the world's most widely used tongues.

Everything had gone well in the France branch; a translator succeeded in translating the book in one month's time. Part of the translated manuscript was sent to Brooklyn and arrived safely. Another part of the manuscript was then sent off, when suddenly the postal strike began and the manuscript was blocked in the mails.

The manuscript was recopied, and it was taken to Brussels, Belgium. A shuttle service was then organized between Paris and Brussels by brothers who had cars, taking mail from the France branch to be sent from Belgium, and picking up mail for France that had been sent to Brussels. Thus the book was completed so that for the first time the French received a book at the same time as did their English-speaking brothers. True, only a few copies were available to show at the summer assemblies, but soon sufficient copies were available for all, and for distribution in the field.

THE "PEACE ON EARTH" ASSEMBLY

The highlight of 1969 was the international "Peace on Earth" Assembly held at Colombes Stadium near Paris. It was part of a chain of such conventions, the first of which took place in early July in the United States. A total of 334 French delegates flew the Atlantic for this seven-day gathering. But then, August 5-10, the assembly came to France.

Arrangements were made in the stadium for a Portuguese convention, as well as a gathering for

the Polish-speaking brothers from France—together 78 nationalities were represented. Besides the 2,731 at the Portuguese meeting and 600 at the Polish, some 5,000 came from Belgium, 1,000 from Switzerland, over 1,300 from the United States, 200 from Canada, 170 from England, and 120 from Africa. There were special English-language sessions, and over 800 attended them.

The Portuguese brothers had their finest assembly up to that time. Their previous peak attendance at any convention in the history of the work in Portugal was 825 in 1968 at Toulouse, France. It was estimated that a large percent of the Portuguese brothers were able to attend the Paris convention, and they certainly enjoyed themselves. There were 65 delegates from one Lisbon congregation of 90 publishers! One sister saved funds for two years to have enough money to make the trip and return. In attendance were brothers from Angola, the Azores, the Cape Verde Islands, Madeira and Mozambique.

The convention opened with fine weather, and there was pleasant sunshine every day. This was a blessing, because the Portuguese, the Polish, and half of the French audience were out in the open, unprotected from the elements. So what would be the convention's combined peak attendance?

Well, on Sunday for the public talk, "The Approaching Peace of a Thousand Years," 47,480 were present—more than double the attendance at the previous Colombes Stadium assembly in 1961! Yet even more remarkable was the fact that 3,619 persons were baptized, or about 10 percent of the regular average attendance during the convention! This growth of Jehovah's Witnesses was of

concern to the clergy, as noted by the following comments in the popular Paris evening paper *France-Soir* of August 6, 1969:

"What worries the clergy of other religions is not the means of spectacular distribution of publications used by Jehovah's witnesses, but, rather, their making converts. Each of Jehovah's witnesses has the obligation to witness or proclaim his faith by using the Bible from house to house, working according to the direction of the organization. . . . The doctrines of Jehovah's witnesses are based on the Bible. . . . They believe in one God (Jehovah), reject the trinity, immortality of the soul, the existence of hell and of purgatory."

The attention given to the convention by the press, radio and television was unprecedented. In view of the delicate situation in France, nothing was done to draw newsmen to the convention. However, they came spontaneously. The first morning about 10 newspapermen were there, and the following day articles with photographs appeared on the front page of several widely read French morning papers. On Thursday, August 7, there was fine television coverage, including a nearly three-minute sequence on the National News at 8 p.m., the most widely followed program in France. Everything that was presented was favorable.

The same day, the influential *Le Monde* gave us a 36-column-inch (.9 m) coverage on its religious news page, devoting only nine column inches (.23 m) to items about the Catholic Church! Favorable reports got into all the best French newspapers—not into special editions sold around the stadium for the Witnesses—but into the national editions, sold all over France and throughout the French-speaking world. In all, the French

press printed 873 column inches (over 22 m) of articles and photographs!

Also, the Bethel family printed two assembly reports that were released during the convention, first a 16-page report and then one of 32 pages, along with photographs. This was the first time a French-language report on an assembly in France had been published. These reports proved to be very useful also after the convention to show people the size and scope of Jehovah's organization.

The new songbook, "*Singing and Accompanying Yourself with Music in Your Hearts*," also was published in French in 1969. The brothers received it shortly before the Colombes convention, which gave them the opportunity to learn the songs that were to be used during the convention.

THE "TRUTH" BOOK SPEEDS UP THE WORK

An average of 29,754 publishers was reached in 1969, a 12-percent increase for the year. The *Truth* book, released the year before, had much to do with the grand increases. An average of 25,949 home Bible studies were conducted each week, and 60,457 attended the Memorial, in comparison with 49,086 the previous year. And 4,583 were baptized, more than double the peak number baptized in any one year up to that time!

This rapid expansion continued. A 15-percent increase in publishers was enjoyed in 1970, followed by one of 14 percent in 1971. This meant that the number of publishers leaped from 26,614 in 1968 to an average of 39,026 in 1971—an increase of over 12,000 in just *three* years! And 80,293 attended the Memorial in 1971, *over 30,000* more than three years before! Also, new congregations

were being formed in France at the rate of more than one every week—53 in 1971—for a total of 636 in the country. Surely the *Truth* book was having a grand part in helping to gather the Lord's sheep!

TOULOUSE ASSEMBLY PREPARATION

What was to be a highlight of 1971 was the "Divine Name" District Assembly in Toulouse, France. Some 5,000 were expected at the French sessions, 5,000 at the Portuguese and 15,000 at the Spanish, totaling 25,000 in all. For this trilingual assembly every available hotel room and camping site in and around Toulouse was reserved. But then the unexpected occurred.

An outbreak of cholera in Spain. There was talk of preventive measures. But the authorities were very hesitant about banning the assembly because this decision would be unpopular with the local tradespeople. Also, they were afraid the Society would sue them for damages since contracts had been signed and tremendous preparations had been made. In time, however, as assembly preparation continued to go ahead, the word finally was received that the assembly had been officially prohibited. Brother Jean-Claude Rézer, the assembly overseer, observed:

"Really the brothers were wonderful right up to the end when the ban was announced. . . . Yes, there were tears, but in a spirit of devotion everyone recognized the need to get back to work to pull down everything that had been built in vain. The brothers in charge of the different departments were equal to their task. The brothers from Spain and Portugal backed us up in the dismantling work, while working at the same time toward holding their assembly elsewhere."

BLESSINGS DESPITE BAN

Practically all the French-speaking brothers were able to attend one of the other assemblies in France. And nearly 900 brothers from Portugal traveled by 12 buses, one chartered airplane and a number of private cars to an "emergency" program in London. In all, a total of 48,533 were present for the "Divine Name" assemblies in France, and the marvelous number of 2,084 persons were baptized.

Thus 1971 was a tremendous year of theocratic expansion in France. The year was also marked by a particularly fine provision, the *Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses* in the French language. This had not been available in French since before World War II.

A BETHEL ANNEX BECOMES NECESSARY

By 1972 the French Bethel in the western Paris suburb of Boulogne-Billancourt had become too small, necessitating an annex. Space was particularly needed for the shipping department. In 1959, when the Boulogne Bethel was completed, 85,000 books per year were dispatched, whereas by 1972 this figure had risen to 1,094,231, not to mention booklets, forms and other printed items.

It seemed judicious to build this annex somewhere between Paris and Le Havre, a port in western France where the literature arrived from the United States. In November 1970, a 73- by 33-meter (240 ft. by 108 ft.) plot of ground was located at a small town in Normandy called Louviers, about 105 kilometers (65 mi.) equidistant from Paris and Le Havre. It took about 18 months to overcome administrative difficulties, and so the title deeds were not signed until April 28, 1972. The actual building was com-

menced the following month and completed in December of the same year.

The building is a very attractive prefabricated, two-story structure, with the exterior composed of facing bricks and green enameled paneling. A spacious printery and shipping department, along with kitchen, cold-storage rooms, and a pleasant dining room are on the first floor. The laundry, library and 22 bedrooms are on the second floor. The structure altogether has about 2,044 square meters (22,000 ft.²) of floor space.

The printery was transferred to Louviers on May 29, 1973. It was an unusual sight on that rainy day in Boulogne to see the printing presses and other machinery hoisted up and loaded onto enormous trucks in the street outside Bethel. The car and truck drivers, who were thus obliged to wait, were so curious that they forgot to sound their horns, which, although forbidden, is most frequent in the Paris traffic jams! Eventually the four printing presses, the linotype, the trimmer, and the folding machine arrived safely at Louviers, and were already in use two days later.

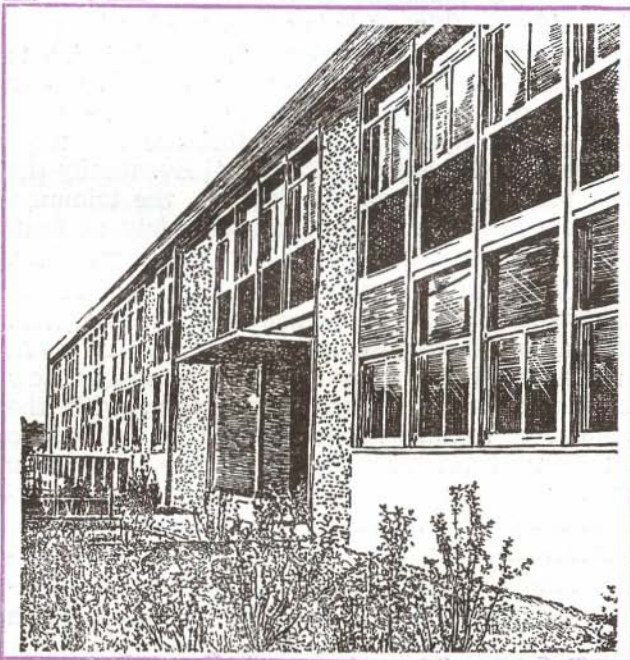
Dedication day was fixed for Saturday, June 9, 1973, when 157 were present for the program. Several brothers gave a retrospect of the work in France. It was most thrilling to realize how the work had increased remarkably, with the number of persons being baptized in 1972 alone exceeding 5,000 for the first time. Also, the brother in charge of the printery briefly explained that in 1960, 291,530 magazines had been printed, whereas 1972 saw a production of 1,771,300! And the total number of printed items increased from 4,161,994 in 1960 to 32,043,610 in 1972.

"DIVINE VICTORY" INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Again Colombes Olympic Stadium was to be the site of an international convention. On January 1, 1973, the assembly committee was set up, seven months in advance of the assembly's start. What a tremendous task it was to oversee the transforming of the stadium into a gigantic Kingdom Hall! But what a success was made of the job!

1972

Bethel annex built in Louviers



Thousands of potted plants that horticulturists who were Witnesses had cultivated over a period of months adorned the center of the stadium, around the platform. An artificial lake occupied by two living flamingos was also a pleasant decoration. The "Racing Club of France," the owner of the stadium, used the decor to illustrate its monthly sports magazine cover.

Everything was ready for the opening day, Wednesday, August 1. A literal swarm of humans invaded the stadium. The French newspapers, often very cutting and ironic toward Jehovah's Witnesses, were full of praise for the attentive crowd. The Catholic newspaper *La Croix* commented:

"Even though they are widely spoken of because of their active house-to-house proselytism, Jehovah's Witnesses have only had moderate success up until now in France. Nevertheless, their assembly in Colombes was really an impressive sight due to their flawless organization and Bible dramas, along with their sense of responsibility."

The journalistic world hailed this international assembly as the event of the summer. *Le Monde* stated: "The stadium was filled to overflowing with an attentive and studious crowd that would have made any political party jealous."

Even the men delivering the newspapers were not indifferent to the conventioners' good behavior. The *Parisien Libéré* deliveryman deposited his newspapers in heaps on the sidewalk with cans for the money, leaving just one man to keep an eye on things. The delegates, surprised at being able to help themselves, asked him if he was not afraid of being shortchanged. He replied: "Oh, no. We did the same in 1969."

On Friday, August 3, a total of 2,703 candidates presented themselves for baptism, answering, "Oui," to the questions propounded to them. It was an unforgettable moment as they left in an orderly manner for the swimming pool only about 500 meters (550 yd.) away. The *Journal du Dimanche* commented on this outstanding event:

"Not just anyone can become one of Jehovah's Witnesses, suddenly discovering their 'truth' like a bolt out of the blue. Patience, time, courage and extremely deep Christian faith are necessary. But one must also accept the precepts set out in Bible laws."

The assemblies in Colombes have been landmarks insofar as progress in the French field is concerned. Here 23,004 people were in attendance in 1961, and in 1969 there were 47,480 present. What about 1973? Well, when the time came for the Sunday public talk, "Divine Victory—Its Meaning for Distressed Humanity," there was the astounding number of 60,241 overflowing the huge stadium!

THE "NEW WORLD TRANSLATION"—IN FRENCH

Back in 1963 the *New World Translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures* was produced in the French language. Finally, eleven years later, the completed *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* in French was most enthusiastically received by the brothers. In France the importance of this new publication took on special proportions. Why so? The situation calls for a little history.

The popes called France "the eldest daughter of the Church," and even today 85 percent of the French population claim to be Catholics. When

you consider that before the French Revolution in 1789 there was one priest for every 110 inhabitants, and more recently, in 1970, there was still one priest, monk or nun for 297 residents, it thus becomes clear that the Roman Catholic Church has been in a very good position to teach the French people the Bible.

However, the priests for centuries enforced the rule set down by the Council of Toulouse in 1229: "The laity must not possess the Old and New Testament books." True, since the 1950's several Catholic Bibles, such as *The Jerusalem Bible*, have been published in French, but as they are relatively expensive, few homes have acquired one. Thus, with the release of the *New World Translation* in French, even the poorest of French families have been able to obtain a complete Bible. Since 1974 nearly 800,000 copies of this fine translation have been shipped out to the congregations for distribution in the field.

PROVIDING A MOTIVATING HOPE

Although the lives of the French people have generally improved from a material standpoint, many are disappointed and confused, lacking any real stability in their lives. They feel hopeless when beset with problems, for their religion has not provided them spiritual strength and true confidence. The Kingdom message often has a transforming effect on such persons that is truly beneficial. To relate just one example:

A woman who had suffered a nervous breakdown because of the many problems she faced, decided to commit suicide and take her three children with her into death. However, before putting her terrible plan into action, she explained her dis-

tress to God in prayer. She cleaned up her apartment, wrote farewell letters to her husband and mother and took the trash can down, so as to leave everything in perfect order.

But on the way down the stairs she met two Witnesses, who talked to her and arranged for a return visit. Upon returning to her apartment, she thought about that appointment, and decided to postpone her suicide for a week. One week later the Witnesses were on time, and after a short introduction a study was started with the *Truth* book. A few weeks later, the lady was in such a bad state of health that she had to be taken to a hospital. During the five weeks she was there, the Witnesses regularly visited her to inquire about her health.

Once she was out of the hospital, the study was continued, and the lady did all she could to attend the meetings with her children, even though she lived a long way from the Kingdom Hall. God's Word was so stimulating she witnessed to everyone she met, with excellent results. Yes, not only was she baptized, but her mother and husband both studied and eventually started out in the preaching work!

Happily, people of all ages and walks of life are learning Bible truths, and their lives are being transformed as they realize the certain prospect of enjoying God's gift of everlasting life. Thus in 1974 there were 8,689 new ones who responded to God's goodness and were baptized. That means on an average, day and night, every hour a person in France was becoming a baptized Christian! Over 53,000 Witnesses in 1974 were active in the preaching and disciple-making work each month,

conducting more than 36,000 Bible studies. Also, that year 110,330 attended the Memorial.

BAN ON "THE WATCHTOWER" LIFTED

In 1975 there was a landmark in the history of Jehovah's Witnesses in France. It was the lifting of the 22-year ban on the *Watchtower* magazine. Beginning in January the French brothers started receiving their magazines for study purposes. Then, a few weeks later, they were overjoyed to have *The Watchtower* available also for door-to-door witnessing activity.

PROVIDING FOR THE SPIRITUAL NEEDS OF ALL

You may recall that in 1952 two pioneers started the preaching work on Corsica, which is part of France. Well, 15 years later, in 1967, there were two congregations there. In 1969 a third congregation was formed, and a circuit assembly was held on the island, for the first time, in 1970. Since then, several special pioneers have been sent to the island, and in 1978 there were 431 publishers organized into nine congregations.

The small independent principality of Monaco on the Mediterranean seacoast comes under the jurisdiction of the France branch. As you may know, this is the home of the famous Monte Carlo gambling resort. Although house-to-house witnessing among Monaco's 27,000 inhabitants is forbidden, publishers from the French Beausoleil Congregation have regularly preached there. By 1978 there were seven active Witnesses in Monaco.

Also, the spiritual needs of foreign-speaking people are being cared for. Thus by 1975 there were 17 Portuguese and 16 Spanish congregations in France, not to mention one Greek and two

German congregations. In addition, there were 24 Portuguese and 12 Spanish groups associated with French congregations. How encouraging it was to see that all these people from different parts of the earth were able to learn the truth in their own tongues!

FURTHER KINGDOM MINISTRY SCHOOL CLASSES

As noted earlier, the Kingdom Ministry School was inaugurated in France in March 1961. Its purpose was to help elders fulfill their Scriptural responsibilities. By December of 1971, a total of 93 classes had enjoyed the benefits of the course, which, after the 28th class, was changed from a month-long to a two-week course.

After being suspended for over three years, in February 1975 the school was begun again, a new textbook being used for instruction. During that year 2,043 elders benefited from this new course. Finally, during a six-week period in 1978, a revised two-day course was attended by France's more than 5,300 elders. Did the elders benefit from it? One elder answered that question well, explaining: "We thank Jehovah's attentive organization for giving us ever clearer enlightenment for up-building our brothers in the congregation."

A SECOND ANNEX IS ADDED

In 1973, when the annex at Louviers was dedicated, it was assumed it would care for the needs in France until the "great tribulation." Even when a plot of land was purchased at Incarville (a village just outside Louviers) in 1974, there was no thought of building an annex, only a Kingdom Hall. But the rapid growth of the Kingdom work soon changed our thinking. Finally, on April 2, 1976, a permit was received for erecting a two-

story building with 2,483 square meters (26,727 ft.²) of floor space.

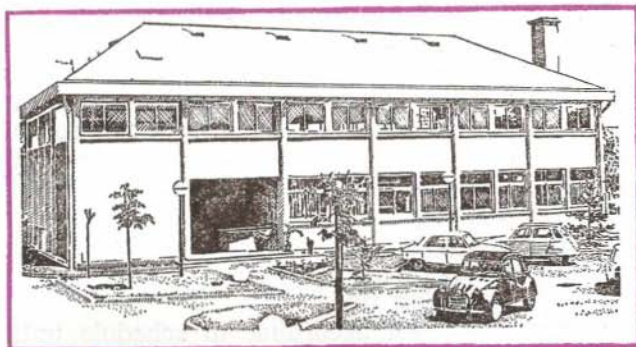
A circular was sent out to every congregation in France asking for volunteers who had some building experience. Since the brothers were not very satisfied with the prefabricated building at Louviers, they decided to construct the new building themselves. A brother with building experience offered to coordinate the work as part of a building committee, supervised by the Branch Committee and the Governing Body.

Work progressed according to schedule until December 8, 1976, when the Governing Body suggested putting in a third floor, which would add 10 extra bedrooms. Thus, our architect drew up new plans, which were submitted for examination. We were granted 390 square meters (4,198 ft.²) more space, bringing the total floor space for the building to 2,873 square meters (30,925 ft.²).

Finally, the new annex was completed, and on Saturday, May 13, 1978, Brother Raymond Franz of the Governing Body gave the dedication talk in French. The Incarville annex now houses the shipping department and also accommodates Bethel brothers who work at Louviers. Almost all the 34 bedrooms on the second and third floors are already occupied. At present the French Bethel family totals 136 members, of which 46 are at Boulogne and 90 at Louviers-Incarville.

NEW PUBLICATIONS IN ABUNDANCE

In recent years a tremendous amount of translation work has been accomplished, providing in the French language practically all the publications that are in English. Starting in 1976, even the yearly *Watch Tower Publications Index* has been published in French, it being the first lan-



1978

Second Bethel annex, built in Incarville, Normandy

guage to have this *Index*, other than English. Also, the cassette recordings of Bible books have been produced in French, with over 12,000 sets of the book of John being distributed in 28 countries.

THE "VICTORIOUS FAITH" CONVENTIONS

Since Colombes Stadium had already been filled to maximum capacity in 1973, the branch committee organized six "Victorious Faith" assemblies throughout France for 1978. And it was a good thing they did, for the total attendance reached 83,419—23,178 more than in 1973!

On Friday morning, delegates shared their victorious faith by witnessing to the local inhabitants. A young woman in Paris welcomed Jehovah's Witnesses, saying: "Your visit is providential. I absolutely needed to talk to someone. I have already had three nervous breakdowns and even wanted to commit suicide." She then confided to the Witnesses that she felt the need to draw

nearer to God. Arrangements were made for her to come along with a friend to the public talk.

PROSPECTS FOR GREATER GROWTH

People are still responding to the Kingdom message. This is reflected by the fact that in attendance at the 1979 Memorial in France were 133,584 persons. This is 9,810 more than were present just two years before. And the fact that this Memorial attendance is double the approximately 67,000 Kingdom publishers in France shows the tremendous prospect for continued growth of the Kingdom work.

Already by the end of 1978 there were 1,188 congregations, 60 circuits and six districts in France. There are 28 congregations in Paris itself, and 116 in the area immediately around Paris, making a total of 144. There are 17 congregations in Marseilles, 11 in Lyons, 10 in Nice, 8 in Nantes, 8 in Toulouse, 7 in Grenoble, 7 in Mulhouse, 5 in Caen, and many other French towns have two or three congregations.

When we reflect on how the work has grown from just a handful of courageous and resolute Christians at the dawn of the century, we can truly see that Jehovah has blessed his people. We do hope that this account will encourage all those reading it to forge ahead in Jehovah's service, keeping in mind that the events set forth herein all go to prove the truthfulness of the apostle Paul's words: "For we can do nothing against the truth, but only for the truth."—2 Cor. 13:8.



Lebanon and Syria

Home of the seafaring Phoenicians. The land of the renowned and majestic cedar trees of Bible times. That was Lebanon in centuries past.

Today Lebanon is a small modern republic occupying a strip of coastland along the eastern Mediterranean. The country covers only about 4,000 square miles (10,400 km²), being some 120 miles (190 km) long and 30 to 35 miles (48-56 km) wide. This coastal country is blessed with banana groves, citrus orchards and various other semitropical crops. Towering above this fruitful scene beside the blue Mediterranean are the impressive mountains of Lebanon, rising to their highest altitude of over 10,000 feet (3,000 m). Behind these mountains lies the fertile Rift Valley, and beyond that the Anti-Lebanon Mountains, dominated by lofty Mount Hermon at their southern end.

Arabic is the language spoken in Lebanon's many villages nestled in the mountains and valleys. It is the predominant language of the cities as well, but there one also often hears French and English or some other European language.

Religiously speaking, there is quite a variety in the small country of Lebanon. The largest "Christian" community is that of the Maronite Catholics. Then comes the Greek Orthodox religion, and there are a number of Protestant organizations represented too. These "Christian" groups make up a little over half of the nation's population of 3,650,000. The rest belong to various Moslem sects. This makes Lebanon the only Arab country with a "Christian" majority.

By nature the Lebanese people are very friendly and easy to talk to. They are always willing to discuss matters of life, even with total strangers. In fact, they find it quite natural to talk about religion.

Syria, bordering Lebanon on the east and north, is a much larger country. With some 71,500 square miles (185,200 km²) of land, it is more than 17 times as large as Lebanon. However, most of the land is a huge desert. Thus most of Syria's population of about 8,375,000—nearly 90 percent of whom are Moslems—live relatively close to the Mediterranean coast and not far from the borders of Lebanon. The country's official language is Arabic, which is spoken by about 80 percent of the population.

BIBLE TRUTH COMES TO TRIPOLI

Many Lebanese have emigrated to other lands to seek their fortunes. If successful in business, often they return to their native land to retire with what they have gained abroad. Back in 1921, Michel Aboud, one of these successful Lebanese people, returned home with something far more valuable than material riches. During his stay in the United States of America, he had become one of the Bible Students, as Jehovah's Witnesses were then known. Aboud was very anxious to share his new Bible knowledge with sincere Lebanese people.

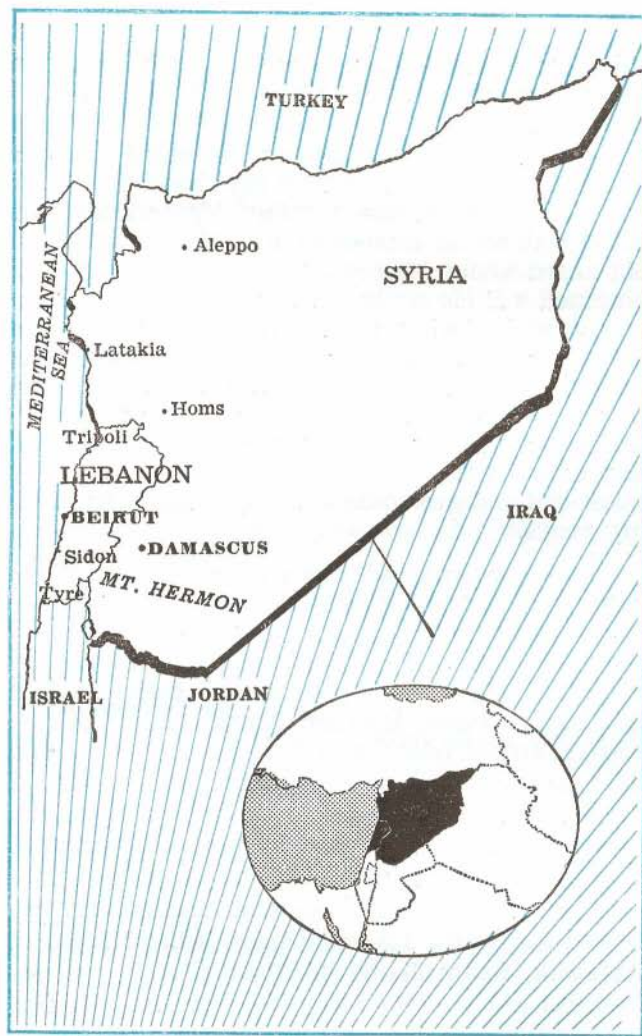
Returning to his native Tripoli in north Lebanon, Michel Aboud rented a house next to a doctor's clinic. Dr. Hanna Shammas, who practiced dentistry in that clinic, had also been to the United States and had returned to Lebanon. He was the first dentist of his kind in Tripoli and enjoyed a very high reputation. He was also a religious man

who often entertained bishops and other prominent clergymen in his home.

Brother Aboud quickly became acquainted with Dr. Shammas, having conversations with him almost daily when passing the clinic. A notable topic of conversation was the Trinity doctrine. One day the doctor called in a Protestant clergyman, who sought to prove the Trinity to be true by using John 1:1, stressing the words "*the Word was God.*" Brother Aboud explained that, according to the original Greek text, this should read "*the Word was a god.*" He pointed out that this is also how the text reads in the Orthodox translation of the Bible in Arabic.

The clergyman would not believe this and, though the discussion had continued until about 10:30 p.m., it was suggested that they go to the residence of the bishop of the Orthodox Church and get a look at this Orthodox translation of John 1:1. The Protestant clergyman did not want to do this, but Dr. Shammas insisted. He had his horses hitched to his carriage and away they went in the middle of the night. The bishop was very surprised that such prominent people should be knocking at his door at that hour. He was no less surprised to find out that they wanted to see what his Bible said at John 1:1. Of course, the point made by Brother Aboud was proved and the Protestant clergyman was silenced.

Dr. Shammas was elated to have this point clarified. From then on he made rapid progress in his study of the Scriptures, and by 1922 he had joined Brother Aboud in the true faith. His stand as one of the Bible Students caused no little stir. Later, Brother Shammas' clinic was used as the first Christian meeting place in Tripoli. About



Lebanon and Syria

this time, a well-known professor at the American school for boys named Ibrahim Atiyeh became interested in the truth.

Another local professor, by the name of Saba Boutary, was encouraged by his Greek Orthodox community to become a priest. He declined, but continued to be interested in religious matters. He heard about Michel Aboud, located him, and obtained a Bible study aid from him. He read the whole book during the night and wanted more literature. In a short time Professor Boutary was convinced that he had found the truth. His home was used for the very first Memorial of Christ's death ever held by the Bible Students in Lebanon. His wife baked the unleavened bread for that Memorial and was to do so many times in succeeding years.

OTHERS ACCEPT THE TRUTH

Outside of Tripoli much good work also was done in spreading the good news. The fertile section of the Koura, with its rolling hills covered with lush olive trees, proved also to be fruitful spiritually. There Brother Aboud visited Nicola Najjar, an old friend and business associate, who lived in the village of Bishmazin. At first Nicola was surprised to hear his friend talking about the Bible. But in a short time he was sharing with Brother Aboud in preaching the good news.

Others in the Koura district also quickly accepted the truth. These included Salim Karam of Aafasdik, Salim Jehha of Bishmazin, as well as Ibrahim Salem, Dib Shaw and Dib Andraws of nearby Bterram. Soon these sincere brothers were telling others the things they had learned from God's Word.

NEW USE FOR A GAMBLING HALL

It was the early 1920's. And the most common means of travel? Either on foot or by donkey. Every Sunday the few zealous Christian witnesses of Jehovah traveled to various villages to spread Bible truth. One of these villages was Amioun.

In Amioun the Kingdom proclaimers found a good-hearted man named Abdullah Salem. He made his living by maintaining a gambling hall in an upper room of his house. He also lent money to gamblers at very high interest, as much as 100 percent for 70 days. A priest borrowed a large sum of money from him at high interest, and the debt was not paid for some time. Finally the priest owed Abdullah Salem four times the amount of the original loan. There was a disagreement about how this should be settled and the matter was taken to court.

While the court case was in progress, Abdullah Salem met the Bible Students, was greatly impressed with their message, and made rapid progress in his study of the Bible. Though the court decided the case in his favor, Abdullah Salem took a Christian brother along and told the clergyman that he did not expect to collect the whole amount. The cleric also was told that he could pay whatever he thought he should pay. Needless to say, the priest was amazed. As matters turned out, the clergyman paid a certain amount and the matter was settled.

Soon the gambling hall was converted into a meeting place of the Bible Students, and about 12 to 15 persons met there. At times the clergy and various fanatical persons opposed to the Kingdom message sent children to make a great deal of noise outside the home to disturb the Christian

meetings. As Abdullah Salem remarked: "We used to gamble and do other dishonest things here and nobody came to make any noise or to interrupt what we were doing. But now that we study the Bible, God's Word, they come to disturb us. How strange for people who claim to be Christians to act like that!"

PERSEVERANCE DESPITE DIFFICULTIES

In those days, the roads of the Koura district were poor and there were dangers to face while traveling through the mountains on horseback or by donkey. Even so, the few faithful witnesses of Jehovah in that area persevered in declaring the Kingdom message. Often they would ride 15 or 20 miles (24 or 32 km), sometimes through rain and bad weather, to attend a Christian meeting or to take the message of truth to yet another village. Mtanous Daaboul recalls riding about 15 miles along with four other persons to attend the Memorial in a neighboring village.

Brother Daaboul's house was used as a sort of broadcasting station during those early years. Loudspeakers were mounted on the roof and brothers would give public talks that could be heard by nearly everyone in the village. Many were happy to listen, though others were opposed and made problems for Brother Daaboul.

Since witnessing was not then organized as it is today, each Kingdom proclaimer took advantage of various opportunities to give a witness. For instance, Brother Salim Karam once was invited to a wedding in a distant village. During the church ceremony he waited outside, intending to present our literature to the people coming out of the church. As he was doing this, the bishop who had officiated came outside. He held out his hand

for Brother Karam to kiss, as was the custom among religious people. Brother Karam grasped the hand and gave it a firm shake, saying, "Hello. How are you?"

Not having received the honor he expected, the bishop began to shout at Brother Karam and curse him. Even the gathering crowd sought to calm the bishop. When he saw that the people were not altogether supporting him, he did begin to calm down. The bishop also remembered that he had recently received a sizable contribution from Brother Karam's father. So, evidently he did not think it wise to be harsh with the son of a man who contributed so well. Finally he left, and Brother Karam continued distributing Bible literature. As a result of the interest stimulated by this incident, Karam's book bag soon was empty.

A VISITOR FROM BROOKLYN BETHEL!

In 1925 the little band of God's people in north Lebanon were excited indeed to learn that Brother A. H. Macmillan from Brooklyn Bethel would visit Lebanon. When they met his boat in Beirut, they inquired of his plans. He had only two days to spend with them, he said, and would be giving a lecture at the American University in Beirut, as well as a talk at the university in Damascus in neighboring Syria. As matters turned out, however, the American University—a religious school—would not allow Brother Macmillan to give a lecture there. Now what would he do?

A delegation came from Tripoli in an old Ford car, requesting that Brother Macmillan come to the Koura district to give a lecture. Since Brother Macmillan did not know whether he would be permitted to lecture in Damascus, he said: "I'll go with you."

So, in that old car, they traveled the 56 miles (90 km) over the rough roads from Beirut to the Koura district. There the brothers got together an audience of about 200 people from the villages around Amioun. Brother Macmillan delivered the famous lecture "Millions Now Living Will Never Die," with Brother Ibrahim Atiyeh translating. How happy the brothers were to hear this fine talk and to observe the interest shown by so many people! Truly, this was a fine stimulus for the Kingdom work in north Lebanon.

Before Brother Macmillan departed, a baptism was held. Among those baptized were Dr. Hanna Shammass and Salim Karam. Brother Karam, of small stature, was sensitive to cold weather. So he was wearing a number of layers of clothing. Before donning baptism apparel, he began to peel off these various garments, and quite a pile of clothing grew alongside him. Brother Macmillan, watching him become thinner and thinner, remarked jocularly: "Well, brother, do you think there is going to be anything left of you to baptize?" Immediately after the baptism, Brother Macmillan left for Beirut, arriving there just as the departure of his ship was being announced.

A CASE OF MISTAKEN IDENTITY

Revolutionary bands of men were active during the 1920's. Their objective? To bring about the uniting of Syria and Lebanon into one country. One morning while witnessing in a distant village near the Syrian border, Brothers Karam, Aboud, Atiyeh, Boutary and Najib Fayad were arrested by the local gendarmes. Why? Because they were thought to be revolutionaries. News spread rapidly and people began to gather at the gendarme

post to see who had been arrested. They kept coming until more than 200 were on hand.

Seeing a fine opportunity to give a witness, Brother Ibrahim Atiyeh began addressing the crowd and answering their questions. The gendarmes looked on without interfering, and a fine witness was given. Eventually, the brothers were released, but only after they had placed some Christian literature with the gendarmes. So this case of mistaken identity proved to be a memorable field experience.

THE WORK SPREADS

One winter evening in 1926, Brothers Hanna Shammass and Ibrahim Atiyeh traveled south from Tripoli along the storm-tossed Mediterranean coast to the fishing village of Enfé. There they visited the fleshly brother of George Shakhashiri. (George, now 88 years of age, is a member of the Brooklyn Bethel family.) At that time two young men, Jiryis Awijan and Salim Demaa, took an enthusiastic part in the Bible discussion. They made rapid spiritual progress. In a few months Christian meetings were being held on Sundays in the home of Brother Awijan, with persons coming from surrounding towns.

During the 1920's it became the custom of the Lebanese brothers to meet somewhere once a month on a Sunday and to spend the whole day discussing spiritual matters. Since they did not have very much literature in the Arabic language, Brother Atiyeh, who was well versed in English and Arabic, translated material from *The Watch Tower* and other publications. These articles would be read during the monthly meeting. Thus, spiritual food was being received at the proper time.—Matt. 24:45-47.



Brother Macmillan (center), visiting from Brooklyn headquarters, baptized Salim Karam (left) and Hanna Shammas, a Tripoli dentist

The people of the village of Enfé were friendly. Therefore, at times it was possible to give public talks there. On one such occasion the public lecture was to be given at a local school. Most of the people were in church that day, and the pastor urged them not to attend the public talk. But because of his publicity nearly everyone who had gone to church came to hear the Bible lecture in the afternoon. Thereafter, many of them continued attending Christian meetings.

GETTING BETTER ORGANIZED FOR SERVICE

During the 1920's Jehovah's people in Lebanon were not well organized as far as Bible studies and

preaching activities were concerned. Yet, people were learning the truth. They were accepting it and were preaching it to others. Truly, "the hand of Jehovah was with them."—Acts 11:19-21.

By the early 1930's the Christian meetings in Dr. Shammas' clinic in Tripoli were being attended by about 10 persons. Sundays were used for field service in the more distant territories. The brothers went into Syria as far as Damascus, and even to Aleppo in the north, witnessing at many points in between.

During the 1930's, matters improved somewhat organizationally. In 1936 Yousef Rahhal, a Lebanese brother who had lived in the United States for many years, came back to Lebanon for a visit. He did much to help the brothers get organized for field service, explaining how the work should be done and joining them in the preaching activity to show them how to do it. At the village of Amioun, in north Lebanon, he gave a talk to about 20 brothers, explaining the necessity of preaching from house to house. Immediately after that talk the brothers went out in pairs to preach from door to door, applying what they had heard.

KINGDOM TRUTH RINGS OUT!

Though Brother Rahhal had to return to America, he visited Lebanon once again in 1937. He brought back with him sound equipment, phonograph records and a couple of phonographs. But Lebanon and Syria were so large and Jehovah's Witnesses were few in number! So Brother Rahhal purchased a 1931 Ford car and mounted sound equipment on it. With this the brothers made many trips throughout Lebanon and Syria, carrying the Kingdom message to remote areas.

The brothers would drive to a village and park the car on a hill. After a brief introduction, a recorded Bible talk was presented. The sound would carry for several miles over the hilltops in those quiet areas. The people were astounded. In fact, some were frightened, believing that God was speaking to them from out of the heavens when they heard the booming voice on the recording.

The people would gather around the sound car after the initial broadcast. Then the sound could be turned down a bit and a Bible lecture was given to the assembled group. After the talk, there was a question-and-answer session and distribution of literature to those assembled. In this way much seed was sown in areas that could not often be reached with the Kingdom message.

Frequently, of course, the clergy were incensed at the Witnesses for coming around to preach to their flocks. They tried to stop the brothers and frighten them away. Najib Salem recalls this experience in the Syrian village of Baid:

"The priest was having lunch in front of his house when we set up our sound equipment at the edge of the village. When he heard the sound of the loudspeaker, he left his dinner on the table, grabbed his big walking stick and ran through the crowds that were collecting around the sound car, waving the stick angrily at them and threatening them like someone who had lost his mind. When he reached the microphone where the talk was being given he shouted, 'Stop! I command you to stop!' But we observed that many of the villagers were taking sides with us and were not willing to do the priest's bidding. So, we continued to broadcast. The priest became so violent that some people picked him up and carried him back to his house, where

they deposited him again at the dinner table. Many were glad to hear the message, but many others were just happy to see such an unusual thing as a sound car that could make such loud noises. In any case, they received the message of God's kingdom."

SOME PROBLEMS ALONG THE WAY

When using the sound car, the brothers worked as a team, with one operating the equipment and two others distributing the literature throughout the crowds that gathered around the car in the villages. On one such trip Brothers Rahhal, Najib Salem and Jirjis Awijan were working together. Roads were not very good in those days, and when it came to crossing streams and rivers, rarely was there a bridge. The brothers just had to ford the stream the best they could.

On one occasion, the three brothers entered a stream in their car and, about halfway across, the water proved to be deeper than they had anticipated. So, the motor stopped. It was a remote and wild section and all three of them were in the car stranded in the middle of the river. Now what was to be done?

The brothers decided to make themselves look as much like farmers as possible, since they were in an agricultural area. Hence, they removed rings, ties and other apparel that gave them a prosperous foreign appearance. Then Brother Awijan climbed out of the car and waded through the stream, making his way to a village on a hill some distance away. Water-soaked and mud-spattered, he spoke to the villagers, telling them that the car was stalled in the middle of the river. Could they help them get it out? Gladly. Taking ropes and other equipment, they set off with the



Kingdom truth was brought to remote areas by means of this sound car

brother and soon had the car pulled out of the water. Before departing, the brothers were able to do some witnessing to the kind villagers who had rescued them.

Such experiences were very common. The brothers continued to use the old car, even traveling as far as Aleppo in Syria to spread the Kingdom message. On the return trip, however, the car became so dilapidated that they were stranded in a small town and decided to sell the vehicle and continue their trip by other means. So, that ended the service of the 1931 Ford that Brother Rahhal had bought. But it did not end the brothers' troubles.

That night they stopped in a small town where they found accommodations in an old house. To reach the room acquired for the night, it was necessary to climb a ladder. On the way up,

Brother Rahhal fell from about the twelfth rung and broke his leg. He was transported back to Tripoli with difficulty, and there he spent two months convalescing. Nonetheless, the brothers were happy indeed to bear whatever was necessary in order to spread the good news.

Other cars were obtained later and were used to carry the Kingdom message throughout the territory. Often brothers would leave their homes in Tripoli at three or four o'clock in the morning on Sunday and would return late at night. But what joy they had! They spent many happy hours preaching the good news to people who had never before heard it.

BIBLE MEETINGS IN THOSE DAYS

Christian meetings held during the 1930's were orderly, but there was much to be desired. Mostly they amounted to discussions, with questions and comments being offered by whoever wanted to speak. Sometimes the brothers had the Society's publications to study, but Arabic literature was not always available. So, someone would translate an article from English and this would be read and discussed.

There was no training of speakers; hence, few were qualified to address an audience. Despite this, the brothers did their best. To illustrate: In 1935 Brother Jiryis Awijan's grandmother died in his hometown of Enfé. Since the family wanted Brother Awijan to care for the burial arrangements, and since none of them objected to a Witness funeral, he sent word to a qualified brother in Tripoli, asking him to come and give the funeral talk. For some reason, however, the brother never came.

Therefore, Brother Awijan, who had never

given a talk before an audience in his entire life, stood up to give the funeral sermon. Needless to say, it was a dramatic experience for him. But he handled the situation well, telling the assembled group about death and the resurrection. When his father died during the following year, Brother Awijan did much better in giving the funeral discourse.

Since very few brothers were qualified to give lectures, the phonograph was put to use. Rather than listening to public talks, a number of families would gather in a home and play recorded Bible lectures on the phonograph. Afterward there would be discussions and often some literature could be placed with interested ones.

AN EXAMPLE OF ZEALOUS SERVICE

Zealous and enthusiastic people continued to learn God's truth. For example, in 1936 a young man in Beirut named Jamil Sfeir was contacted by the Witnesses at his place of business. Within a short time he was associating with God's people, but he encountered strong opposition. His uncle was a Maronite (Catholic) priest.

The priest, along with other members of the family, sought to pressure Jamil into breaking his association with Jehovah's Witnesses. His parents went so far as to inform him that if he persisted in his activity with the Witnesses they no longer would consider him their son; they would view him as dead. His response? He offered them his condolences for their dead son. Shortly thereafter, in April of 1936, he began to preach the good news from house to house. This stirred up such a controversy among his relatives that they made efforts to have him put in an insane asylum, but without success.

Jamil now decided to go back to his village and share the good news with friends and relatives there. He covered the village thoroughly with the Kingdom message, distributing a great quantity of literature. Later, the bishop, who had his headquarters in that village, instructed the priest to collect the literature from the people and burn it. Some persons gave their publications to the priest, but others said they were free to do what they wanted to in their own homes and would not give up the literature. The bishop was so infuriated by this development that he issued a decree of excommunication against Jamil, thereby saving him the trouble of resigning from the church. This happened before Brother Sfeir was baptized in 1937.

Back in Beirut, Jamil Sfeir continued to preach the good news. One day a bootmaker and his son, who had shown interest in Bible truth, invited him to accompany them to the nearby village of Aley while they visited relatives. Jamil took along a phonograph, some records and a quantity of literature. A very enjoyable evening followed, with a group listening attentively to the recorded lectures.

A priest of the Hadad family was present and surprisingly was enjoying the message. When the records were finished, he placed half a gold pound on the phonograph. But Jamil told him: "The phonograph neither eats nor drinks and so it does not need contributions. But I would be very glad to give you some books for the money you have contributed." To this the priest agreed. Years later the grandchildren of this priest became Jehovah's Witnesses.

About mid-1937 Brother Sfeir became a pioneer or full-time preacher. A few months later, while

preaching in an apartment building, he was invited into an apartment where he talked to a group of people, including a Jesuit priest. The discussion became quite heated and Jamil decided it was time to leave. As he stepped out the door, the householder gave him a strong push, causing him to fall down the stairs and break his leg. The householder went back inside and left him lying on the stairs. Jamil began to shout to people passing by on the street a couple of floors below. However, the householder shouted from the balcony of his apartment, telling the people not to render aid, saying that the man calling out was crazy.

Finally, someone passed by who knew Brother Sfeir personally, and he was taken to a hospital run by priests and nuns. Only after they had set his leg did they learn that he was one of Jehovah's Witnesses. Then they began to ridicule and threaten him, also saying that if he would abandon Jehovah's Witnesses they would put him in a first-class room without charge. Of course, these threats and the offer had no effect. Finally they expelled him from the hospital. He was obliged to hop up the road for about 200 yards (180 m) on one foot before he could get a car to take him back home.

Brother Sfeir also encountered priestly opposition at a later time when he was working among the villages in Lebanese territory. Though this was a solid Maronite Catholic area, people were willing to listen to the Kingdom message. But when the priests learned of his presence, they began to make trouble, forcing him to keep moving from village to village. Thus, much Kingdom seed was sown in these territories.

Often people living in these areas had no cash.

Consequently, Brother Sfeir would find himself carrying home much grain, cheese, eggs and other things that he had accepted in exchange for literature. In these remote areas there were many robber bands who preyed on people as they traveled along the road. None of these bands ever molested Brother Sfeir, however. In fact, he used to preach to them. One of these men—a very fierce person feared even by the other robbers—listened to the Kingdom message like a little child.

MAKING CHANGES TO PLEASE GOD

About 1937, in the little village of Kfarhaboo, there lived a sincere Orthodox man named Louis Yazbek. He heard about Jehovah's Witnesses, searched for them, and found them at the clinic of Dr. Shammas in Tripoli. Of course, the Witnesses gladly gave him spiritual assistance.

Interestingly, in one of the discussions, the subject of smoking came up. It was explained to Louis that it was not appropriate for a servant of God to be a smoker. Louis, who rapidly was becoming a Witness, took his cigarettes and other smoking materials out of his pocket, threw them out the window and never again smoked. This well illustrates how those who love Jehovah can and do make changes in their lives in order to please their heavenly Father.

For many years Brother Louis Yazbek was the only witness of Jehovah in the village of Kfarhaboo. However, through perseverance and aid from other brothers, interest was stimulated in that village. Today there is a zealous little congregation covering that territory, and Brother Yazbek is still among them.

During 1937 Brother Petros Lagakos, a Greek-

American, arrived in Lebanon, having served zealously in other countries of the Middle East. After working the Syrian towns of Eskandurun, Aleppo, Antioch and Latakia he and his wife came to Beirut, Lebanon. There were many Greeks living there and Brother and Sister Lagakos preached diligently among them.

One day Sister Lagakos knocked at the door of a Mrs. Katina Nicolaidou, who was very zealous for the traditions of the Orthodox Church. In fact, upon entering the home, Sister Lagakos observed an entire wall covered with images and pictures of religious saints, with a small oil lamp burning in front of them. It was the woman's custom to kneel and pray before these objects daily.

In time, with the help of the Lagakos couple, Mrs. Nicolaidou advanced in knowledge of the Scriptures. Soon it was time to decide what to do about all her religious pictures and images. "Maybe I could just send them over to the church," she reasoned.

"No," was the answer given by Brother Lagakos.

"Well, I have many religious friends; I will just give them away to my friends," she responded.

But Brother Lagakos said: "That would not be the thing to do either."

"Well," she asked, "what should I do with them?"

"Why, they should be treated as God's Word instructed," it was explained. "They should be broken in pieces and done away with."

This was quite a decision for the woman to make after so many years of praying before these "holy" objects. But she made that decision, and the pictures and images were broken up to be

used for fuel in heating the family bath.—2 Ki. 18:1-5.

When Mrs. Nicolaidou made the big change in her life and became a Witness, the Greek community was determined to ruin her sewing business. They all vowed that they would never have any more of their sewing done by her, and they kept their word. But, undaunted, this new sister soon found that she had more customers than ever before. And she also had a precious relationship with Jehovah God! Moreover, she and her husband raised their daughters in the truth.

PRESSING ON DURING THE WAR YEARS

In the early 1940's the world was at war. Conditions were upset and no one was sure what the future held in store. It was not easy for Lebanese Witnesses to maintain contact with the Watch Tower Society's headquarters in Brooklyn, New York, and preaching materials were not plentiful in those years. Many people in Lebanon feared that Adolf Hitler and his Nazi party would take over the Middle East. On the other hand, some of the clergy and others sided openly with Hitler and his policies. They made strong threats about what they would do to Jehovah's Witnesses as soon as Hitler took over. But, of course, Hitler did not win the war, and Jehovah's Witnesses continued preaching the good news throughout the war years.

Though the sound car and phonograph were not used as extensively during those years, the brothers made maps and systematically worked from house to house in the cities and villages that they could reach. Also, in the early 1940's small assemblies were held in Tripoli and near there. These

strengthened the brothers spiritually. They were saddened, of course, when they heard of the death of Brother J. F. Rutherford in 1942. But they were determined to keep on preaching the good news, knowing that the work of Jehovah's organization would not come to a halt.

Lebanon and Syria were French mandate territories prior to World War II. After France fell to the Nazis in June 1940, French authorities in Lebanon decided to side with the French regime, called the Vichy government, that had collaborated with Germany. Consequently, the tide of war eventually rolled over Lebanon and in 1941 battles were fought between the Vichy forces and British, Australian and other troops. Beirut and some other places experienced air raids and bombings. Eventually, Lebanon was taken over by British and Australian troops. In spite of the warfare, however, it was possible for the brothers to keep preaching the good news.

PREACHING CONTINUES IN SYRIA

In Syria freedom to preach steadily lessened. Even so, Jehovah continued to bless his people there. During 1942 Christian meetings were organized on a regular basis in Damascus under the direction of Adib Kafoony. Often the brothers were arrested and their literature confiscated. As usual, the clergy made false accusations against Jehovah's people.

For instance, clergymen falsely charged Jehovah's Witnesses with being Communists. Nevertheless, the work of witnessing spread into various parts of Syria. For example, pioneers Jamil Sfeir and Brother and Sister Lagakos were able to cover Aleppo thoroughly. At the village Amar El

Hussan in northern Syria a small congregation eventually was formed.

AID FROM ABROAD

During World War II contact had been lost to a great extent with the Society's headquarters in Brooklyn. Consequently, during the 1945 service year only one Kingdom publisher had reported field activity in Lebanon. However, by the end of the 1946 service year a peak of 72 publishers was reached. Why such an upsurge?

This increase was largely because of getting things better organized, since actually there had been more than one preacher of the good news in 1945. The first graduates of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead to arrive in Lebanon, Brother and Sister Afif Farah, were a great help. Brother Farah assisted the brothers in conducting meetings more in line with arrangements that existed elsewhere, and in organizing the field-service work. He visited scattered publishers and arranged for them to report their preaching activity regularly.

In the spring of 1947 another event took place that greatly assisted the work in Lebanon. This was the visit of the Society's president, N. H. Knorr, and his secretary, M. G. Henschel. During their round-the-world trip they came to Lebanon, where the brothers eagerly awaited their arrival. Hundreds attended assemblies held during the visit and were upbuilt spiritually through the talks the brothers gave. It was arranged for Gilead graduate Afif Farah to travel to different parts of Lebanon and Syria to organize groups of Witnesses into congregations. Accordingly, by the end of the 1947 service year, seven congregations were functioning throughout Syria and Lebanon.

"SOLDIERS OF THE FAITH"?

Among those listening to Brother Knorr's discourse in Tripoli were five fleshly brothers. Some of them had come rather reluctantly because, until recently, they had been very much opposed to Jehovah's Witnesses. They were Greek Orthodox by religion and Greek by nationality, although having lived in Lebanon all their lives. They had been members of a local Orthodox religious society called the "Soldiers of the Faith," which had been organized specifically to oppose Jehovah's Witnesses.

The head of this religious society was a priest named Stephen. He was well known as a violent man who always carried a pistol on his hip and was known to use it on a number of occasions. Among the most ardent supporters of this religious society were the six Stavro brothers.

This society planned a variety of ways to oppose Jehovah's Witnesses. Some extremists suggested threatening the Witnesses with violence, killing some of them, if necessary, in order to frighten the others. However, one member of the society, a lawyer, suggested that it would be best to fight the Witnesses with their own weapons. Since the "Soldiers of the Faith" belonged to the Greek Orthodox Church and thought they had the true religion, why not study the Bible and prove Jehovah's Witnesses wrong? Many agreed to this, among them the Stavro brothers.

However, one day Brother Michel Aboud walked into the tailor shop of Costi Stavro and began talking to him about the Bible. To Stavro's surprise, what he was hearing was quite reasonable and in harmony with the Scriptures. As matters turned out, Brother Aboud called on him repeated-

ly and eventually a Bible study was started with him. This greatly angered Costi's fleshly brothers. Strong discussions ensued, violent ones at that, reaching the point of the brothers even throwing chairs at one another. But Costi continued to study.

Now the other Stavros had a meeting with the priest. 'How are we going to refute these Jehovah's Witnesses?' they wanted to know. The priest showed them John 1:1 and said it could be used to prove the Witnesses wrong, since they did not believe in the Trinity. When the Stavros met with Brother Aboud they found that their one scripture was far from enough. This man could refer to many, many Bible texts to support his point. So they spent more time listening than talking. Within a few months four more of the Stavro men accepted Bible truth as taught by Jehovah's Witnesses.

The priest was astounded. How could they join the enemy? Soon the priest was at their house trying to talk them out of it. "Jehovah's Witnesses are Jews," he said falsely. "You are Greeks, so must certainly remain Orthodox. You are the pillars of our Greek Orthodox community here."

These strong efforts of the priest seemed strange. For when the Stavros used to hold wild parties, with no little drinking and the like, the priest had never corrected them. Now, when they had begun to study the Bible, he was rebuking them for it. So they told him that he had come much too late. They were Jehovah's Witnesses and intended to remain witnesses of Jehovah God.

The Stavro brothers continued to grow in knowledge and eventually their mother and sister accepted the truth. The youngest one became a

pioneer. Later he was privileged to attend Gilead School and thereafter serve in Syria, as well as Baghdad, Iraq, and Teheran, Iran. Having to leave there, he continued as a missionary in Lebanon until he took up circuit work. Two of his brothers were privileged to serve as congregational overseers.

BRANCH OFFICE ESTABLISHED

Brother Afif Farah did fine work in Lebanon, but, for personal reasons, he found it necessary to leave the country after about a year. Nevertheless, the Society soon sent other missionaries to Lebanon. In the spring of 1949 Gilead graduates Don Tuttle and John Chimiklis arrived. They were assigned to Beirut, where they rented a home for use as a missionary home in the Ras Beirut section of the city.

In September of 1949 a branch office of the Watch Tower Society was opened up in Beirut, with Don Tuttle serving as the branch servant. This office looked after the work of Jehovah's Witnesses in Lebanon, as well as in Syria and Jordan. By the end of the 1949 service year a peak of 172 publishers were serving in five congregations in Lebanon. Syria had three congregations with a peak of 20 publishers of the Kingdom.

NEW MISSIONARIES MAKE THEIR MARK

A number of brothers from the Middle East attended the international assembly at Yankee Stadium in New York city during 1950. They brought back many points that helped them in the service to Jehovah's praise. However, more help was on the way.

In January of 1951 four more Gilead graduates arrived to do missionary work in Beirut, and in October more arrived. They were Keith and Joyce Chew, Olive Turner and Doreen Warburton, and Edna Stackhouse, along with Anne and Gwen Beavor. All were assigned to Tripoli temporarily.

The congregation in Tripoli still met in Brother Shammass' clinic, with 30 to 50 people present regularly. Since Eastern customs still prevailed in that congregation, few brothers brought their wives and daughters to the meetings. The women who did attend always sat in the back row, never in among the men. Of course, the missionaries were unaware of this custom. So, the brother and his wife sat up toward the front and the single missionary girls sat wherever they could find a seat. This created no little stir among the brothers.

During a discussion after the meeting the missionary brother kindly explained that they were all brothers and sisters. So he did not see why it would be necessary to have segregation. Surely a brother could sit next to his wife any place he liked. Well, in a short time wives and daughters no longer stayed at home and questioned their family heads about the meetings after they had returned. Rather, they were attending the meetings personally.

The same Eastern custom extended to field service. Rarely if ever did sisters go from house to house before the missionaries arrived. But those missionary girls were out there knocking on doors every day and soon they were taking local sisters along with them. What joy they all had! Soon the brothers were very happy to see the progress of their wives and daughters, and noticed the won-

derful difference it made in their spirit and attitude around the home.

ON TO SIDON AND TYRE

Eventually it was possible to locate a suitable missionary home in Tripoli with a Kingdom Hall attached. Meeting attendance grew and soon the Hall was full. In time that one congregation became four. By the summer of 1953 such progress had been made that it seemed advisable to move the missionaries to other territory. Two of them were assigned to ancient Sidon.

Sidon's rolling hills and many orange and lemon orchards made it a delightful assignment for Sisters Olive Turner and Doreen Warburton. Much of their work was done in the old part of the city, with its covered streets and small entranceways. In the rainy season this was a good section to work because they could keep dry when walking along the streets. Too, the people were surprised to see two English girls moving about through those small streets, knocking on doors and talking to people about God's Word. The populace treated them with respect and the girls felt safer there than most people do walking down the streets of Western cities today.

Twenty-five miles (40 km) south of Sidon is the little town of Tyre. Here is where King Hiram once ruled. Tyre was the maritime mistress of the ancient world, building such distant trade cities as Carthage. Alexander the Great conquered Tyre by building a land bridge out to it, since the city of his time was on an island just off the coast. Today the little town of Tyre is built on the ruins of those ancient cities, part of it right on the causeway constructed by Alexander. It was to this town that Sisters Turner and Warburton were

sent, to witness among its predominantly Moslem population. Bible studies were conducted, Moslems were helped to learn the truth, and they progressed well. Later, some became Kingdom proclaimers with the congregation at Sidon.

On the road between Tyre and Sidon there were large camps where Palestinian refugees had been living since the Arab-Israeli war of 1948. Their lot in life was a difficult one, but they were humble and the missionary sisters were able to move among them freely. Some of them accepted Bible studies and two families became especially interested in the truth. Later, they moved to the vicinity of Beirut and could associate with Christian congregations there.

The missionary sisters were pleased indeed to note the open hospitality to strangers that was displayed by people in the southern part of Lebanon. No matter how long a visitor stays, even though he be a stranger, the householder will offer him refreshments. In their conversations these people are willing to tell you who they are, what their work is, how many children they have, how much rent they pay for their house, and the like. And never do they ask the visitor what his business is. They just make him welcome, with the thought in mind that when he is ready to state his business he will do so. Till then he is a welcome guest. In fact, some desert Arabs carry this so far that if a person spends two days and nights without stating his business that is soon enough to ask him politely to state his reason for coming. Of course, our missionary sisters never stayed that long at any of the houses. And they were glad to give the important reason for their presence.

Sometimes the people are just interested in being visited by such pleasant individuals. Yet, many learned the truth in Sidon and later moved to other territories and countries, where they continued to serve Jehovah. The little congregation in Sidon still continues to press on with the work of declaring the good news.

ON TO DAMASCUS IN SYRIA

Toward the end of December 1951 Lebanese Witnesses again were visited by N. H. Knorr and M. G. Henschel. A peak of 401 Kingdom proclaimers reported field service during that service year in Lebanon and 82 in Syria. A permit was obtained to hold a public meeting, and the brothers were overjoyed to have an attendance of 793 people at Brother Knorr's public discourse given at the large lecture hall at the American University of Beirut. What a wonderful occasion it was!

During this visit it was decided that it would be timely to send missionaries to Damascus in Syria. A missionary home was located and four missionaries began witnessing as inconspicuously as they could. The small Damascus congregation of 10 to 12 publishers was meeting at the home of Adib Kafroony. Soon, the missionaries were growing in their ability to use the Arabic language.

Only a few months passed before the authorities noticed the work of the missionaries and began to have them followed. A short time later an official from the Security Department came to the missionary home and informed the brothers that they would have to leave the country within 24 hours. So the short period of missionary work in Damascus ended. However, the brothers of that city con-

tinued their service to Jehovah's praise, and later local special pioneers were sent to help them.

In April 1952 Brother Atif Naous, a special pioneer, was assigned to the Syrian town of Homs. There were a few zealous brothers there, but the territory was large and they needed help. His experience was much like that of the missionaries in Damascus. After only two months Brother Naous was arrested, put in prison and held under military law for 42 days. During the first five days and nights, he was given very little food and he slept on a narrow wooden bench in a cell with only a barred window and nothing to keep out the cold. Had it not been for the pity of a prison guard who regularly gave his overcoat to Brother Naous at about midnight, he might have fared much worse. As a result of the treatment he received, his health was permanently affected. But he was still able to continue serving Jehovah as a special pioneer.

BLESSINGS IN THE FACE OF PERSECUTION

Shortly after returning to Lebanon from Damascus, two of the missionaries, a married couple, were assigned to Zahle, a town in the Rift Valley about 32 miles (51 km) north of historic Mount Hermon. It was a predominantly Catholic town, with a good-sized Greek Orthodox community and not many Moslems. Jehovah's Witnesses had never established a congregation there, but the few Kingdom publishers in the town were helped to make progress in the truth as they worked with the missionaries. Meetings were held regularly, with about eight or ten persons present.

Most of Zahle received a witness in about six months. In the spring, two more missionaries, Olive Turner and Doreen Warburton, joined the

others in that territory. By then the clergy had gotten the people stirred up against Jehovah's Witnesses. There were no other foreigners in the town and so the missionaries were very conspicuous as they went about in field service each day. It was their daily experience to be shouted at and mocked. Often stones were thrown at them, some of which found their mark. One sister had her glasses knocked off by a stone, and there were numerous bruises and a few cuts. But the missionaries escaped serious injury and were able to keep on visiting the people's homes for two years. A small congregation was formed and the meetings were held at the missionary home, with from 10 to 15 persons in attendance each week.

The missionaries found it necessary to avoid the schools because nearly all of them were church-operated. Both the teachers and the clergymen in the schools would incite the children to stone Jehovah's Witnesses wherever they found them. If the missionaries happened to be walking by a school during recess, they were sure to be barraged with a shower of stones coming out of the playground.

The situation was much the same in surrounding villages. Once the three missionary women, accompanied by three local sisters, were preaching in a nearby village. After witnessing about an hour, two of the sisters were warned by a householder that the priest was getting the school-children organized to stone them. By the time these sisters found the others, the priest had gotten the children together and it was not possible for the sisters to leave by means of the road in the usual manner. So they cut across the fields in an attempt to avoid the mob. However, they

were pursued. Fortunately, they found some men working in the fields. When the sisters appealed to them for help, they said that they would stop the children. But in order to do so, they had to throw stones even at their own children who had been so worked up by the priest.

As the missionaries walked along the streets of Zahle, the favorite "catcall" came to be *Shuhoud Yahwah* ("Jehovah's Witnesses"). Nevertheless, the residents had learned who Jehovah was and they realized he had witnesses in that village.

Incidentally, years later, at a Christian assembly in Beirut, the missionaries who had served in Zahle were approached by a young man. He introduced himself and said: 'You probably don't remember me, but I remember you. I was among those children who used to throw stones at you when you were in Zahle.' This former Moslem had become their Christian brother, having dedicated his life to Jehovah God.

A PRIEST AND HIS BELL

Mainly in the summertime, Kingdom proclaimers would travel by bus from Tripoli to various isolated villages. Leaving early on Sunday morning, they took along a lunch and spent the whole day in field service, returning home in the evening, tired but very happy. Kingdom songs were sung and Bible games were played as the bus was traveling along to and from these territories.

Sometimes special tactics had to be used in these areas. Groups would go into a specially difficult village and plan to be back at the bus by a certain time. In this way the villages could be witnessed to quickly before the clergy or someone else

stirred up trouble for the publishers. One such village was visited on the occasion of a rich man's funeral. Since all the clergymen of the village were at the funeral, the brothers covered the entire village while that gathering was in progress. By the time the priests got back to their normal business of the day, the brothers had completed calling at all the homes and were on their way.

On another occasion, however, a village priest learned that Jehovah's Witnesses were in the area and began to hunt for them. By the time he came to the house where the presiding overseer was giving a witness he was furious indeed. The priest began cursing and using bad language, addressing his remarks mostly to the people listening to the brother. The people tried to calm the priest, but were unsuccessful. Finally, he shouted that anyone not leaving that house immediately would be excommunicated from the church. Only about half the people left. At that, the priest became even more furious. He ran to the church and began ringing the bell. Surely, he thought, this would gather all the villagers. He was going to teach these 30 Jehovah's Witnesses a lesson!

The bus was parked at the village square and the publishers had begun to gather there after calling at all the homes. When the presiding overseer arrived, the bell-ringing had gathered together quite a large crowd and the priest was still ringing it with all his fury. People kept coming and the publishers mingled among them, giving a witness. Why, it was such a good opportunity to preach that the presiding overseer stood on a rock beside the bus, got the attention of everyone, and delivered an abbreviated public discourse! The villagers were quite amused that their priest was

still ringing his bell and gathering people to listen to a lecture that was being given by one of Jehovah's Witnesses. They even apologized for their priest's anger and vile speech. So, outrageous opposition had turned into quite a unique occasion when a priest and his church bell unwittingly summoned people to a Christian Bible talk.

THE MAGAZINES BANNED

By 1955 the peak number of Kingdom proclaimers in Lebanon had grown to 501. An outstanding feature of that year was the special distribution of the booklet *Christendom or Christianity—Which One Is "the Light of the World"?* This booklet was translated into Arabic and 10,000 copies were printed in Lebanon. What a fine witness it gave! But, of course, it stirred up the clergy and they made renewed efforts against the preaching work.

Each year thousands of copies of *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* were being placed in the hands of the Lebanese people. In fact, during 1956, 1,106 new subscriptions were obtained by Kingdom publishers. Many magazines fell into the hands of businessmen who would leave copies in their offices and waiting rooms. Why, every time a clergyman walked into an office he would find an *Awake!* or a *Watchtower* lying on the table! Clerics were not happy about that.

By the summer of 1956 the clergy were successful in getting both *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* banned in Lebanon. This deprived the Witnesses of these fine instruments to use in field service, but they were thankful that spiritual food brought by these publications still continued to get to the brothers and sisters. Even at present the magazines are banned in Lebanon despite many efforts

to have the ban removed. Yet, Jehovah sees to it that the Witnesses receive their spiritual food.

TIME FOR SOME ADJUSTMENTS

During September of 1955 Brother and Sister Lee Plummer came to Lebanon as Gilead School graduates and missionaries. In May of the following year Brother Plummer was appointed as branch overseer. Arrangements also were made to reorganize the circuit work and various features of our preaching activity. For instance, Lebanese publishers had used the Bible very little in their house-to-house service. But this was encouraged through the circuit overseers, and soon Kingdom proclaimers all over the country were going from house to house with the Bible in hand.

During the winter of 1956-1957 Brothers N. H. Knorr and F. W. Franz, along with the zone overseer, Filip Hoffmann, visited Lebanon. This was a fine occasion for spiritual upbuilding. An assembly was held, and both Brothers Knorr and Franz were able to offer fine counsel and encouragement to those in attendance.

In 1958, however, much trouble arose in Lebanon, and this interfered greatly with theocratic activities. Early in the spring a circuit assembly was planned in Tripoli. But while preparations were under way a revolution broke out. Eventually many areas were ruled by revolutionaries, as they called themselves, who ran their own little governmental organization independently of the Federal government. Many difficulties were encountered by the brothers in these areas. Some were arrested by these revolutionaries. Usually the brothers were released when these men found out who they were. Jehovah's Witnesses had be-

come well known as neutrals as far as political affairs were concerned, and this was a protection to them during that time of trouble.—John 15:19.

The year 1958 was notable for the large Divine Will International Assembly of Jehovah's Witnesses in New York city. In Lebanon the airport from which the conventioners were to depart was surrounded by government troops and was under siege. However, at departure time air traffic was normal, and the missionaries and others got away safely.

Jehovah's servants who remained in Lebanon during that time of trouble had to make adjustments in their field service. There was a curfew in most of the main towns, and a person was not able to be out except for a few hours in the afternoon. Even then, often there were dangers because of gunfire and bombs exploding in the populated areas. Beirut, the capital, especially was a troubled spot in the country, with heavy fighting between government and revolutionary forces. Several of the brothers were wounded by stray bullets, but happily not one of them was killed during the whole affair.

Eventually, the United States Marines landed to keep the government from being overthrown. This calmed things down to a great extent. After some months, matters were settled between the government and the revolutionaries to the reasonable satisfaction of both parties. So peace returned to Lebanon. It was a shaky peace, however.

Nevertheless, Jehovah's people kept right on preaching. Once again they were able to work openly from house to house, discussing the peaceful Kingdom message. The people were more willing to listen than they had been before the time

of trouble. By November of 1958 all the missionaries were back in the country, again happily sharing in the Kingdom-preaching work with their Lebanese fellow believers. By 1960 a peak of 608 Kingdom witnesses were serving with 15 congregations in Lebanon.

FURTHER PROGRESS IN LEBANON

Back in 1954, two missionaries—Anne and Gwen Beavor—had begun witnessing in the community of some 60 to 80 thousand Armenians living in Beirut. They did fine work for some time. Then, in the winter of 1957-1958, an Armenian sister, Sona Haidostian, began serving among the Armenians there. Progress was good, and in February 1959 the first Armenian congregation was formed in Beirut. Later, Sona was joined by her parents, and the work continued to move ahead. By 1971 there were two Armenian congregations.

Brother Lee Plummer had been serving as the branch overseer of Lebanon since May 1956. But for personal reasons he found it necessary to relinquish this privilege of service. So, Brother Afif Fayad became the branch overseer as of January 1962. By then there were 17 congregations in Lebanon and two in Syria. But in January 1965 Brother Fayad no longer was able to take care of the branch responsibilities. So, another brother, who had recently completed the 10-month course at Gilead School in the United States, was assigned that privilege of service.

ON TO ALEPPO IN SYRIA

In 1962 Sona Haidostian was assigned to another Armenian territory in Aleppo, Syria. At that time there were about 100 Kingdom pub-

lishers in all Syria. Sona had some fleshly relatives who were not Witnesses living in Aleppo, and within a short time several of them accepted the Kingdom message. Sister Haidostian's father and mother joined her in Aleppo, and in 1966 a congregation of 25 Kingdom proclaimers was formed. By then the number of Witnesses in Syria had increased to about 120.

The Haidostians remained in Aleppo as a missionary unit for another two years, doing excellent work. However, Sona began to experience ill health, and after quite some time it was determined that she had multiple sclerosis. Hence, the family decided that they would return to the United States.

However, just a few days before the family was about to leave Syria, another Arab-Israeli war broke out in June 1967. The police in Aleppo had been watching the brothers for some time, at the instigation of the clergy, who had made false charges against them. So, the authorities came to the house of the Haidostian family, and they, along with two local brothers, were arrested. Brother Haidostian was over 70 years of age and his wife was in her late 60's, while Sona was in very poor health. Despite this, they were put in prison.

For the first few nights they had to sleep on the bare floor. Later, they were given a couple of blankets, one to sleep on and the other for covering. They were kept in prison for about five months, but they were not unhappy about their experience. Sona said that the doctor had told her that she must rest in order to make progress in overcoming her illness. In prison she could do nothing else. Brother Haidostian commented that

the stone floors were hard at first but got softer after a few weeks of sleeping on them. The family set a fine example of faithfulness for the new congregation in Aleppo.

After about six months the Haidostians were taken to Damascus. There they experienced more questioning. After a while, they were told they were being released immediately. They were taken to the Lebanese border, without having their passports returned and without being allowed to return to their home in Aleppo to get their belongings. But it was a happy occasion when they were met at the border by Christian brothers.

Over the years, freedom to carry on the Kingdom preaching in Syria has continued to be limited. But the brothers have not given up. They have been doing what they can to share the truth with others, and new ones keep on being added to the faith. In the mid-1970's peaks of over 200 Kingdom publishers were reached in Syria.

ADDED HARDSHIPS IN LEBANON

In May of 1968 Brother N. H. Knorr visited Lebanon and spoke to the overseers in the country. His fine talk encouraged them very much, and they were more determined than ever not to forget Jehovah's law, but to go on serving their God forever.

During the early 1970's hardships developed as a ban was placed on all of the Society's publications, and all the Kingdom Halls in the country were closed. But informal witnessing continued to produce good results. Accordingly, by 1971 there were 29 congregations and three isolated groups in Lebanon. Then the next five years—from 1971 to 1975—saw 600 more persons baptized in Lebanon! Indeed, sheeplike persons were continuing to

be found! There was a new peak of 1,882 proclaimers of the good news in March 1975, and these were organized into 46 congregations.

PERSEVERING DURING CIVIL WAR

In April 1975, armed conflict erupted in a suburb of Beirut. It continued to escalate in stages until the whole country was involved in civil war. The war went on for nearly two years, with the death toll eventually numbering into the tens of thousands. Many brothers' homes, businesses and other property were destroyed, three Witnesses were killed and an unknown number were injured.

One Witness died by sniper fire as she was hanging out her wash. And another, who ignored warnings not to leave the house where the Witnesses had gathered, was shot dead when he returned home. Other Witnesses were wounded by bullets and shrapnel, one by a bayonet. But gratefully such incidents were remarkably rare.

The religious aspect of the war has been felt very strongly, and it is perhaps the most frightening feature of the whole conflict. In areas where the Moslems predominated, professed Christians were taken from their homes in the middle of the night and many of them were never seen again. Moslems received the same treatment from professed Christians. But Jehovah's Witnesses are known to be different.

PEACEABLE WITH ALL

Jehovah's Witnesses have always tried to deal with everyone alike, whether they are nominal Christians or Moslems, applying the Bible counsel: "If possible, as far as it depends upon you, be peaceable with all men." (Rom. 12:18) On one occasion members of the Catholic Maronite

League visited a Witness in an effort to persuade him and his children to join the vigilantes and to contribute 300 Lebanese pounds for ammunition.

The Witness told them: "I cannot share in anything to do with war. And besides your war isn't God's. In fact, God soon is to bring to an end all men with their guns and usher in a peaceful system under Christ's rule." Later, when conditions in the area improved, the Witness noted that his firm and neutral position had won the respect of his neighbors.

This neutral stand has repeatedly worked to the benefit of Jehovah's Witnesses. Just being able to prove that one was a Witness often was lifesaving. One brother produced the card he always carried refusing blood transfusion, and his life was spared. Similarly, another brother escaped execution by

Witnesses walking through a war-torn Beirut suburb during a cease-fire



repeating a student talk that he had earlier given in the Theocratic School to convince a group of would-be executioners that he was a Witness. There were many instances where the Christian conduct of Jehovah's Witnesses saved their lives.

For another example, one evening a Witness offered a ride home to a Moslem fellow worker. They were stopped by armed men who were going to kill the Witness because he was a Christian. But his Moslem companion pleaded for his life, explaining: "This man is different from the others who call themselves Christians. He is neutral. He doesn't involve himself in politics."

When the gunmen refused to listen, the Moslem man said: "If you won't leave us alone, you will have to kill both of us." Because of his sincere plea, they both were set free.

Another Witness relates that he had no food in his house, and because of the armed men everywhere it wasn't safe to venture outside. But then a young Moslem boy from a nearby village appeared at his home. "My parents," he said, "sent you this bread. And whatever else you need, please tell us. We are ready to get it for you."

REPUTATION OF WITNESSES SPREADS

In the north of the country there is a "Christian" village that is surrounded by Moslem villages. There are two congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses in this village. When the Moslems attacked the village and came to the house where the Witnesses had gathered, the gunmen were told: "We are Jehovah's Witnesses. We have no weapons and we are completely neutral. Here are our houses, do to them as you see fit." The gunmen were surprised and promised not to harm them.

In another village, even the Catholic priest had armed himself with a machine gun. Extreme pressure was put on the Witnesses to give up their neutral position and also to arm themselves for an anticipated attack. Because they would not, one rightist leader said: "When this war is over we will turn our attention against you!" Yet what happened when the attack began on January 20, 1976?

Regular defenders of the village fled. The priest discarded his weapon and hid. Other villagers who had armed themselves sought to hide their weapons; still others threw theirs away. One rightist leader tried to give his gun to a Witness, saying: "It's known that Jehovah's Witnesses don't have weapons."

Also, many persons sought refuge in the homes of Witnesses. In one such home over 60 persons gathered! After one of the Witnesses offered prayer asking Jehovah's protection, a daughter of the political leader remarked: "Now I feel at ease, for Jehovah is the God who can protect." Though armed men entered the home and stole some valuables, no one was harmed.

In another Witness home about 50 persons gathered. The presiding overseer of Jehovah's Witnesses there reports: "I heard a Moslem neighbor tell the armed men, 'Don't touch this house. They are Bible students, different from the others.' Later, though, gunmen did appear. But I had opened all the doors purposely. So when they called I answered quickly, inviting them in. I spoke kindly and unhesitatingly, explaining that we were Jehovah's Witnesses. Finding no weapons, they left." All the homes in the neighborhood were looted except this one.

In the northern city of Tripoli clashes between the fighting factions were extremely violent. Hundreds of shops and homes were looted and burned. It was particularly dangerous for Christians to go outside, so one Moslem neighbor told a Witness: "These people don't know that you're Jehovah's Witnesses. So tell us what you need and we will get it for you."

HEADQUARTERS FAMILY IN DANGER

At the beginning of the civil war the branch headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses was in a Moslem section of Beirut. Before moving from there to a safer place outside the city, the headquarters family had some scary experiences. On February 6, 1976, one family member described conditions this way:

"For about a month we didn't even bother to go to bed in our rooms. When it was time to sleep we put mattresses in the little entranceway, as it was the safest room in the house. We all curled up there and slept in our clothes, since we never knew what the night would bring. When that phase of the fighting passed, the rightists tried to get control of strategic buildings on our side of town.

"Then it got down to real street fighting, from street to street and from house to house. It looked like the rightists would come up the street in front of us and the leftists behind us, so we decided to evacuate. However, there was no way to get completely out of the area, but there were safer houses, so we went to the home of a Witness about a mile (1.6 km) up the street from us. We stayed there for two weeks and then we were able to go back home."

One night was especially harrowing for the headquarters family. It was a night that the main commercial center of Beirut was set aflame, and the section around the branch home was also marked for destruction. Witnesses at the branch give some of the details:

"About 10:30 p.m. we were startled by a burst of machine-gun fire right in front of the house. As two members of our family looked from the veranda, they saw five or six gunmen come out of the hotel directly in front of us—then, suddenly, a loud explosion. What a racket when seven floors of glass windows and doors came shattering down in front of us!

"Then shop after shop was set afire, and gunmen drove back and forth in front of the shops adding fuel to the flames, making sure they burned. They shot at anyone who tried to put the fires out. The night sky was red from all the blazes.

"As we were watching the fires from one of the back bedrooms, we were rocked by another explosion. We rushed to the front of the house and saw that a bomb had exploded in a grocery shop in our building. Our own building was on fire! What worried us most was a gas-storage room in the building. If the fire reached it, it would probably bring down our building and the one next to us. All the neighbors on the street cooperated and we got the fire out before it did much damage."

CHRISTIAN MEETINGS AND PREACHING

Through all the violence Kingdom interests continued to be looked after. Congregations held their meetings in small groups or in large ones, depending on conditions in an area at a given time. Even circuit and district conventions were held! It was not at all unusual to hear the sound of nearby

gunfire and exploding shells during meetings. On occasion the speaker had to pause for a time until the din of battle subsided sufficiently so he could make himself heard.

The brothers kept on in house-to-house witnessing wherever possible, and much informal presentation of the good news continued to be done. Many responded favorably to the message, while others were so preoccupied with just staying alive and out of harm's way that it was difficult to penetrate their thoughts with the Kingdom hope.

PRESENT SITUATION AND THE FUTURE

Four-and-a-half years have passed since the beginning of the civil war, and still matters are not settled. There is an Arab peace-keeping army in most of Lebanon and a United Nations force in the southern part of the country. In parts of the country violent clashes and sustained artillery barrages still occur. In December 1978 machine-gun fire and shell explosions were still echoing through the area where the branch office is located. During one 12-day period in the fall of 1978, the branch family had to spend eight days in a shelter in the lower part of the building while some 200 shells and rockets landed in the immediate vicinity. It has been much worse for brothers living in other areas.

What the political and social future of this troubled land will be is uncertain. But it is certain that Jehovah will continue to accomplish the preaching of the good news in Lebanon and Syria until the "great tribulation" ushers in his peaceful new system of things. The brothers in these countries pray that Jehovah will continue to use them in that work until it is finished.

Israel and Jordan

The land that is now the modern nations of Israel and Jordan is of special interest to Jehovah's Witnesses. This is because most of the people spoken about in the Bible lived here, and the events in which they were involved occurred here. Yet our interest is not only in what happened to ancient servants of Jehovah who lived in this land; it is also in connection with the activities of Jehovah's modern-day Witnesses. What has been the situation with this land and its people in the years since Jesus Christ and his apostles walked and taught here?

In Jesus' day and afterward the land was under the control of the Romans, and was called Palestine.* As a result of conflicts with the Romans, most of the Jews fled Palestine by the early part of the second century. The land, however, remained a part of the Roman Empire until the 600's, with most of its inhabitants professing Christianity. Then the Arabs swept over Palestine, and the land came under Moslem rule.

Eventually, beginning in 1096, crusades were organized by professed Christians from Europe to seize the land from the "infidels." In that first crusade, Jerusalem was captured in 1099. However, the city was taken back from the "Christians" by the Moslem ruler Saladin in 1187. More crusades followed, and the land was drenched with blood as barbarous atrocities and cruelties were inflicted on countless thousands while Moslems

* The name "Palestine" was derived indirectly from "Philistia," a name originally limited to the coast territory occupied by the Philistines.

and professed Christians fought to control Palestine.

In 1517 the Ottoman Turks took possession of Palestine and held it for 400 years. During the latter part of the 1800's Jews from Europe began to migrate to Palestine. By 1914, out of the land's total population of nearly 700,000, about 85,000 were Jews. Then, in 1917, during World War I, the British forces under General Allenby defeated the Turks and ended their long rule of Palestine.

In the years following World War I a new political state east of the Jordan River came into existence. It was called the Hashemite Kingdom of Transjordan and more recently was known as the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Yet most of Palestine was a mandated territory of Britain. On May 14, 1948, however, the new nation of Israel came into existence, and the next day war broke out between Israel and surrounding Arab nations. In this war most of Palestine west of the Jordan River came under the control of Israel, although about 2,165 square miles (5,607 km²) of this territory became part of Jordan.

From around the world Jewish refugees kept coming to Israel. By 1951 over 600,000 had arrived in the land. By the early 1970's over 3,000,000 Jews lived in Israel, forming a majority of the population. Thus what a few years ago had been an underpopulated and neglected corner of the earth has become a well-developed, very fruitful land.

Large cities and varied industries have transformed Israel into a modern community, yet the old remains in evidence outside the modern cities. Scenes from Bible days are still visible in the villages as womenfolk carry water jars and other

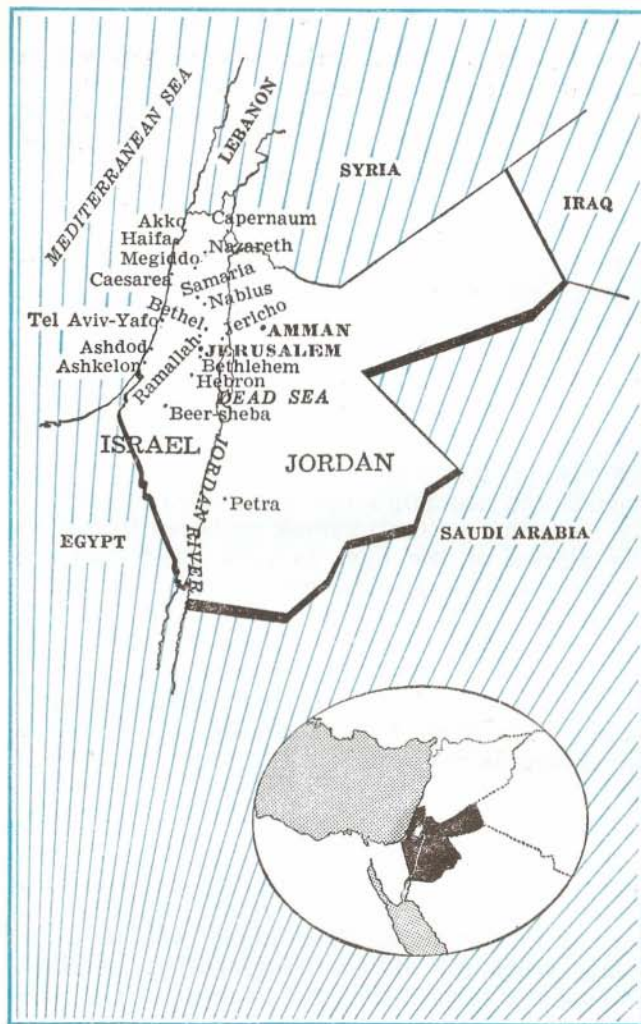
goods on their heads, donkeys carry produce to the market, camels are traded, goats are shorn for their black hair, bullocks tread the corn to thresh it or pull the single-furrow plow. It is a land of contrasts where the old meets the new and East meets West.

Orthodox Judaism has reasserted itself and, in large measure, controls the way of life of the modern nation of Israel, even as Judaism did in Jesus' day. It does this through its religious leaders and by participation in the coalition government. But God's true Witnesses have also reappeared in this land in modern times. How did their activities begin? What fruit have they borne?

RAMALLAH—WHERE IT BEGAN

The Watch Tower Society's first president, Charles T. Russell, visited Palestine in 1891 as part of an extensive world tour. But apparently the first seeds of Bible truth to take root in the country were sown in 1913. In that pre-World War I year a young man who was interested in the truth moved from New York to his family's hometown, Ramallah, located about 10 miles (16 km) north of Jerusalem. Ramallah is close to the remains of the ancient city of Bethel, one of the cities most frequently mentioned in the Bible.

Interestingly, before this young man, Hanna Hechmi, left the States he was warned that war was coming, and that he would be walking right into difficulties. True to the warning, World War I broke out the following year, and the Turkish government controlling the area immediately began drafting young men. Hanna fled back to New York, leaving by ship from the port of Haifa. However, he left a full set of the *Studies in the Scrip-*



Israel and Jordan

tures at the home of the Kadura family, where he had been staying in Ramallah.

After the war six young Arabic Witnesses, who were associating with the congregation in Brooklyn, New York, moved back to their hometown of Ramallah. Thus a congregation was organized there in 1920. That year the Society's second president, Joseph F. Rutherford, visited them. A branch office was established, and during his visit Brother Rutherford gave public lectures to capacity audiences in the Ramallah Municipality Hall. He also spoke to a sizable crowd in Jerusalem.

At first the young Arabic Witnesses did not organize house-to-house preaching. Yet they were zealous in witnessing to others; they visited friends and acquaintances, and talked at the coffee shops where the menfolk gathered to discuss the affairs of the day. In time, they met the Kaduras and encouraged the father of the family to read the books that young Hanna had left with him before he returned to the United States. Mr. Kadura became a strong brother in the congregation, and, in turn, he interested a relative of his, a Mr. Saah. Four of Brother Saah's granddaughters became full-time pioneer publishers, and others in his family also became Witnesses.

Another neighbor of Brother Kadura, Awwad Faramand, responded to the good news. Awwad and his wife rendered many years of faithful Kingdom service. Their daughter served as a special pioneer, and their home was used for many years for all the congregation meetings. During the early 1920's the Ramallah Congregation reached about 12 publishers, all men.

From Ramallah the small group of brothers would organize witnessing campaigns into the sur-

rounding territory. They went to Jerusalem, Nazareth, Haifa and many other places, preaching the truth in the same territory that Jesus and his apostles had covered in ancient times. Having very little Bible literature in Arabic, the brothers took the initiative and published in the Arabic language a tract explaining basic Bible truths. Later it was pointed out to them that before publishing such material it should be checked first with the Brooklyn headquarters office, but the tract bore fruit.

A tract that was left in Haifa found its way into the hands of an interested person from Beirut, Lebanon, who was visiting in Haifa. This man wrote the brothers in Ramallah, and arrangements were made for his interest to be followed up by Brother Michel Aboud in Lebanon. Thus the energetic efforts of the brothers to spread their faith enjoyed success.

The only Arabic study textbook those early Witnesses had was *The Divine Plan of the Ages*. However, during those years the Watch Tower Society's motion-picture, slide and sound production, the "Photo-Drama of Creation," was presented with Arabic commentary to large audiences in Palestine. Some brothers from New York city brought the showing to the Middle East, where it was put to good use. Many Arabic copies of the *Photo-Drama Scenario*, a book containing pictures along with a summary of the script, were placed with people throughout the land.

In those early days travel across borders was difficult. However, on occasion brothers from Ramallah traveled to Beirut and Tripoli in Lebanon to attend assemblies and to have association with other Witnesses.



Israel—a land of contrasts where the old meets the new

From about 1924 *The Watchtower* was published in Arabic, and the magazine was studied in congregational meetings held in private homes. During the second world war the supply of *Watchtowers* was cut off, but meetings continued to be held using publications already on hand.

ANOTHER FOOTHOLD—HAIFA

If you look at a map of Israel, you will note where the Carmel mountain range juts out into the Mediterranean Sea, forming a pointed irregularity on the otherwise straight coastline. Haifa is located right on that point. Unknown to the Ramallah brothers, a small group began to be built up here in the mid-1930's. This came about as a result of the witnessing of Brother David Farjini, who transferred to Haifa temporarily from Egypt in connection with his work with the railway company.

David rented a room in Haifa from Ibrahim Shehadi, an ardent Catholic. Of course, the subject of religion came up in their discussions, and Brother Farjini was quick to expose the falsity of certain church doctrines and practices. The first discussion was so interesting that Ibrahim stayed home to talk instead of attending the regular church service as was his custom. He took literature in Arabic to read. From then on Bible discussions were held every day, and Bible reading went on till midnight, night after night.

The first one that Ibrahim approached with his newfound faith was his brother, Atallah. Though reluctant to get involved, due to his love of religious tradition, he eventually investigated. Troubled with poor eyesight, Atallah picked up a large-print Bible at a 'give-away' price and started to check for himself what his brother had been telling him. He began to see that it was the truth. Matthew chapter 23 made an especially strong impression, as he noted that what it says applied to the clergy with whom he was acquainted.

In due course, David Farjini completed his work in Haifa and returned home to Egypt, leaving

Ibrahim and Atallah on their own. Pressure and opposition that began to build up against them were prompted in part by their own outspokenness in criticizing the church. Ibrahim was a kerosine delivery man and wherever he entered a home and saw religious pictures or images he would write a scripture citation right on the picture. Then he would tell the housewife to have her husband look up the text when he got home from work. Nor were the brothers very tactful in dealing with their own families, and this contributed to the opposition they experienced.

For example, Atallah walked into his own home one day with a hammer and smashed every image and picture in sight. He did this without explanation or warning, much to the consternation of his wife and young children who just stood dumbfounded watching the performance. However, several of his children came into the truth, and today grandchildren of his are active Witnesses.

When the time came for Ibrahim's daughter to be confirmed in the church, he took the special dress that had been made for her and hid it on the roof of the house. The nuns, priest and even the bishop were told about this. Thus, the following Sunday morning the bishop himself declared a boycott on Ibrahim. In fear that, as a result, violence might be precipitated against the whole family, one of Ibrahim's brothers pleaded with the bishop to cancel the boycott decree.

"If he'll kiss my ring and cross, I'll cancel the decree," offered the bishop.

Ibrahim's reply was: "All right, if he'll let me discuss these matters from the Bible."

The bishop would not hear of it! "I'm a bishop!" was his response.

The boycott worked a hardship on Ibrahim, as all Catholic customers stopped buying kerosine from him. Efforts were also made to turn the local Moslem population against him. On one occasion a group of Moslem men angrily accused him of cursing Muhammad and threatened to kill Ibrahim on the spot. They said that the "Christians" had reported this to them.

"They lied," Ibrahim declared. "I spoke against their using images and pictures and their belief in a Trinity, so they lied to you to make trouble for me." Ibrahim's belief in one God thus saved his life.

As a result of the bishop's boycott decree, no one would speak with Ibrahim and Atallah, thus calling attention to their newfound faith. In due course, nearly all of Ibrahim's large family became Witnesses, and, in recent years, two of his sons and one of his daughters have tasted pioneer service.

Meanwhile, in the early 1940's, a small group of three or four met in Haifa each week for meetings in one home or another. Thus, right through the period of World War II, a tiny group continued to study and to preach enthusiastically to those around them. Occasionally brothers from Beirut visited them. By this means supplies of literature were received, and practical instructions were provided regarding carrying on the ministry. After World War II, supplies of literature came direct from Brooklyn, New York.

Soon after World War II, Brother Joseph Abdenmour returned to Haifa from Cuba, where he had become a Witness. Having wider experience in congregation matters, he was able to be a real help to the small group. Afterward, because of

business reasons, Joseph moved to Nablus, the location of the ancient Bible city of Shechem. There he remained an isolated publisher until his death in 1968.

One evening during their meeting shortly after the second world war, the little group of five or six Witnesses suddenly heard a loud voice in the street below preaching a recognizable Bible message in Arabic. Who could it be? They went down to investigate and found two Witnesses who had emigrated from Russia. They had with them a phonograph and some records in Arabic so as to get started preaching to the Arabic-speaking community in their new land. Unknowingly they had

Ibrahim (left) and Atallah Shehadi, fleshly brothers, pioneered the witnessing work in Haifa



chosen a street corner right at the location of the meetings, and had begun playing the records at the time of the meeting itself! These brothers were warmly welcomed to the small congregation.

THE MESSAGE REACHES TARSHIHA

The year was 1931. The place? The Palestinian village of Tarshiha located about 25 miles (40 km) north of Haifa, just south of the Lebanese border. Professor Khalil Kobrossi, a staunch Catholic, had been assigned by the government to teach Arabic and the Catholic religion in a school in this village. Upon arriving at his post, he observed that the Bible had been placed where students could read it. Immediately, Professor Kobrossi replaced it with a Catholic catechism, thinking this would do the students much more good.

In time, Professor Kobrossi came into possession of the book *The Divine Plan of the Ages*. When he read it he became incensed at its publishers because of what he considered their rudeness in speaking against Catholicism. Later, he obtained many of the Society's publications, reading some of them several times. His objective? One day he would contact these people and put them right!

From a tract published by the Society, Professor Kobrossi obtained the address of the Witnesses in Tripoli, Lebanon, and wrote his long-planned letter. He gave the brothers what might be called "a good pen-lashing." Surprisingly, he received a kind letter in reply, one that quoted many scriptures. This was the beginning of extensive correspondence with brothers in Lebanon.

In 1937 two brothers from Lebanon, along with Brother Ibrahim Shehadi from Haifa, visited Pro-

fessor Kobrossi. When the brothers left, he was thoroughly convinced that he had found the truth. Soon he was teaching it to his wife and telling his many friends about it. In 1939 he was able to travel to Tripoli where he was baptized.

Now opposition began in earnest against Brother Khalil Kobrossi. At least three attempts were made to murder him, and these became common knowledge. As Khalil himself said: "If it had not been for this opposition I would not have become so well known, and there would not have been so many opportunities to preach the good news to those whose curiosity was aroused or whose sense of fairness was stirred to show sympathy."

Correspondence with the brothers in Haifa and in Lebanon encouraged Khalil during this time of trial when he stood alone and isolated. His preaching in the village of Tarshiha bore some fruit, temporarily at least, when two or three others studied with him and sided with him. But finally the bishop influenced the local education authorities to transfer Khalil from Tarshiha, which was a Catholic stronghold, to the Moslem city of Hebron far to the south. This was in 1940.

A CENTER ESTABLISHED AT BEIT JALA

In Hebron Brother Kobrossi spoke about his faith to fellow teachers. Two years later, in 1942, he was transferred again, this time to a small town on the outskirts of Bethlehem called Beit Jala. This is only four or five miles (6.4 or 8 km) south of Jerusalem. There were greater opportunities to preach in Beit Jala, as the majority of people here are nominal Christians. Soon a congregation was established in this area, and it exists to this day.

The first person to embrace the truth here after a number of discussions was a young man named Salameh Assoussah. A friend of his also joined in the study. Salameh was baptized at an assembly in Tripoli, Lebanon. While witnessing in Jerusalem, Salameh met Farah Bakhit, who, after their first Bible discussion, promptly destroyed all his images and pictures. Farah later became congregation servant (presiding overseer), and endured imprisonment and other hardships because of his faithfulness.

Eventually, in that area, Salameh's father, mother, aunt, two brothers and three sisters all accepted the truth because of the fine example set by him. To this day they continue strong in the faith. Brother Kobrossi's wife also started associating actively. Thus the attendance grew to 12 or more each week. Their meetings were held in Brother Kobrossi's home, where they continued almost without a break for 26 years, from 1942 to 1968. Occasionally for meetings such as the Memorial, they got together with the group of brothers in Ramallah, a few miles to the north.

VISITORS FROM BROOKLYN

Shortly after the second world war, a few Jewish Witnesses emigrated from Europe to Bat Yam, a suburb of Tel Aviv-Yafo, Israel's largest city. It is located on the Mediterranean coast, some 65 miles (105 km) south of Haifa. A Watchtower study was established in the German language here. Thus, in 1947, largely independent of each other, groups of publishers were meeting regularly in Ramallah, Beit Jala, Haifa and Bat Yam. That year the Society's third president Nathan Knorr and his secretary Milton Henschel from

Brooklyn Bethel were able to visit and strengthen the brothers in Palestine. In the August 15, 1947, *Watchtower* they reported regarding their visit:

"We had thought there were about a dozen interested persons in Palestine, but at the meeting 40 had assembled from various parts of Palestine. There were some Arabic brethren there and brethren of Russian, Ukrainian and German nationality. They all understood either English or Arabic and we used an Arabic interpreter. We learned from them that there are actually 55 interested persons scattered throughout the land who are studying the Society's publications. Not all are publishers, but they believe the truth and they are being built up in the faith. It was a very joyful day. Speaking was done through an Arabic interpreter during the whole day and many questions were answered. Instructions as to organization were given and a brother was appointed to look after the Society's interests in Palestine. Arrangements were made to order a large quantity of literature and have a depot organization at Beit Jala. Inquiry was made as to which of the brethren could be best qualified to be company servants [presiding overseers] in Haifa, Ramallah, Beit Jala, and other villages where brethren are assembled together. Appointments were made, and it is hoped that the work of preaching the gospel in the land of Palestine will continue to expand. This visit with the brethren made our hearts very glad, for it was a joy to see here some very active individuals who travel to various parts of Palestine every week-end distributing the literature and trying to arouse interest. The day passed rapidly, and it was necessary to get back to Jerusalem before the 6:30 curfew."

Brother Khalil Kobrossi was given the responsibility of maintaining regular contacts with the various groups of Witnesses. He was assigned to

collect service reports, and to see that supplies of literature were distributed to the various groups according to their needs. Khalil made several trips to visit all the groups and scattered publishers during the year. Later in 1947, an assembly was held in Haifa, and brothers came to it from Ramallah, Beit Jala, and Bat Yam. About 80 were present and enjoyed happy fellowship. It was the first opportunity for many of them to meet fellow believers from other cities. But these arrangements were not to continue for long.

PALESTINE DISAPPEARS

The political scene was changing. In 1948, as a result of the Palestinian war between the Jews and the Arabs, the country was partitioned into two distinct lands. Palestine thus disappeared from the map. There were about 30 Kingdom publishers reporting field service at this time.

Part of Palestine now became the new nation of Israel, and part came under the control of Jordan. Thus the Witnesses living on the east side of the new border line—the groups in Ramallah and Beit Jala and individual publishers in Jerusalem and Jericho—were now in Transjordan, which, in 1950, came to be called simply Jordan. The rest of the Witnesses, in Haifa and Tel Aviv, lived within the boundaries of the new nation of Israel.

Apart from very brief visits, when border restrictions were lifted for two or three days at certain religious holidays, there was no direct contact possible between the Witnesses living in the two separate regions for nearly 20 years, or until 1967. In that year the war between the Israelis and Jordanians again changed the boundaries. The Jordanian territory west of the Jordan

River—the West Bank—was taken over by Israel. Thus the Witnesses in the West Bank congregations of Ramallah and Beit Jala became a part of Israel, explaining Israel's sudden growth from an average of 114 Kingdom publishers in 1967 to 153 in 1968. Also, due to this political development, the number of publishers in Jordan decreased from 53 in 1967 to 19 in 1968.

DEVELOPMENTS IN JORDAN

How have Jehovah's people fared in Jordan? Well, missionaries first arrived there in 1952 and a missionary home was established in Ramallah. The territory was well worked by the missionaries and others. Near Bethlehem the congregation also was doing very well. During a circuit assembly there in April 1952, a baptism was held. After the talk those to be baptized were taken to the Jordan River just below Jericho and were immersed in the same vicinity that some believe Jesus himself had been baptized by John. What a happy occasion!

When Brother Knorr was in Jordan during the winter of 1951-1952, it was decided that it would be good to send some relief supplies to our brothers in that land, many of whom were refugees after the Palestinian war of 1948. Eventually about 26 bundles of used clothing were shipped to Jordan and distributed among needy fellow believers. They appreciated these gifts very much. However, some people thought that this was a good material handout and began coming to our meetings and claiming to be Jehovah's Witnesses. Of course, they did not stay long when they discovered that God's people lay stress on spiritual matters and preaching the Kingdom message.

Observing the success of Jehovah's Witnesses,

the clergy of Christendom became quite incensed and began working very hard to get the government to expel Witness missionaries from Jordan. At first legal action prevented this. But the clergy persisted and in 1953 the missionaries were expelled. Since Jehovah's Witnesses had not been banned in Jordan, other missionaries were sent into the country, only to be expelled some months later.

Early in 1957, due to the persistent efforts of the clergy in Jordan, an official ban was placed on Jehovah's Witnesses and all our publications. This created new hardships for God's people. A number of their homes were searched and their literature was confiscated. Brother Farah Bakhit was sentenced to prison for one year for possessing some of the Society's literature. He also was dismissed from his position at the post office. This worked great hardship on Brother Bakhit's family, but his spiritual brothers cared well for his large family while he was in prison. Actually, during the next few years a number of brothers were arrested. Some were released after being questioned and threatened, while others were held for some time.

During this period, meetings had to be held secretly at different times and locations to the extent possible. However, the brothers never failed to get together in order to enjoy spiritual food and to encourage one another.—Heb. 10:24, 25.

In 1959, during a legal case in the Supreme Court of Jordan, we presented proof showing that we are not Zionists working as spies for Israel, as falsely charged. Also during that year a letter-writing campaign was carried out as a result of an article published in *Awake!* Thousands of let-

ters flooded the government offices, and King Hussein appointed a three-man committee to investigate Jehovah's Witnesses. The committee made the investigation, gave a clear report to the government, and in March 1960 a governmental decree was issued recognizing Jehovah's Witnesses as a religious community in Jordan having the right to practice their religion. This decree made it unnecessary for our court case to continue, though it had proved to be a great witness.

Things now began to change for Jehovah's people in Jordan. The ban was lifted on *The Watchtower* and our other publications. Kingdom Halls were opened and meetings and assemblies were held freely. How delighted the brothers were to have this freedom!

BRANCH OFFICE IN JORDAN ESTABLISHED

Brother and Sister Alfred Nussrallah arrived in Jordan as missionaries in March 1961. Their first assignment was Ramallah, but some months later they moved to the capital, Amman, where a missionary home was opened.

In February 1962, Brother M. G. Henschel visited Jordan. It was his recommendation that two other Gilead School graduates who had been serving in another Arab country be assigned to Jordan. So in March of that year an American brother and sister arrived in Amman. In September of 1962 a branch office of the Watch Tower Society was opened there.

HAPPINESS, THEN HARDSHIP AGAIN

In 1963 a delegation of Jehovah's people traveled around the world to attend the "Everlasting Good News" Assembly held in various cities. One of these gatherings was to be held in Jordan. But

the government refused to issue permission, saying that they feared for the safety of Jehovah's Witnesses if they were allowed to gather publicly. Though the assembly plans were canceled, it was possible to have our traveling fellow believers visit Jordan as tourists. They saw many Biblical sites—Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Hebron, Jericho, the Jordan River, the Dead Sea and Samaria, all of which at the time were part of Jordan. Some also went to Petra, the ancient Edomite citadel. What a happy time local Witnesses had with their fellow believers from other lands!

Though the government had granted freedom to Jehovah's people, the clergy were unrelenting in their opposition. Repeatedly they falsely charged God's people with being Zionists. Each time, the government would investigate and find the accusations to be false. But in 1963 the government again put a ban on all our literature. Then, on October 27, 1964, the Jordanian government canceled its recognition of Jehovah's Witnesses, and we no longer were considered a religious community in that country. Our Kingdom Halls were closed, much literature was confiscated, and problems again arose for God's people in that land. Once again, Christian meetings had to be held in small groups in private homes and at varying times.

The branch overseer had received another assignment of service in December of 1963. But the Nussrallahs were able to remain in the country until the winter of 1965, when they were forced to leave. Before that happened, however, a great witness was given in government circles. As a result of efforts made to regain recognition, many officials were contacted and attempts were made to

see the king, although this failed. An appeal was made to the High Court of Justice, but they refused to hear our case, saying that it was a security matter and out of their jurisdiction. Hence, the freedom that had been enjoyed by Jehovah's Witnesses in Jordan dimmed, missionaries left, the branch office was closed, and our work in Jordan once again was directed by the Society's Beirut office in Lebanon. Nevertheless, Jehovah's people in Jordan continued to serve Jehovah faithfully.

Following the 1967 war, which saw the congregations in Ramallah and Beit Jala change from being in Jordan to being considered part of Israel, there was just one congregation left in Jordan itself, at the capital, Amman. Despite many difficulties and various disturbances in the country, Jordanian witnesses of Jehovah have carried on in their service to God's praise.

DIFFICULT DAYS

The upheavals and changes in 1948, when the nation of Israel was born and war immediately broke out with surrounding Arab nations, brought difficult days for the Kingdom work in Israel. There was loss of communication with the Society's Brooklyn headquarters. Also, a number of Witnesses, along with other refugees, left the country.

A climate of extreme nationalism developed, which also has been a hindrance to our preaching work. Many Israelis were full of pride at their own accomplishments. Others attributed the achievements of the new Israeli government to God and to the fulfillment of Bible prophecies. On the other hand, many turned bitterly away from all belief in God in view of the European

holocaust in which six million Jews were massacred by the Nazis. To this day, an outstanding question in the mind of many Jews is: "If there is a God, how could he have permitted such a massacre to occur?" The failure of their religion to provide a satisfying answer has resulted in many also turning a deaf ear to our Christian message.

Further, the terrible example of the so-called Christian churches has caused difficulty for our preaching work. Christendom's anti-Semitic campaigns down through the ages, including support for the Nazi system, have created an extreme aversion to anything brought in the name of Christ Jesus or associated with the Christian Greek Scriptures. The term "missionary" has become really obnoxious to almost every Jewish person in the land. The brothers constantly have had to clarify that they are no part of Christendom, and that they are not missionaries in the way local people generally conceive of missionaries.

BEGINNING AGAIN NEAR TEL AVIV-YAFO

In February 1948, Sister Frieda Susser, who had learned the truth in Poland in 1942, arrived in Israel. In time, she made contact with the remaining ones of the small group that had been meeting in Bat Yam, near Tel Aviv-Yafo, for a regular *Watchtower* study. Soon the rest of these all left the country, leaving only one interested lady and Sister Susser. So for a while there was just one lone voice witnessing in the Tel Aviv-Yafo area.

Sister Susser was so happy to be joined in 1950 by Fanny Mintzer. She and her family landed in Israel as immigrants from Poland. Frieda and

Fanny had grown up together in the same village in Poland, but had not seen each other for many years. What a happy reunion, especially since they both now were in the truth! Regularly they met together for study.

But what about the territory for witnessing? The two sisters agreed that the one who lived in the north of the town would witness to the *whole* of Tel Aviv, and the other who lived on the southern limit would witness to the *whole* of Yafo! (Yafo is the Joppa of Bible times.) What an assignment! For a meeting location they had just

Frieda Susser (left) and Fanny Mintzer, both from the same village in Poland, started the present witnessing activities in Tel Aviv-Yafo



their own homes, so the meetings were held alternately at these two locations.

Frieda and Fanny certainly showed fine zeal for the truth despite having very limited fellowship or direction from the Society. And they are still going strong! Frieda is a special pioneer and Fanny is a very active publisher. They have personally aided many to become a part of the congregation. Besides this, they have hospitably opened their homes to others who have arrived from other lands as immigrants or visitors. Jehovah has indeed blessed their faithful and diligent efforts.

GILEAD GRADUATES ARRIVE

It was a big day for the brothers in Israel when the first four Gilead graduates arrived in June 1951, Ben and Grace Wiens and Thomas and Mary Wayne. They settled in Jerusalem, which, it was hoped, would become the center for pure worship in Israel. However, after four years of hard work the response there was small.

Although meetings were held regularly, newly associated ones inevitably received either threats or material inducements in order to discourage them from continuing their association. At one time there were as many as 26 who attended Bible discussions, but few continued. In time, three interested ones dedicated their lives and were baptized. Among these was an elderly Arab. He remained a faithful brother to the end of his days, although suffering blindness, and enduring extended periods of isolation due to opposed relatives.

KNORR AND HENSCHEL VISIT AGAIN

A visit by Brothers Knorr and Henschel in January 1952 was an occasion to gather the brothers

and interested persons together. In all, 24 assembled in Jerusalem. They put much effort into advertising a public lecture for the evening of January 24, and 51 were in attendance.

Up to this visit the Gilead graduates had confined their activities to Jerusalem. Now arrangements were made for Ben Wiens to make regular visits to the publishers and interested persons scattered throughout Israel. Most of the 24 who assembled in Jerusalem had published in the past, and they were all helped to get started again.

In 1953, Thomas and Mary Wayne were transferred to Haifa to aid the little group there, while Ben and Grace Wiens stayed on in Jerusalem for a couple more years. In 1955, the Waynes left the country, so Ben and Grace moved to Haifa. Haifa proved a suitable location from which to maintain contact with the brothers in the northern villages, as well as those in the Tel Aviv area.

CONGREGATIONS ESTABLISHED

The nucleus of the Haifa group was Ibrahim Shehadi, his growing family, and the two Russian brothers who had arrived following World War II. Ibrahim's brother, Atallah, had in the meantime moved to a village near the Lebanese border, where he kept active in the truth. By now the younger Shehadi generation were growing up, and some joined the weekly study groups. Finally, in June 1956, the first full-fledged congregation was formed in Haifa. Included were two sisters who had learned the truth in Romania before moving to Israel as immigrants.

Also, the preaching work was bearing fruit in the Tel Aviv area. An interested Jew from Poland moved to Israel and continued his studies with the local publishers. After many detailed and

lengthy discussions, he became convinced that Jesus was the Messiah and accepted the Kingdom hope. An older brother, David Cohen, arrived from Egypt. He qualified as congregation servant, and so in October 1956, a congregation with seven publishers was formed in Tel Aviv.

CYPRUS BRANCH OVERSIGHT

For a time all service reports were submitted and circuit visits were arranged through the Society's Cyprus branch. The branch servant first visited the brothers in Israel in 1955. The following year the assembly in connection with such a visit was held in the yard of a brother's home in Haifa, a lovely place for the gathering. The background for the speaker was the blue Mediterranean with towering Mount Carmel behind the listeners. Seeing 22 of the 51 who attended go out Sunday morning in the door-to-door service was a source of real joy. All attending were accommodated in the homes of brothers and interested ones in Haifa.

On another occasion some 20 publishers came from Cyprus for an assembly with their Israeli brothers. In turn, the Witnesses in Israel requested visas to travel over to Cyprus for one of their assemblies. However, the Interior Ministry would not accept the idea that a group of Arabic and Jewish persons wanted to travel together to a *religious* convention! So the brothers did not get their permits.

LANGUAGE PROBLEMS

From the early days the congregations were encountering the problem of language. In the Tel Aviv Congregation, for example, one of the two original sisters could speak six languages (Ger-

man, Yiddish, Polish, Russian, Ukrainian, Hebrew), and Brother Cohen from Egypt could handle seven (English, French, Italian, Arabic, Turkish, Greek, Spanish). But they could not find a language in common! Since then the sister has learned English, making it possible for them to converse in that language!

Thus all the meetings had to be multilingual, with someone translating from English and Polish into Hebrew, or vice versa. On one occasion the Memorial meeting was held in Haifa in five languages so that all the 18 attenders could understand! To this day, looking along the rows at the Kingdom Hall at the weekly *Watchtower* study, one sees the same article in such languages as Russian, German, French, Spanish, Turkish, English, Polish and Hebrew.

Due to immigrants arriving in Israel from all over the world, some 70 different languages are spoken here. This creates no little problem in the field service, and in being able to offer householders literature that they can read. But as a greater percentage of the population learn Hebrew, the problem is being resolved. All the younger generation speak Hebrew as their main tongue, and at most homes Hebrew is now understood.

PROGRESS IN TEL AVIV

In 1958 Gilead graduates, Alex and Athena Panis, and special pioneer Anita Seclenov from Uruguay, arrived in Tel Aviv. They set up a home that became a theocratic center for meetings and field service. From then on, particularly, things began to move ahead.

Anita Seclenov, who speaks Russian and Spanish fluently, began to see fruitage from her ser-

vice right away. For example, she met a carpenter of Russian extraction at his workshop. He ordered a subscription for *The Watchtower* in Russian, which led to a study with his wife. She became a staunch publisher, and in due course a special pioneer. Another family, Bulgarian Jews speaking Spanish, responded. Although the mother did not continue in the truth, her son is now an overseer in the congregation.

Another lady from Bulgaria listened to Sister Seclenov with interest, but her way of life had been so far from Bible principles it seemed that it would be almost impossible for her to change. Yet she did! For some years she served as a special pioneer, and others in her family are active publishers. She turns to good advantage her ability to converse in over 20 languages, which is one of the greatest assets one could have in this multilingual country.

It is quite an experience to accompany this sister from house to house and hear the Kingdom good news being spoken in Spanish, then Hebrew, then Bulgarian, then Russian, then Arabic, then English, as immigrants from different places are met. And when she meets a deaf person it is not a problem, for the sign language of the deaf is one more "language" that she can handle! For quite some time the little kitchen of her small home served as the Kingdom Hall.

Through the years the Tel Aviv Congregation met in a number of private homes, as well as hired halls. A number of times the brothers wondered 'Where can we go now?' as their numbers grew and hall owners refused them further use of their premises due to neighborhood pressure and prejudice. But the meeting schedules were main-

tained without a break. In fact, in all the years only one meeting had to be canceled and that was when a violent storm took the roof off the room being used as a meeting hall just before the time of the meeting. Finally, in 1963, the Watch Tower Society financed the purchase of a Kingdom Hall for the congregation in a central location in Tel Aviv. Here attendances grew and grew until it was necessary to form two congregations. Looking back over the years it is clear that Jehovah's hand directed matters in such a way that there was always some provision made.

Often new immigrants are supplied with housing and work in distant settlements so as to spread out the population. Thus Brother and Sister Klufinski from Poland, who arrived in late 1957, found themselves very isolated in the northeast corner of the country near the old Bible city of Hazor. But after six months they arranged to move closer to Tel Aviv, near to Lod, the location of the Bible city Lydda. Since 1959 their home has been a congregation book study location, and also a Polish-language *Watchtower* study is conducted there for local interested ones, as it is some 14 miles (23 km) from Tel Aviv.

When the Gilead graduates were transferred temporarily from Tel Aviv to Nazareth, Brother Abaye Behar, who had arrived from Turkey, was assigned as overseer for a while. But he did not understand Hebrew or any other language common to most of the publishers. What happens when the one conducting the *Watchtower* study does not understand the answers being given in various languages?

Well, Brother Behar would read the questions from *The Watchtower* in Turkish; those present

would have the same article, each in his own language. Then, it was arranged that, as answers were given in Russian or Polish, a mature publisher would nod to let Brother Behar know whether the answer was in order and complete, or whether more was needed. If the answer was given in Hebrew or German, then another publisher would do the same! Theocratic School talks and counsel given in Spanish were translated into Hebrew by a young 10-year-old publisher. Service meeting talks given in Spanish were translated into Russian for the Slavic-speaking publishers by one sister, and into Hebrew by another. By such means all understood satisfactorily and gained benefit from the meeting programs.

What a blessing when young David Namer arrived in the country from Turkey! He already had a good working knowledge of Hebrew, and although comparatively new in the truth he had gained a good knowledge and understanding. When the congregation overseer, the Gilead graduate, left the country, David took oversight of the congregation for a while. He now serves as a member of the branch committee, and enjoyed the special five-week course at Brooklyn as one of the highlights of his life.

"EVERLASTING GOOD NEWS" ASSEMBLY

An outstanding event of 1963 was the international "Everlasting Good News" Assembly. The mainstream of visitors went to Jordan and Lebanon, but a few came to Israel. The Rabbinate became aware of the assembly and pressured the hall owner to cancel our contract under the threat of having his catering license canceled, which would effectively ruin his business. Although the brothers had a secure contract, they agreed to

relinquish their claim on the modern, air-conditioned hall rather than cause difficulties for the proprietor.

The assembly was transferred to the Kingdom Hall. However, rather than being dampened, the spirit of the brothers was stirred by the opposition. The news media got hold of the story and published it in a number of newspapers in English and Hebrew—a total of 150 column inches—voicing their disapproval of such high-handed action. Thus the rabbis' efforts backfired! A record attendance of 115 was reached for the public talk.

BRANCH ESTABLISHED IN ISRAEL

Finally, on January 1, 1963, Israel became a separate branch, the office being located in Haifa. From here circuit overseer visits, assemblies and all other activities were organized, reports were collected, and correspondence was maintained with congregations and groups. By this time the number of publishers in the country had reached about 80, most of whom were located in and around the two cities of Haifa and Tel Aviv. About the same time additional help was provided with the arrival in Israel of Eric and Catherine Pearce and Derek and Jean Hanson.

Also, an outstanding step forward was the production of the first issue of *The Watchtower* in the Hebrew language, dated December 1962. The first 15 issues were mimeographed editions. As improved editions were produced, the circulation grew from 300 to 400 copies to an average of over 2,000 copies each issue, in over 30 different lands. Due to prohibition on importation of Hebrew-language literature into the country, *The Watchtower* has been printed at a local printery,

with translation, layout and proofreading being taken care of by Witnesses in Israel.

One of our translators is Shoshana Givati. She was raised here in Israel, but later moved to the United States where she became a Witness in 1960. She heard about a couple who were working hard to learn Hebrew so as to move to Israel to aid the congregations there. So she thought to herself: "If they're making such efforts, and I already know Hebrew, what am I doing here in the United States?" She promptly arranged her affairs to move back to Israel and, despite family responsibilities, she has been serving here ever since, contributing to the translation of *The Watchtower*.

In June 1966 a more suitable building was leased in Haifa to provide a Kingdom Hall, branch office and living accommodations for the small Bethel family. Thus, in the mid-1960's with regular attendances of 80 to 100 in Tel Aviv, and about 40 in Haifa, progress was evident. New peaks in publishers were reached in the country year after year: 1964—88; 1965—98; 1966—112; 1967—126.

A WARM, INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD

What may be lacking in the way of understanding and clear communication between the brothers due to language barriers is made up for by a genuine warmth among them. As one lady said at her first meeting: "You are all so friendly here!" That this is an important factor is seen from the following experience:

A Witness who had learned the truth in Poland, and whose grasp of Hebrew was still very limited, was on her way to the congregation meeting when she met an acquaintance from her home country. She told her where she was going and invited

her along right then and there. The friend came and, although not understanding much of what was said, she was so impressed by the warmth and friendliness of the brothers that she started coming regularly. She, in turn, told the wives of two of her husband's workmates. Now they are all part of the congregation! One of these sisters served as a regular pioneer for several years, and her husband, whom she assisted into the truth, is a staunch publisher and ministerial servant.

Further showing just how international the scene is here, we have in one of the congregations a Brother Moshe Erez who grew up in Iraq. He first came in contact with the Kingdom message in Hong Kong. Then, during the second world war, he was in Japan. There he started to witness to others about his newfound faith. However, in the course of time, isolation and reading books on higher criticism undermined his faith. After the close of the war he returned to Iraq, and then came to Israel.

Moshe decided to write a book relating the story of his life, particularly regarding the changes that had occurred in his outlook on religion and the Bible. When it was finally prepared, he began to look for someone who would publish it for him. Discussing the matter with a sheik in one of the villages where he was working, the sheik suggested that perhaps Jehovah's Witnesses would help him on his project, as they publish religious literature. So he was put in contact with the local congregation, and had a series of detailed discussions with one of the brothers.

The fulfillment of the "seventy weeks" prophecy in Daniel regarding the Messiah, as well as the overall accuracy of Bible chronology, deeply im-

pressed Moshe. The faith that he had gained in Hong Kong and lost in Japan was restored and strengthened, this time on the basis of accurate knowledge. Regular study and association at the congregation meetings built him up quickly. He, along with his daughter, Dalia, who also progressed rapidly in the truth, were baptized together in 1962. Forgotten now was his desire to publish his life-story book. What a fine asset they have been to the congregation! The father translates at the meetings between Arabic, Hebrew and English where necessary, and serves as an elder. The daughter has been in Bethel service for over 10 years, being kept busy full time in translating and proofreading material for *The Watchtower* and other publications.

THE SIX-DAY WAR—1967

The fine example of unity and mutual confidence that flourishes within the congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses was in evidence during the Israeli-Arab war of June 1967. Inside Israel bitterness and suspicion built up between the Jewish and Arabic sections of the populace during the tense prewar days and during the week of the war itself. But the Haifa Congregation, which consists of both Jewish and Arabic brothers, continued to meet together right through the period of the war without a trace of such hatred and suspicion. The Kingdom Hall was blacked out, the lights dimmed, and the full meeting schedule was carried on unbroken.

The Tel Aviv Congregation had to transfer its meetings to afternoons due to the curtailing of all transportation at sunset. Otherwise, all continued without letup. The brothers certainly found many opportunities to witness regarding

the 'signs of the times' and the hope ahead. A new peak of publishers was reached in the country that month when 126 reported preaching activity!

As a result of the war, contacts between the brothers in Israel and those in the section designated as the West Bank could be reestablished. The Ramallah and Beit Jala congregations, and the group that lived in Jericho, are on the West Bank. It had been nearly 20 years since brothers there could meet with those on the other side of the boundaries set up following the Palestinian war of 1948. As soon as feasible a delegation from the Society's branch office, including an Arabic-language translator, obtained permits to visit these places. But their knowledge of the brothers' whereabouts was very vague. They reported:

"Driving out of Jerusalem northwards, we passed signs of war damage—burned-out tanks and automobiles and shell-damaged homes—and reached the town of Ramallah. One of our party remembered the name of a family that had been there some years previously, so we asked for directions to their home. It had not suffered any damage and was obviously inhabited, so we tapped at the door. The door was opened a few inches, rather nervously, and we explained who we were. Immediately the picture changed! We were welcomed right in, and found that we had arrived at the time and place of the weekly 'Watchtower' study! How thrilled the brothers were to see us! They had lost contact with the Society's Beirut office since some time before the outbreak of the war. Eighteen were in attendance at their study that afternoon.

"Following the study, a short talk was given to inform the brothers of what had been happening, relating something of the progress of the congregations in Israel. That short talk, given with translation into Arabic, was likely the first address

ever given in Ramallah in the Hebrew language! We were loaded with good things for the brothers—supplies of the current magazines to supply their spiritual needs, as well as staple foodstuffs, gifts from the brothers in the Haifa Congregation. The needs of the three special pioneers were also met. What a happy occasion that was for us all! Unfortunately, it had to be cut short as the curfew time drew near and we had to head back for Jerusalem to stay overnight.

"The next day—this time supplied with names and addresses—we called on the brothers in the Beit Jala/Bethlehem area. Here, too, all were well; none had come to any harm. The congregation overseer, Farah Bakhit, was so delighted to see us that he promptly closed his little shop for the rest of the day and accompanied us around to visit all the families associated with the congregation, including those faithful ones who had stood firmly throughout the nearly 20 years since the partition of the country. All too soon the day passed and we had to leave. But before doing so we made arrangements to visit again, provided the borders were not changed in the meantime."

The next visit, which took place three or four weeks later, was a fuller one, and meetings were scheduled ahead of time for the occasion. Visits were included to Jericho and Nablus to see the isolated families. The lone brother at Nablus, Joseph Abdennour, was the one who, many years before, had been associated with the Haifa Congregation.

Plans were set for a one-day assembly for all the congregations in the country in a large hotel room in Jerusalem on August 6, less than two months after the war. It was timed to coincide with a vacation trip to the country by the Society's then vice-president, F. W. Franz, along

with others from New York city. What a wonderful day that proved to be!

The brothers enjoyed meeting two of the original group who had brought the Kingdom message from the United States to Ramallah in 1919. Those from the West Bank were thrilled to see so many from the cities in Israel, where there had been only four or five publishers 20 years before. A total of 176 attended the one-day gathering. The grand spirit of unity was so clearly manifested as the brothers, who had been kept apart by a barbed-wire border line, now had opportunities to exchange greetings and news, as far as language differences would allow. Ever since, brothers from the West Bank have been able to attend the circuit and district assemblies held in Israel, while the brothers from the Israeli sector have been able to visit the congregations there.

The two West Bank congregations had formerly been subjected to bans and literature seizures. The clergy of Jerusalem and Bethlehem had pressured Jordan's government in Amman to place these restrictions on Jehovah's Witnesses. But these dignitaries cannot influence the Israeli civil or military authorities, and, as a result, we have had freedom of assembly and activity on the West Bank since 1967. Similarly, these same clergy had been able previously to cause trouble for the brothers in Amman, Jordan, but now they have no access to influence the ruling authorities there.

A LESSON FOR FAMILY HEADS

There is a lesson to be learned from what occurred in the case of Brother Joseph Abdennour, who transferred from Haifa to Nablus around 1947. While maintaining his faith in the Kingdom message, and witnessing to others as opportunity

presented itself, Joseph failed to pay sufficient attention to the spiritual needs of his family. Being isolated, they had no opportunity of attending meetings or associating with other young ones in the faith. The result was that none of his children took any interest in the truth, but devoted themselves to the family business, to politics and other interests.

One son became active in the Communist movement, and even suffered a seven-year imprisonment in a desert work camp under the Jordanian authorities for his political activity. He had heard his father talking about the Bible's hope, but it had never been explained thoroughly to him. His experience in the prison camp shattered his confidence in Communism and he was left without a basis for hope. Following his father's death, he and his family moved to Ramallah where he came in contact with the Witnesses. He also brought with him his father's library, including the Society's literature. His interest was aroused by the brothers' visits and a study was started. This led to a building up of faith in God and the Bible. He made rapid progress and was baptized at his first assembly, serving for a while as a pioneer. His father would have been delighted to see his spiritual progress!

COVERAGE OF TERRITORY

Most of Israel's Witnesses live near the cities where the congregations are located—in Haifa and Tel Aviv, and on the West Bank, in Ramallah and Beit Jala/Bethlehem. Nevertheless, some witnessing has been carried out in most corners of the land, and the literature has found its way into many additional towns and villages. Cities that still bear Biblical names that have received

at least some witness include Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath, Joppa, Caesarea, Beer-sheba, Elath, Jerusalem, Lydda (now Lod), Nazareth, Ptolemais (now Acre), and the townships all along the Mount Carmel range. Similarly, such West Bank territories as Hebron, Shechem (now Nablus) and Jericho have heard the good news to a limited extent.

There was a Christian congregation at Ptolemais in the first century. (Acts 21:7) Today we have one publisher there. And what a fine stalwart she is! Crippled by poliomyelitis as a young girl, she was restricted to a radius of a few yards from her family's home in the old walled city. It happened that a brother had a watchmaker store within that distance and she would come to his shop to talk occasionally. She responded to the encouraging good news he gave her, which offered her the hope of running and jumping one day!

The truth brought marked changes in her outlook about everything in life, giving her the incentive to learn a trade, to find suitable employment, and even to pass her driving test. Soon she was traveling the 15 miles (24 km) to the Haifa congregation meetings regularly. She has become a fine, enthusiastic and energetic Witness, sharing in auxiliary pioneer service on occasion. In 1969 she attended the international assembly in Paris, France.

THE KIND OF PERSEVERANCE NEEDED

It is not easy to become a Witness in Israel. A person of Jewish origin who starts to associate with a local congregation has to face up to opposition from all quarters. It really tests a person's love of truth and his determination to serve

Jehovah. One family who weathered just such opposition hails from Russia.

One of the pioneer sisters met this family and, as a result of a weekly study, they quickly progressed and developed a fine spirit of determination to hold on to what they were learning. Stones were thrown through their windows, while cat-calls and verbal insults were daily experiences. Others snubbed them entirely, refusing to speak with them. However, in the course of time they gained the respect of those who formerly opposed or shunned them.

When the family began attending meetings and witnessing to others, the rabbinical authorities took notice. The local Rabbinate committee offered the family financial aid if they would return to the Jewish religion, for they assumed that it was some material inducement that had caused them to become Christians. The brother's reply was unmistakable: "There are some things that cannot be bought nor sold with money, and the truth of God's Word, the Bible, is one of them. I have found this truth with the aid of Jehovah's Witnesses." In addition to the help that the father of the family is rendering as an elder in one of the congregations, two of the family have served as pioneers. Such early tests produce a spiritual strength that stands Witnesses here in good stead over the years.

RAPID PROGRESS OF NEW ONES

Since 1969, Anita Seclenov has been serving as a member of the Bethel family. Following a fall and back injury her participation in field service has been restricted, limited in the main to contacting people in the immediate vicinity of the

branch home. About 50 yards (46 m) from home she met a lady who showed interest, and a study was started despite language problems. The pleasure that this housewife gained from the study caused her husband to take an interest and he started to read and then to study.

Meeting attendance was encouraged, but time after time visitors from their large family circle arrived just at the meeting hour. Even when they came to the hall, they would be called home from the meeting as soon as visitors showed up. But then the "taste" for the spiritual food served at the meetings developed strongly, and they informed their many friends and relatives that on the three meeting nights they would not be home between certain hours.

This couple, Hanna and Nehai Khoury, and their five children, have given a fine witness to their many relatives in the city and out in their distant home village. They have proved to be a great help in the congregation, too. The father was soon taking a lead in field service, and handling other responsibilities in the congregation. He was appointed to the Branch Committee, and in 1978 he enjoyed the privilege of attending the course for branch committee members in Brooklyn, New York. It was the first time he had ever left the country or been separated from his family.

ASSEMBLIES AND MEMORIAL

From 1967 onward, all our circuit and district assembly programs have been presented in both the Hebrew and Arabic languages. In some cases the program is given in one language and translated into the other. At other times separate language sessions are arranged in adjoining halls,

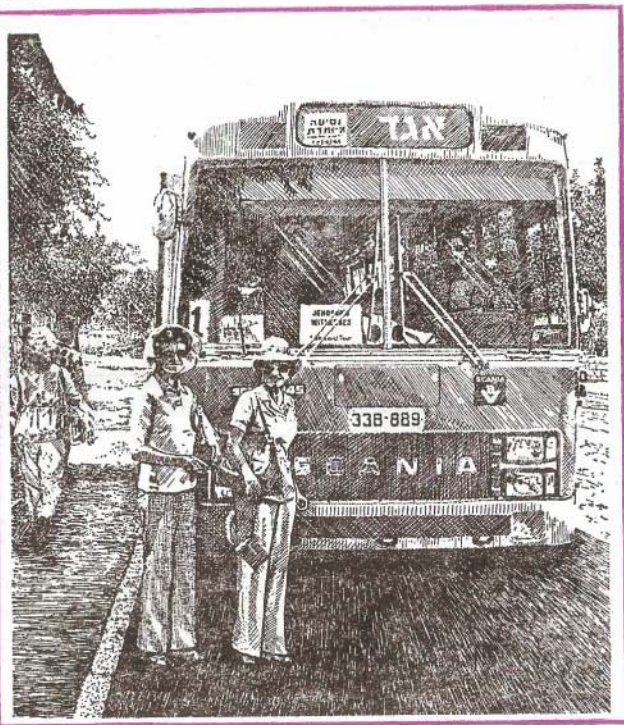
and then there are opportunities for fellowship between the sessions. A variety of halls have served our needs for these assemblies as our numbers have increased—cinemas, social clubs and school facilities.

The Memorial often coincides with the Jewish Passover, a fact that creates its problems. All public transport shuts down at sundown and few of the local families have an automobile. Locally, Jewish families gather around the seder table in celebration of the exodus from Egypt in Moses' day, a situation that has its difficulties for Witnesses in divided families. This is especially so when the mother of the family is the only one in the truth, and she is expected to be at home preparing and serving the Jewish Passover meal. This is just one of the many issues to be faced by new ones as they come along and take their stand for the true 'Passover lamb,' the Messiah himself. So attendances of over 400 each year at our Memorial represent a great effort by interested persons.

MANY VISIT "THE LAND OF THE BIBLE"

Whereas there has always been a steady flow of individual visitors to Israel, the Society organized a tour program in 1973 that enabled many more to see the land where so much occurred in connection with the outworking of Jehovah's purposes. Transportation to Israel, a well-organized itinerary and comfortable accommodations were all lined up, and over 3,500 visited the land. They tied in their visit here with an assembly in Europe or elsewhere.

More recently, in 1978, a similar program was repeated, and this time we had over 14,000 visi-



Some of the many Witnesses who toured the land of the Bible in 1978

tors from more than 40 different lands. And during 1979 thousands more took advantage of similar organized tours. What do the visitors see?

The itinerary has given as thorough coverage of the country as is possible in one week's touring—a view of the land “from Dan to Beer-sheba”

and at times even beyond. Some included a visit to the Mount Sinai area. It is faith-strengthening and educational to see for oneself the actual localities and settings of the Bible's meaningful events—Megiddo, Mount Carmel, Caesarea, Capernaum, Joppa, the Mount of Olives, Jericho, the valley of Hinnom, Nazareth and Bethlehem. The whole Bible history comes alive and takes on added meaning.

But the benefit has not ended here. Many of the visiting groups arranged evening get-togethers with the local publishers who came to the hotels where the visitors were staying. An exchange of experiences and news was enjoyed, for the mutual encouragement of all. And it was quite an experience for the four-member Bethel family to receive in their little home so many thousands!

Besides, the large number of Witnesses touring the length and breadth of the land gave a fine witness to those with whom they came in contact. Each bus carried the sign, “Jehovah's Witnesses—Bible Land Tour,” and many visitors wore an identifying lapel badge. So even when conversation was not possible because of language barriers, the fine conduct and friendliness shown by the brothers made a positive impression.

NEUTRALITY ISSUE

Within 10 days of the departure of the last group of visitors back in 1973, the ‘Atonement Day War’ broke out between Israel and its neighbors. As in 1967, the congregations' activities and meetings continued without a break. But trouble resulted when the Israeli government stepped up military conscription, and canceled all exemptions previously granted to our young brothers.

Some, including two elders, fathers with young children, as well as some ministerial servants, were arrested and sentenced to incarceration in a military prison. For one of the families, the father's absence continued into a second year. The local brothers rallied around the families, supplying food and other practical aid.

It was not until the group of imprisoned brothers decided on a firmer stand in line with the dictates of their consciences, refusing to don the army fatigues issued as prison garb or to perform any work assignments in the camp, that things began to change. They had to endure a few weeks of inhuman conditions in the punishment block dressed only in underclothes during wintry weather, but the publicity that resulted, and the evident futility of the efforts to break their integrity, led to their eventual release. The press reports were, in the main, favorable as personal stories about the families involved, and explanations of our principles and beliefs, appeared in a number of national papers, as well as on radio newscasts and a phone-in program.

In connection with these news reports the Divine Name, Jehovah, appeared in the newspapers and was heard on the radio, probably for the first time. Although the Tetragrammaton is in the Hebrew Bible and in other religious literature, it is never written in secular publications or pronounced in *any* circumstances. When publishers introduce themselves to householders as "Jehovah's Witnesses," they have to explain that this means, in effect, "God's Witnesses." Jewish householders identify us as part of Christendom because we use the name of Jehovah. At the same time, the Arabic population classify us as "Zion-

ists" because we use the name Jehovah, the Jewish name for God! What a unique privilege we consider it to bear the name of the Almighty God!

RELIGIOUS EXTREMISTS OPPOSE

Whereas there is freedom of religion in Israel, there are individuals and some antimissionary movements who oppose all proselytizing. Such ones have often mistakenly associated us with Christendom's missionaries. During 1977 opposition to our work reached a peak with a campaign directed against the Tel Aviv Congregation and its Kingdom Hall.

Orthodox Jewish fanatics created problems for some Witness families by distributing insulting pamphlets to their neighbors. As the brothers went to and returned from meetings, insults, vile language and threats were shouted at them. Then came a series of three attacks on the Kingdom Hall, during which the perpetrators destroyed furnishings, sound-amplifying equipment, airconditioners, electrical installations and literature—even tearing apart every copy of God's Word, the Holy Bible!

At first, protests to the authorities and appeals for help went unheeded. However, as both local and foreign press, as well as local television, took up the story, the police authorities acted. They cooperated in setting an ambush that resulted in the arrest of three rabbinical students when they returned a fourth time, this time intent on burning the building. Although these vandals were let off with a nominal fine and a suspended sentence, the action taken stopped the attacks. Many honest-hearted persons expressed their disgust at the intolerance shown by those who

have been quick to protest discrimination against themselves in other lands.

STEADY PROGRESS CONTINUES

Through the 1970's the number of publishers steadily increased to reach 200 by 1974, 250 by 1975, and a peak of 276 in 1976. Attendances at the assemblies and Memorial climbed to 400 and more. Following this upswing, things have leveled out for the last couple of years, a few new ones coming along, some leaving the country and others failing to show the needed quality of endurance. Both the congregations in Ramallah and Bethlehem (or Beit Jala) now have fine, centrally located Kingdom Halls.

The number of Kingdom publishers in Jordan has risen from the 19 reporting in 1968, when the congregations at Ramallah and Bethlehem were no longer considered part of Jordan, up to an average of about 40 publishers today. There is still only the one congregation in Jordan, in Amman, the capital.

All the old original team of brothers who brought the truth to Ramallah after World War I have since died, the last one in the spring of 1971. Also, Ibrahim and Atallah Shehadi, the original brothers contacted in Haifa in the 1930's, recently ended their faithful life courses, Ibrahim dying in 1978 and Atallah in July 1979. The two sisters who started off the present activities in and around Tel Aviv, Frieda Susser and Fanny Mintzer, are still zealously busy in the service. And now they have been joined by many, many more. All these Kingdom publishers are happy and united in their work in this vital corner of the world.



Theocratic Instrumentalities

Witnessing to Jehovah's name and kingdom in modern times requires both Bibles and Bible study aids. To have these always available as needed at a low cost, Jehovah's Witnesses have found it advantageous to produce these themselves. To this end they have formed legal corporations of a religious, nonprofit nature. The first of these, formed in 1881 and incorporated in 1884, is known today as the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. It is the parent of similar religious corporations formed world wide. Among such are the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., and the International Bible Students Association in a number of British Commonwealth nations. (This past year the religious corporation "Association Chrétienne Les Témoins de Jéhovah de France" was recognized by the French government.)

These legal bodies cooperate closely with the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses, which is located in Brooklyn, New York, at the headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses, known as the Brooklyn Bethel. This body functions in a way similar to that of the body of apostles and elders in Jerusalem who directed the activity of Christians in apostolic times. Since the Governing Body of modern times strives hard to proceed according to God's inspired Word and recognizes Jehovah God as its ruler, it, as well as the legal bodies directed by it, can properly be termed theocratic instrumentalities. "Theocratic" means to be divinely guided or ruled.

Even as the Governing Body in apostolic times served to keep Christians united in teaching, practice and preaching, so does the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses today. (Acts 15:1-29; Gal. 2:7-10) Only in this way is it possible for all these Christians to be obeying the command of the apostle Paul as recorded at 1 Corinthians 1:10: "Now I exhort you, brothers, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that you should all speak in agreement, and that there should not be divisions among you, but that you may be fitly united in the same mind and in the same line of thought."

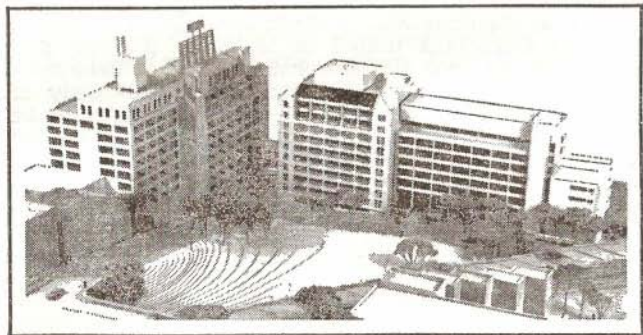
The Governing Body functions by means of committees of which there are six: Chairman's, Writing,

Teaching, Service, Publishing and Personnel. In the past year Ewart C. Chitty resigned, so that at present there are 17 members of this body.

The year 1979 has seen much expansion in the building of structures needed for the carrying on of the Kingdom proclamation. New structures were completed in Colombia, Ecuador, Greece, Guadeloupe and Kenya. Large-scale projects are now under way in Australia, Brazil, Canada, Germany, Japan and Sweden. Smaller projects are under way in Guam, India, Ivory Coast, Peru, Puerto Rico and the Netherlands Antilles. Ghana and Liberia have obtained sizable acreages on which to build, and as the year ended, a number of other branches were working to acquire suitable locations for facilities far larger than those now being used. Nor would we overlook the expansion taking place at the world headquarters of the Witnesses in Brooklyn, New York. Due to the ever-increasing size of the Bethel family as well as of the various departments, it has been found necessary to replace several of the old structures of the "Squibb" complex with a new office building. This expansion will house the Governing Body meeting rooms, the writing, art and service departments, the treasurer's and computer departments, and others.

In addition to the work of publishing Bibles and Bible study aids, there is need of various schools to train

Former "Squibb" complex in Brooklyn, as it is to appear when renovation has been completed



the Witnesses to preach the good news of the Kingdom and to make disciples. Thus there is the Gilead missionary school formed in 1943 and from which more than 6,000 missionaries have been sent forth to serve in all corners of the earth. During the 1979 service year 55 of such were sent forth. Its five-month course places the emphasis on students' being familiar with God's Word, the Bible, and the skilled use of it. During the past year a total of \$20,136,626.07 was spent to pay the expenses of members of Bethel homes, traveling representatives of the Society, missionaries and special pioneers. The 'sowing bountifully' on the part of Jehovah's Witnesses world wide made all of this possible.—2 Cor. 9:6.

There were also six classes held during the year for the five-week Gilead branch school attended by branch committee members from around the world. As a result, these branch brothers are now better equipped to co-operate with the Governing Body and to discharge their duties in the local branches.

Periodically the Kingdom Ministry School is conducted for the benefit of elders, to enable them better to fulfill their responsibilities as evangelizers, teachers and shepherds. Then there is also the Pioneer Service School, which has proved to be such a blessing to all full-time preachers who have attended it. One report stated: "The Pioneer Service School was truly inspirational!" Another report said: "The Pioneer Service School was the highlight of the year!" Still another: "This school was excellent. I thank Jehovah and his organization for the privilege." Other comments stressed the value of the school in learning how to get along with fellow pioneers, the need to cultivate the spirit of self-sacrifice, how to be more spiritually minded and how to be more effective in the field service.

And finally there is also the Theocratic School conducted in each congregation week in, week out, helping all in the congregation, old and young, brothers and sisters alike, to be better Kingdom preachers, better disciple-makers and also better examples of Christian conduct. All these schools serve as theocratic instrumentalities, even as do the various branches and the Governing Body committees.

Your brothers,
GOVERNING BODY OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

YEARETEXT FOR 1980

"And now, Jehovah, . . . grant your slaves to keep speaking your word with all boldness."—Acts 4:29.

The greatest event in human history had taken place. The Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth, had been falsely condemned and put to death; but Jehovah God had resurrected him, enabling him to act in behalf of all humankind as their ransom and redeemer. Yes, the way was now there for people to receive forgiveness of sins with everlasting life in view. How vital that people should hear about this, have the opportunity to repent and avail themselves of God's kind provision!

That was the situation when the words of Acts 4:29 were spoken in prayer. Earlier, the apostles Peter and John had been arrested, interrogated and ordered by the highest court of their land to stop speaking to the people about these things. Humble men, onetime fishermen from among the common people, Peter and John spoke boldly before the powerful, august body of Jewish leaders, telling them that they simply could not fail to bear witness to what they themselves had seen with their own eyes and heard with their own ears and knew to be the truth. In obedience to God, they must tell others the good news about his resurrected Son, the Chief Agent of life.—Acts 4:1-3, 8-21; 5:31.

Threatened and then released, the apostles met with their brothers. They knew the Christian

congregation faced grave danger. To go on could mean persecution, imprisonment, even death. But the truth had to be made known; people must learn how God had opened up the way for life. Few and weak in themselves, opposed by powerful and numerous enemies, they laid the whole matter before God in prayer. They prayed that he, the God who foretold all these things, would now also act in their behalf. They made no request to be excused from making known the good news, no petition that he eliminate the danger or even that they might come through the trial unscathed. Rather, they prayed that they might speak out his word with the boldness this message deserved, with a confidence befitting servants who spoke the words of the Sovereign God, Maker of heaven and earth. Jehovah God answered their prayer beyond question.—Acts 4:23-31.

He will answer our prayers today and we should draw courage now from the way that trust in God and in the power of his holy spirit was rewarded then. Like another faithful Christian, Paul, let us all say: "For I am not ashamed of the good news; it is, in fact, God's power for salvation to everyone having faith."—Rom. 1:16.

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 1979. 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.

Tuesday, January 1

But pay attention to yourselves that your hearts never become weighed down with overeating and heavy drinking and anxieties of life, and suddenly that day be instantly upon you as a snare. For it will come in upon all those dwelling upon the face of all the earth.—Luke 21:34, 35.

When we consider the circumstances of those of our brothers who are suffering imprisonment because of keeping integrity, what an incentive this should be for us to use much of our recreation time in doing as they would love to be doing—freely witnessing to others about the Kingdom! Surely those of us who live in affluent lands would never want to let the world “soften” us to the point of habitually spending weekends on pleasures, away from our congregations and God’s service! Not without point does the account of Jesus’ great prophecy on the end of the system of things conclude with a warning against—not the dangers from persecutions, but—the dangers of letting our hearts become “weighed down” through worldly indulgences or materialistic anxieties. *W 1/1 17a*

Wednesday, January 2

Your arrows are sharp—under you peoples keep falling—in the heart of the enemies of the king.—Ps. 45:5.

Arrows require a bow for propulsion. Hence, the psalmist’s description helps us to identify who is pictured in Revelation 6:1, 2, when John speaks of seeing in vision Jesus Christ, seated on a white horse, having a bow. That crowned bowman astride the white horse pictured the glorified Jesus Christ proceeding to war against his enemies. Victory to a completion is

what he aims for. His conquest must be world wide. In his dignity and splendor, as of an officially inaugurated king, Jesus Christ girds himself with the sword of war in order to lift it up against the opposing nations on earth. Being no longer a man of flesh and blood, but clothed with heavenly powers, he is now indeed the “Mighty God.” (Isa. 9:6) Shortly, he will, figuratively speaking, ride a war steed. Properly so, for he has a reckoning to carry out with those who violate truth, humility and righteousness. May we never be found guilty of acting as they do! *W 1/15 13-15a*

Thursday, January 3

Take courage! I have conquered the world.—John 16:33.

History tells of many would-be world conquerors. But, finally, all of these had to bow in defeat. Mighty Pharaoh of Egypt, Alexander the Great, the Caesars of Rome, Napoleon, Hitler—their glory was indeed short-lived! However, there is one world conqueror whose glory will never fade. He boasted of no hordes of warriors, no great armadas of ships. Yet his conquest has been complete, and for the eternal good of those who acknowledge his kingship. Many stumbled over this powerful conqueror, for they thought him to be nothing more than just a humble carpenter’s son. When the Roman imperial power killed him, his few followers were scattered. Yet this man—Jesus Christ—is beyond compare as a world conqueror. On the eve of his execution he could tell his disciples the above. Moreover, he said that they, too, would conquer the world. But how? As one of his followers later put it: “This is the conquest that has conquered the world, our faith.” —1 John 5:4. *W 2/1 1, 2*

Friday, January 4

After declaring the good news . . . they returned . . . strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to remain in the faith. —Acts 14:21, 22.

Visiting overseers often commended early believers for the fine qualities they displayed. (Col. 1:2-8) Paul’s visit to Thessalonica brought outstanding results. Later he wrote to the believers there, taking note of their faithful work, loving labor and endurance. They had accepted the word under tribulation and had become worthy imitators of men like Paul, Silas and Timothy. (1 Thess. 1:1-7) By word and example, those older men taught the early disciples and showed them how the fruitage of God’s spirit could be displayed in their everyday lives. They were encouraged to place implicit trust in Jehovah and to rely constantly upon him in prayer. Congregations rejoiced in such visits, acknowledging that they were strengthened and encouraged “to remain in the faith.” Are like things true of the traveling older men among Jehovah’s people today? Indeed they are. *W 2/15 9*

Saturday, January 5

“You are my witnesses,” is the utterance of Jehovah, “even my servant whom I have chosen.”—Isa. 43:10.

In 1919, the reorganized remnant of spiritual Israelites refused to accept the man-made substitute for God’s kingdom, the League of Nations. They came out in favor of the real thing, the newborn heavenly kingdom of God by Christ. More and more there was impressed on their consciousness that the only purpose in their being set free from Babylon the Great was for them to be witnesses, not

just witnesses for Jesus Christ, but witnesses in the sense set out in Isaiah 43:10, 12. In 1931, they embraced an organizational name that was most appropriate. Isaiah 43:10 provided the name for them, Jehovah’s Witnesses! Should we believe that the true God appreciated that loyal course of theirs and would bless it? How could Jehovah do otherwise, especially when they were living up to that name by really being His witnesses! Yes, Theocracy, that is to say, God-rule, is what we want in our organization for carrying on the witness work. *W 3/1 18, 19*

Sunday, January 6

Whoever disowns me before men, I will also disown him before my Father who is in the heavens.—Matt. 10:33.

Living in fear of others’ finding out that you are one of Jehovah’s Witnesses will not contribute to your happiness. Neither will it meet with the approval of Jehovah God and Jesus Christ! Since this is the true faith, why be ashamed of it? Those youths who have the courage to speak out find that there are many opportunities to make known Jehovah God’s view on matters while at school. For example, the class may be considering the works of some well-known author who wrote about immortality of the soul, or another Bible-related subject. In your written report, or in the class discussions, you could tactfully show how the author’s view compares with what the Bible says on the subject. Witness youths have done this very thing, and it has opened the way for further Bible discussions in school. Often Christian youths have introduced the *Youth* book, from which both teachers and fellow students have benefited. *W 4/1 12-14*

Monday, January 7

Bless Jehovah, . . . who is crowning you with loving-kindness and mercies, who is satisfying your lifetime with what is good.—Ps. 103:2, 4, 5.

King David, at Psalm 32: 1, 2, spoke of the happiness of the man to whom God counts righteousness apart from works. Such a man has his sins forgiven—he is *clean* in God's sight. Jehovah accepts him as a close intimate, viewing him as having no unrighteousness, for unrighteousness causes a separation from God. Referring to the fineness of having this standing with God, David said the words found at Psalm 103:2-5. Such a person can call on God as Father. When he errs and sins, as do all imperfect humans, he can, when he finds that he has done so, appeal to God for forgiveness and cleansing, thereby preserving that right standing. How, in day-to-day living, does an intimate relationship with God 'satisfy your lifetime with what is good'? And what is such a relationship like? Jesus revealed the kind of closeness that he had with his faithful apostles when he told them that they were his friends. —John 15:15. *W 4/15 1-4a*

Tuesday, January 8

Present your bodies a sacrifice living, holy, acceptable to God, a sacred service. —Rom. 12:1.

Without a deep inward desire to please his Creator, an Israelite would be making sacrifices in vain, even as noted at Isaiah 1:11-15. When genuine devotion and a spirit of generosity were lacking, the outward forms of worship were comparable to bribes designed to buy divine favor. They were wholly unacceptable. Unlike the Israelites, however, we disciples of Jesus Christ do not

present sacrifices on some material altar. The Law covenant that commanded such offerings was canceled on the basis of Jesus' death on a stake. This gives rise to the question, What sacrifices can we offer? Paul encouraged spirit-anointed believers who would give up their body of flesh and receive a glorious spiritual body on being raised from the dead as above. Thus, they were encouraged to use their energies and capabilities in serving the Creator. This principle also applies to Christians who comprise the "great crowd" of "other sheep." —John 10:16; Rev. 7:9. *W 5/1 6-8*

Wednesday, January 9

Now to 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, to him be the glory . . . forever.—Eph. 3:20, 21.

Beginning with Pentecost, the persistent prayers of the little band of Christ's true followers were surely answered beyond their anticipations. What a bold and thorough witness Peter gave on that day, including his declaration, "This Jesus God resurrected, of which fact we are all witnesses." (Acts 2:32) Similarly today, we need to be persistent in our prayers. Though greatly enlightened respecting Jehovah's purpose and its outworking, there is still much of which we do not know the details, as to both the exact timing of events yet future and just how the many scriptures will be fulfilled concerning the complete end of Satan's system of things. These include prophetic references to Jehovah's people, such as the one found at Isaiah 26:20: "Hide yourself for but a moment until the denunciation passes over." *W 5/15 3, 4*

Thursday, January 10

I for one, although absent in body but present in spirit, have certainly judged already, as if I were present, the man who has worked in such a way as this.—1 Cor. 5:3.

The apostles and other older men back there saw to it that the congregations functioned in an orderly, harmonious way, under the headship of Christ. They knew that spiritual and moral cleanness had to be maintained. There could be no compromise in this regard. Otherwise, how could the Christian congregation keep separate from the world and be used as an honorable vessel in carrying out Jehovah's work? To emphasize the importance of obedience to divine requirements, those older men made visits and wrote letters to help local appointed shepherds and the flock in their care. (1 Pet. 5:1-5) They did not hesitate to express what should be done with regard to judging matters. Such counsel helped the responsible brothers to adjust their thinking. And what they have written serves to help traveling overseers and other older men in dealing with problems that arise in the congregations today. *W 2/15 10, 12*

Friday, January 11

That is why God has blessed you to time indefinite. —Ps. 45:2.

This handsome, charming King has God's indefinitely lasting blessing. The reason why is that he spoke what Jehovah God taught him to speak. He preached and taught God's truth about the theocratic government that is to bless all mankind. When Jesus Christ was standing trial for his life and the Roman governor Pontius Pilate asked him whether he was a king, he fearlessly answered: "You

yourself are saying that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone that is on the side of the truth listens to my voice." (John 18:37) For his faithfully telling the truth about the Kingdom, Jehovah God blessed him with a resurrection from the dead. Moreover, God gave him a heavenly kingship, not only over the Israelite subjects of King David, but also over all mankind. Jehovah God's indefinitely lasting blessing upon him portends good for all of us. *W 1/15 10a*

Saturday, January 12

God anointed [Jesus Christ] with holy spirit and power. —Acts 10:38.

Under the Mosaic law, a failure to respect the sacred purpose of the holy anointing oil constituted a capital offense. (Ex. 30:31-33) This furnishes vital lessons for us, for this oil was representative of Jehovah's holy spirit with which Jesus was anointed. Truly, then, we want to have the highest regard for God's spirit, doing our utmost to follow its leading. This includes preserving a good conscience so that we do not slight or 'grieve the spirit.' (Eph. 4:30) Moreover, since it is by means of his spirit that God is building up the Christian congregation, we need to guard against giving credit to men for what is being accomplished. Our firm faith in the inspired prophecies also is a confirmation of our having a proper attitude toward the spirit that is responsible for those prophecies. Do our words and actions demonstrate that we are awaiting "new heavens and a new earth" and want as many others as possible to learn about this grand hope? —2 Pet. 3:13. *W 5/1 6, 7a*

Sunday, January 13

Let your light shine before men, that they may see your fine works and give glory to your Father who is in the heavens.—Matt. 5:16.

For us, faith is not something merely to profess. Rather, it must be alive, active and accompanied by works. Jesus described its fruitage in his Sermon on the Mount. And on his last evening with his apostles he said that by bearing much fruit they would glorify the Father. (John 15:8) It is true in these critical times that "faith is not a possession of all people." (2 Thess. 3:2) But it is very much a possession of the Christian witnesses of Jehovah. It is our living faith that motivates us to continue telling forth the "good news" publicly in the field service. It is the same faith that strengthens us to continue giving the witness, even in most difficult territories, and to stand firm in the face of bitter trials and persecutions. It enables us even to rejoice in times of trial, as we look forward with keen anticipation to the revelation of Jesus Christ in Kingdom glory. W 1/1 1, 2

Monday, January 14

It is according to his good pleasure . . . to gather all things together again in the Christ.—Eph. 1:9, 10.

Because the nation of Israel had rejected theocratic organization, Jehovah rejected it as his visible theocratic organization, and put an end to the Jewish administration. But he did not desert the small remnant of individual Israelites who had placed their full faith in Jesus and had followed him as the Messiah. He transferred them into a new

visible theocratic organization. This occurred on Pentecost. He used his resurrected Son in pouring out holy spirit upon waiting disciples in Jerusalem. It identified the new visible theocratic organization. The destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E. verified that God had rejected the Jewish theocratic organization and had begun a new Christian administration toward his people. It continued victoriously despite efforts of the Roman Empire to stamp it out of existence by persecution! And it is victorious in modern times. W 3/1 10, 11

Tuesday, January 15

Let marriage be honorable among all, and the marriage bed be without defilement, for God will judge fornicators and adulterers.—Heb. 13:4.

Yes, fornication and adultery are serious sins, regardless of what any humans may say or do. There will be no place for immoral persons in the "new earth." (Rev. 21:1-4, 8) Thus, what should that mean relative to our conduct with the opposite sex? What about dating, for example? This was God's law to the Israelites: "You must form no marriage alliance with them. Your daughter you must not give to his son, and his daughter you must not take for your son." Similarly, Christians are advised to marry "only in the Lord," that is, marry only fellow worshippers of Jehovah. (Deut. 7:3; 1 Cor. 7:39) Such a requirement may appear overly restrictive, but is it really? Judging from the prevalence of sexual immorality in the world today, it is actually just as fitting and applicable as it was when God's people were living alongside the depraved Canaanites, or among the sexy inhabitants of ancient Corinth. W 4/1 10, 11a

Wednesday, January 16

Then he went on to tell them an illustration with regard to the need for them always to pray and not to give up.—Luke 18:1.

When near the end of his earthly ministry, Jesus gave an illustration emphasizing the need of persistence in prayer. First, however, we will consider what led up to the giving of this illustration. Looking back at Luke 17:22-37, we note that Luke was reporting what Jesus had said concerning the conditions that would prevail when he would be "rejected by this generation." While these words of Jesus, corresponding in part to Matthew 24, had a fulfillment in his day, leading up to the end of that Jewish system of things, they have a greater fulfillment in this our day, the "time of the end" for the present system of things. (Dan. 12:4) And what are the prevailing conditions among the people of this generation today? Yes, daily it is becoming more like the days of Noah. (Gen. 6:12, 13) All of this underscores the need of heeding Jesus' words on the importance of prayer. W 5/15 10, 11a

Thursday, January 17

Gird your sword upon your thigh, O mighty one, with your dignity and your splendor . . . ride in the cause of truth and humility and righteousness.—Ps. 45:3, 4.

When Jesus Christ was on earth as a perfect man, he had his enemies. It is not strange, then, that he still has enemies on earth after his enthronement in heaven since 1914. Some hours before his martyr's death he said to his disciples: "If the world hates you, you know that it has hated me before it hated you." (John 15:18) Today the

world has not turned to loving Jesus Christ. The worldly nations would like to block the enthroned Jesus Christ from ruling over mankind. They would like to limit his rulership to heaven and to keep rulership of the earth for themselves perpetually. So the cause of truth, humility and righteousness is implicated. Because the worldly nations have taken such an unyielding stand since 1914, they have to reckon with Jesus Christ in a violent war. That war will result in deliverance for all lovers of truth and righteousness. W 1/15 11a

Friday, January 18

In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.—Rom. 8:37, American Standard Version.

We do not have to wait until Har-Magedon to become world conquerors. We launch out on world conquest when we turn around from following the ways of the world and, on the basis of our faith in Jesus Christ, dedicate our lives to Jehovah and receive water baptism. Thus we make a conquest by faith. It is, however, a conquest that we must maintain 'through thick and thin,' out of appreciation for the love shown to us by Jehovah and his Son. Speaking for all such conquerors, the apostle Paul declared the above. Jesus himself illustrated, while here on earth, how we may complete this conquest by faith. He knew God's Word. He found delight in that Word, and became skilled in using it as "the sword of the spirit." (Eph. 6:17) Under temptation by Satan in the wilderness, he three times turned back the adversary, saying, "It is written." His conquest was based on adherence to the Word of God. So must ours be.—Matt. 4:3-11. W 2/1 4-6

Saturday, January 19

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.

Due to inherited imperfections, early Christians experienced problems similar to ours. Temptations that they faced were much like the ones we are called on to resist. (1 Cor. 10:13) They lived amid a wicked system of things that is still present today and from which we all long for deliverance. Their chief adversary, the Devil, we also must oppose. (1 Pet. 5:8) In the face of their fleshly weaknesses, pressures from the world and opposition from invisible wicked spirit forces, those first-century Christians had a work to do. Their commission was to preach the "good news" and make disciples. That twofold commission also applies to us today and must be carried out to completion before the coming end of this ungodly world. And since our needs are much the same as theirs were in apostolic times, we also need the help of traveling overseers to keep on doing God's will under trying circumstances. W 2/15 2, 1

Sunday, January 20

What is looked for in stewards is for a man to be found faithful.—1 Cor. 4:2.

Out of loving concern for people, God provided his Son, Jesus Christ, to define the proper place for all of us. Christ laid the foundations for a Christian society. Today that society of true worshipers exists among Jehovah's Witnesses. Thus, the proper place for young and old alike is within this Christian society. But note: It is not simply attending meetings with Jehovah's Witnesses or the associating with them that makes

one precious to Jehovah; rather, it is one's faithfulness to Him! A faithful six-year-old, or a 16-year-old, is far more precious to Jehovah than those mighty angels who left their own proper dwelling place and became unfaithful. (Jude 6) Those angels no longer have any place in God's arrangement. As a part of the Christian society, all of us—young and old, male and female—have a common, principal work to perform faithfully. That work is to make known our Father's purposes, to serve as his Witnesses, by our conduct and by our speaking about him. W 4/1 6, 7

Monday, January 21

Happy and holy is anyone having part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no authority, but they will be priests of God and of the Christ, and will rule as kings with him for the thousand years.—Rev. 20:6.

Early in their modern-day history the Bible Students saw that there are to be two destinies for those benefiting from Christ's ransom, a heavenly and an earthly destiny. Under Jesus Christ's direction they were able to harmonize the scriptures that tell of a heavenly reward for Christ's followers and those that speak of the blessings of an earthly paradise. No other group professing to be Christian has this matter clear, and yet how plain it has been to those taught by the "faithful and discreet slave" for the past 100 years! The Bible clearly states that Abraham's seed would bless—whom? Not themselves but all the families of mankind. The 144,000 standing with the Lamb on Mount Zion will reign with Christ as kings over whom? Not over themselves but over the rest of mankind that will live on a paradise earth. W 3/1 7a

Tuesday, January 22

That which corresponds to this is also now saving you, namely, baptism, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the request made to God for a good conscience).

—1 Pet. 3:21.

Yes, by undergoing baptism we are making a request to Jehovah God for a good conscience. That means that the feeling of guilt for past sins no longer weighs on our conscience. It means, in addition, that we have a new relationship with God and Christ as our friends. This is for the reason that our faith in Christ's sacrifice gains for us pardon from our past sins and also more than that. By exercising faith in Christ we are accepted by God as friends. As long as we maintain that same faith and faithfulness, we can pray for forgiveness of our day-to-day sins and preserve that intimate relationship. Of course, we should not "accept the undeserved kindness of God and miss its purpose." (2 Cor. 6:1) We may not rightly think that we may presume on that intimacy and continue to hold a good standing with God. W 4/15 15, 16

Wednesday, January 23

With you is the source of life; by light from you we can see light.—Ps. 36:9.

The exercise of courage requires a clear understanding and discernment of God's purpose, also of the righteous standards and principles set forth in God's Word. Among mankind, never has there been such a wholesale abandonment to selfishness, violence, corruption and uncleanness of all sorts. (2 Tim. 3:1-5) There are many and various pressures to contend with in these "last days." This means that we must learn how to view every

situation and problem from God's standpoint. It is only by looking to him that we can get true enlightenment through his Word and with the aid of his spirit and organization. Hence, the need for persistence in prayer and the need to build a true and strong faith, a victorious faith. Knowing our needs, Jehovah, in his Word, has kindly given us much timely encouragement, counsel and warning on these vital matters. Of course, to be heard by Jehovah God, we must meet his terms for prayer. W 5/15 6

Thursday, January 24

Let us hold fast the public declaration of our hope without wavering, for he is faithful that promised. And let us consider one another to incite to love and fine works.

—Heb. 10:23, 24.

By inciting others, we also arouse ourselves, impressing on our own minds and hearts the importance of works that are consistent with faith. This can have a highly beneficial effect on us, causing us to examine ourselves and to make improvement in Christian living and activity. And when we listen to what others say and then apply the Scriptural encouragement, we gain the happiness that comes from being "doers of the word." (Jas. 1:22-25) Paul, in the same chapter in Hebrews, also encourages sharing, responding to the material needs of others. He says: "Keep on remembering the former days in which, after you were enlightened, you endured a great contest under sufferings, sometimes while you were being exposed as in a theater both to reproaches and tribulations, and sometimes while you became sharers with those who were having such an experience."—Heb. 10:32, 33. W 5/1 13, 14

Friday, January 25

Stand firm against the machinations of the Devil.

—Eph. 6:11.

Trials of our faith are certain to increase in the days just ahead. And why? It is because, since the birth of God's kingdom in 1914, the Devil has been "hurled down to the earth." He knows he has only "a short period of time." Hence, his wrath increases toward those servants of Jehovah on earth "who observe the commandments of God and have the work of bearing witness to Jesus" as the mighty enthroned King who now prepares forever to vindicate Jehovah's sovereignty. (Rev. 12:9-12, 17) The great adversary stirs up troubles and tensions in the world, particularly to the end of slowing down, or even stopping this "work of bearing witness." As witnesses for God and Christ we have a real fight on our hands—against invisible foes that are bent on destroying our faith and work. This is no time to be passive or indifferent, even as the apostle Paul admonishes. The Devil's attacks may come at any time, and from many different directions. W 1/1 7, 8

Saturday, January 26

Jehovah will make an accounting on the earth, concluding it and cutting it short.—Rom. 9:28.

All nations have proved to be violators of right rules of conduct and of government. Past human history indicates that the nations must all meet up with a day of reckoning. This day of reckoning for all nations is while they are still going concerns and striving to perpetuate their rule in the styles of government that they prefer. Will the nations survive the coming day of inspection and of settling accounts

with the superhuman Judicial Authority to whom all the nations are accountable? We desire for the day of reckoning a Judicial Authority that is superior to all the impotent gods of the nations, One that cannot be bribed by the wealthy, highly developed nations, One that does not stand in fear of the heavily militarized superpowers of the world. This superhuman Judicial Authority is none other than Jehovah God, the Sovereign Lord of the universe. It is our privilege to witness for him. —Isa. 43:10-12. W 1/15 6, 7

Sunday, January 27

He that exercises faith in me, that one also will do the works that I do; and he will do works greater than these, because I am going my way to the Father.—John 14:12.

Has the Son of man really found the faith on the earth? (Luke 18:8) The gathering of Jehovah's Witnesses—more than two million strong—clearly testifies that he has. News media have described our assemblies as "out of this world." And something exceptional they should be! For God's people are striving for excellence. The churches of Christendom have shown that they are part of the world. On the other hand, we, in taking a neutral stand toward politics, have shown unequivocally that we are "no part of the world." (John 15:19) Our faith rests not in the fleshly arm or in war machines. Our invincible faith acknowledges "God as ruler rather than men." And because we "obey God as ruler" in witnessing concerning his Kingdom purposes, we show that we have God's spirit. (Acts 5:29) Thus we have been energized to do the works Jesus spoke of, in preaching the Kingdom earth wide. W 2/1 1, 2, 5a

Monday, January 28

Jehovah will not forsake his people, nor will he leave his own inheritance.—Ps. 94:14.

"Jehovah will not desert his people for the sake of his great name." The prophet Samuel had said this at the time when the Israelites had rejected Jehovah as king and opted for a human king. (1 Sam. 12:22) The psalmist spoke in a similar vein. Do each of us personally place confidence in these words? Esther, Mordecai and the Jews of their day did, even as is seen from the record in the book of Esther. Out of love for Jehovah's people, Esther even took her life in her hands, courageously going before King Ahasuerus uninvited. Like Mordecai and Esther, anointed Christians of today, as well as their companions, the "great crowd" of "other sheep," show similar love for all of God's people. And despite persecution by religious opposers, pictured by Haman and his crowd, Jehovah's present-day servants act with implicit trust in Jehovah. And when Jehovah chooses to do so, he can direct governmental authorities so as to accomplish his will, even as noted at Proverbs 21:1. W 3/15 1, 6, 7a

Tuesday, January 29

We must obey God as ruler rather than men.—Acts 5:29.

The organizing of the congregation as a spirit-anointed people moved forward from Pentecost, which marked the beginning of the Christian administration. (Eph. 1:10) As a spiritual Israel it was brought into a new covenant with God. The theocratic attitude of that congregation of Christ's disciples was displayed in their replies to the religious court of Jerusalem when that Court, guilty of the blood of Jesus, demanded that they stop wit-

nessing about the resurrected Son of God. Boldly they said the above. Those first-century Christians were distinguished by the faith that conquers the world. They were not ashamed to suffer under the name of Christian, for the spirit of glory, even the spirit of God, was resting upon them. (1 Pet. 4:14; Acts 11:26) Later, apostasy—religious rebellion—made it seem that the true theocratic organization had disappeared. But had it been killed forever? According to God's Word, never could that be the case! The facts show that in modern times it was restored. W 3/1 13, 14

Wednesday, January 30

Let the young children come to me; do not try to stop them, for the kingdom of God belongs to suchlike ones. —Mark 10:14.

Perhaps you have had an experience similar to this: You were invited to some large function where there were place markers for all the guests. But by some oversight there was no place designated for you. This can be an awkward and embarrassing situation. It is not pleasant to be left out or overlooked, is it? In the same way, some persons may be inclined to overlook or leave out young people, considering them unworthy of attention or concern. But that is not how our Creator, Jehovah God, or his Son, Jesus Christ, view them. When his disciples were inclined to brush children aside, Jesus reprimanded them with the above words. Stressing that even small creatures are precious to God, Jesus said that not even a sparrow falls to the ground without God's being aware of it. (Matt. 10:29) So if God considers even little birds to be of value, how much more can little children be dear to him! W 4/1 1, 2

Thursday, January 31

Rejoice in the hope. Endure under tribulation. Persevere in prayer.—Rom. 12:12.

Luke's Gospel records how Jesus, concluding his prophecy for both his day and ours, warned of overindulgence and our hearts' becoming "weighed down with overeating and heavy drinking and anxieties of life, and suddenly that day [of final judgment] be instantly upon [us] as a snare." He then pointedly said: "Keep awake, then, all the time making supplication [to what end?] that you may succeed in escaping all these things

that are destined to occur, and in standing before the Son of man." (Luke 21:34-36) This does not mean that we are taken away from the scene of action, but, rather, that we must avoid being 'caught on the wrong foot,' as in a snare, or being found in the wrong camp. Instead, we must earnestly pray at all times and endeavor to act in harmony with our prayers that we may be found having a "standing [of approval] before the Son of man." In view of all these reminders as to persistence and never giving up, how often do you pray? *W 5/15 18, 19a*

Friday, February 1

Woe is me if I did not declare the good news!—1 Cor. 9:16.

Brothers sent out to the congregations invariably are men who take the lead in Kingdom-preaching and disciple-making. They have gotten the sense of the word and are bearing fine fruit. (Matt. 13:23) Imbued with a feeling of urgency born of genuine appreciation for what God's kingdom means, and recognizing the seriousness of these last days, they do not loiter at their business. Having this attitude, they endeavor to build up in others the same evangelistic spirit that identified the early Christian congregation. (Acts 5:42; 8:1-4) 'The traveling overseers' high regard for Jesus' commands to preach the "good news" and make disciples moves them to stress this twofold commission as a sacred trust, a divine requirement. They invite as many as possible to share with them in witnessing. They give help to those who lack experience. The zeal and fine lead of the visiting elders show that they feel as the apostle Paul did about his ministry. *W 2/15 14, 15*

Saturday, February 2

He is closing an account and making a deduction with saving goodness. Because with the whole land the Lord will make a reckoning.—Isa. 10:23, Septuagint, Thomson.

Who will hold a reckoning with the guilty nations? Logically, it must be some intelligent entity that is more than equal to all the deep-rooted difficulties of peoples and that is impartial to the races and nations, an almighty Intelligence that can turn this day of reckoning into one of relief for all lovers of what is right. Ah yes, what our hearts instinctively want is for the Supreme Being of the universe to serve as the Final Judge and Administrator of justice. Where would the harmony, the orderliness, the preciseness of the operation of our universe be without such a universal Lawgiver? Where would the beneficial cooperation of all the interdependent things that make up our natural environment be without such a Designer and Creator? They would be nowhere. —Rom. 1:20. *W 1/15 6, 8*

Sunday, February 3

You are the light of the world.—Matt. 5:14.

A Christian's conduct is to shine brightly in a morally dark world. Paul charged all disciples to keep on "shining as illuminators in the world." (Phil. 2:15) Those early disciples, though associated with the apostles, were still imperfect humans. If not careful they could be influenced by the moral atmosphere of a "crooked and twisted generation" and in a moment of temptation could forsake their Christian morality. In fact, some returned completely to works of darkness. (Phil. 3:18, 19) So, too, in our time the pressure is on to make us return to the darkness of this world. Regrettably, some Christians have yielded to the pressure. Though by and large we are known world wide for our honest and moral lives, individually some have ceased walking as "children of light" and have had to be expelled from the congregation. (Eph. 5:8) However, in addition to our conduct, we shine as light bearers by giving people the light of understanding about God and his purposes. *W 6/1 2, 3*

Monday, February 4

You yourself will arise, you will have mercy on Zion . . . For your servants have found pleasure in her stones, and to her dust they direct their favor.—Ps. 102:13, 14.

It certainly denotes appreciation of Jehovah's organization when a repentant person finds pleasure in its very "stones" and favors its very "dust," so to speak. Appreciation of that kind on the part of the repentant exiles in Babylon Jehovah did not despise. He rewarded it with liberation at the end of the 70 years of desolation of Zion,

Jerusalem. He restored them to their homeland, there once again to practice theocratic worship in its purity. He continued to be their Theocratic King, and his chosen priesthood resumed theocratic service at the reconstructed temple of worship. This was so, in spite of the domination of Gentile world powers over them. For the time being, that arrangement was how Jehovah's theocratic government over his chosen people expressed itself. He had not deserted them. Neither did Jehovah desert his repentant people in modern times. *W 3/1 7*

Tuesday, February 5

As regards the resurrection of the dead, did you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying, "I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob"? He is the God, not of the dead, but of the living.—Matt. 22:31, 32.

Since God has made preparations for the long-dead Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, those ancient men of faith are sure to have a resurrection from the dead under God's government. Jesus pointed out that fact in a discussion with the Sadducees, who did not believe in a resurrection. Jehovah used to be the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob before they died. He can be a God of a living Abraham, of a living Isaac, of a living Jacob, only by resurrecting them from the dead. They will be persons living under the heavenly government that Jehovah their God has prepared for them. It will then be in fulfillment of Psalm 45:16 for the glorified Messiah to appoint them as "princes in all the earth." He will fulfill toward them each one of his titles as foretold in Isaiah 9:6, even Eternal Father. *W 6/15 7, 8*

Wednesday, February 6

God is really among you.
—1 Cor. 14:25.

Not only as regards witnessing to others but also within the congregation, youths can make a fine contribution to Jehovah's praise. In the world today many young ones use filthy language, are sloppily dressed and lack good manners. So when you young Christians are polite, are neatly groomed and take a genuine interest in spiritual matters, visitors to the Kingdom Hall are favorably impressed. Especially are they impressed when they hear you deliver a well-prepared student talk, or listen to you as you make enthusiastic comments with genuine conviction; or when they see you doing such things as caring for the microphones, greeting others before and after meetings, helping at the literature counters and in cleaning the hall. Yes, visitors may be so impressed by the example of you young Christians that they will be moved to conclude that God is with the congregation. So never be negative, but, rather, be thankful that you can do many things that are a help to your brothers and sisters. W 4/1 19, 20

Thursday, February 7

No man can come to me unless the Father, who sent me, draws him.—John 6:44.

Jehovah God expressed great love and undeserved kindness by making the arrangement for us to have intimacy with him. And even more than that, God is working in connection with his purpose. It is he who draws right-hearted persons to Christ. How does he do the drawing? God can effect a change in a person's will. He knows what is deepest in a person's heart. He can then not only cause him to hear

about Christ and the way of salvation, but also give understanding of the arrangement. He can open blind eyes. God's drawing of men and women to put faith in Christ during this system of things, though they would never of themselves have done so, is the getting into their hearts a knowledge of the fineness of Christ. Then, on the part of the individual, he desires from the heart to follow Christ, just as people, when they really see and realize the goodness of a good person, desire to approach him and become his friend. Similarly, God draws the hearts of men to Christ. W 4/15 8-10

Friday, February 8

You both expressed sympathy for those in prison and joyfully took the plundering of your belongings, knowing you yourselves have a better and an abiding possession.
—Heb. 10:34.

Do we likewise express sympathy to those who are suffering and do we come to their aid? The situation in which God's servants find themselves varies considerably. Some may be poverty-stricken. Others may be sad and depressed, in sore need of comfort and fellowship. Still others may be discouraged on account of serious personal problems. It is true that Jehovah God will see to it that the righteous are not entirely forsaken. (Ps. 37:25) But should we not personally feel the responsibility of being Jehovah God's agents for extending kindness and help? Our being neglectful in this respect is a serious matter. The apostle John wrote: "Whoever . . . be- holds his brother having need and yet shuts the door of his tender compassions upon him, in what way does the love of God remain in him?"—1 John 3:17. W 5/1 14, 15

Saturday, February 9

God makes all his works co-operate together for the good of those who love God.
—Rom. 8:28.

The "faithful and discreet slave," foretold at Matthew 24:45-47, was never inspired, never perfect. Those writings by certain members of the "slave" class that came to form the Christian part of God's Word were inspired and infallible, but that is not true of other writings since. The increasing light on God's Word as well as the facts of history have repeatedly required that adjustments of one kind or another be made down to the very present time. But let us never forget that the motives of this "slave" class were always pure, unselfish; at all times it has been well-meaning. Moreover, the words of Paul above are fitting here also. Actually, any adjustments that have been made in understanding have furnished an opportunity for those being served by this "slave" to show loyalty and love, which Jesus said would mark his followers. For those who truly love God's law there is no stumbling block.—Ps. 119:165. W 3/1 15a

Sunday, February 10

For even the Son of man came, not to be ministered to, but to minister and to give his soul a ransom in exchange for many.—Mark 10:45.

Let the Devil keep on maligning mankind as being unfit for a resurrection because of an inability to produce men and women who keep their integrity toward God. Resurrection of dead mankind will take place on the "last day" mentioned by Martha. (John 11:24) Why so? Because God, for whom nothing is impossible, has produced a redeemer, his only-begotten Son who became related to humankind

by being born as a perfect man. He came to earth, not to be served, but to serve and to give his soul as a ransom. This paved the way for God to sanction the resurrection of as many as were ransomed or redeemed by the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ. Consequently, the "last day" does not mean the final day for mankind to exist, inasmuch as the resurrection of redeemed mankind takes place on that "day" under Christ's millennial reign. This resurrection hope should spur us on to faithful Kingdom service. W 6/15 24, 25

Monday, February 11

If any one of you is lacking in wisdom, let him keep on asking God, for he gives generously to all and without reproaching; and it will be given him.—Jas. 1:5.

The foretold "critical times hard to deal with" are certainly here with increasing pressures and dangers of all sorts crowding in on people everywhere, especially on true Christians who are on the 'cramped road leading off into life.' (Matt. 7:14; 2 Tim. 3:1-5) One of the Devil's main methods of attack is, as Peter wrote, to act "like a roaring lion, seeking to devour someone" after frightening us off that road. (1 Pet. 5:8) He brings about threatening situations, either on a national scale or on a more personal level, with the object of forcing us to make some compromise, if not completely to abandon our stand involving Bible principles. Our daily living, even life itself, can be at stake over difficult questions of employment or neutrality. This is where the need arises to keep praying for wisdom to discern and the strength to apply Bible principles. W 5/15 9b

Tuesday, February 12

Having come to be past all moral sense, they gave themselves over to loose conduct to work uncleanness of every sort with greediness.—Eph. 4:19.

Obviously, modern times have seen a worsening of the worldwide moral environment. This is apparent in the forms of entertainment that thrive today. Why single out entertainment? Because we can learn much about a person's inclinations from what he does after his regular working hours, when he can do what he *wants* to do. What a person does with his free time, when he is "off duty," as it were, tells much about what he is really like. Judging from the notoriously bad forms of entertainment that are popular today, the moral quality of today's world is very low. But is such baseness affecting you? The apostle Paul's letter to the Ephesian Christians should be of utmost importance to us, for in it he gets to the bottom of what it means to walk as "children of light." (Eph. 5:3) His counsel is truly relevant in these critical last days when many in the world have "come to be past all moral sense." W 6/1 4, 5

Wednesday, February 13

Judas and Silas . . . encouraged the brothers with many a discourse and strengthened them.—Acts 15:32.

In the first century, the apostles and other older men made timely visits as traveling overseers to the Christian congregations. Today traveling overseers regularly visit more than 42,000 congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses throughout the world. Do such visits, ancient and modern, have much in common? Yes, indeed! Both then and now, visits from spiritual men have been welcome as a provision

to strengthen, encourage and otherwise help God's people. These visits in apostolic times provide helpful guidance for us today. As we examine some Scriptural accounts and draw many modern-day parallels, we should be able to deepen our appreciation for such "gifts in men," who serve and meet our needs. (Eph. 4:8) It was their humble, self-sacrificing spirit that made those "older men" such an encouragement to their brothers. For example, there was Timothy. Paul had no hesitation about sending him to the Philippian congregation.—Phil. 2:20-22. W 2/15 1-3, 5

Thursday, February 14

Praise Jah, you people . . . you young men and also you virgins.—Ps. 148:1, 12.

Our physical bodies themselves are a credit to Jehovah. The beauty, agility and grace of movement of athletic young men and women bespeak the work of a Master Designer. But humans are also meant to praise Jehovah by the upright way in which they live their lives, and by the good things they speak about him and his works. We should have the determination of the psalmist David: "The praise of Jehovah my mouth will speak." Also, our conduct should be exemplary. Christians are urged to "turn away from what is bad and do what is good." (Ps. 145:21; 1 Pet. 3:11) Are you showing Jehovah appreciation for his goodness by praising him in these ways? Are you in your proper place? Humans, unfortunately, are inclined to be concerned with position. Some youths today have this attitude. They feel that they lack privileges or opportunities to do things in the congregation. Yet the truth is, you young ones have special opportunities to give praise to Jehovah. W 4/1 9, 10

Friday, February 15

Do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the wicked one.—Matt. 6:13.

Thus Jesus said we should pray. This is similar to the psalmist's prayer at Psalm 141:3. How are these prayers answered? A person tempted to do wrong will be reminded immediately that the bad act will damage his fine relationship with God; such acts are against the law of love; they bring reproach upon the good name of God and Christ, because the Christian professes to be their representative; if he gives in he will bring reproach and sorrow upon himself and his loved ones; he will disgrace the Christian congregation. The good conscience he asked for when exercising faith in Christ's sacrifice for all sins will be sorely hurt. These warning thoughts arise because of the Christian's constant reading of the Bible and by the prompting of God's spirit, or, sometimes, of a fellow Christian. They will act as deterrents to his going headlong into following a fleshly desire, as would be true of one not having the safeguard of a good relationship with God. W 4/15 6, 8a

Saturday, February 16

For he must rule as king until God has put all enemies under his feet. As the last enemy, death is to be brought to nothing.—1 Cor. 15:25, 26.

The "last day" spoken of by Martha (John 11:24) will be a day of judgment for resurrected mankind, including those humans who disregarded Jesus and did not receive his sayings. The words of Jesus recorded at John 12:48 indicate this. And that Jesus associated the time of judging the world of mankind with the resurrection is seen from John 5:27-29. Of course, that

day will not be a day of twenty-four hours. It will be a time period of 1,000 years in length. It will coincide with the 1,000 years of Christ's reign. (2 Pet. 3:8; Rev. 20:4, 6) That "day" will be a glorious one, for it will be marked by the wiping out of all the effects of the death that we all inherited from Adam and Eve because of the sentence of death that was pronounced upon them. So, surely, the 1,000-year reign of Christ is something to which we all should look forward, even as seen from Paul's words above. W 6/15 15, 16

Sunday, February 17

When you spread a feast, invite poor people, crippled, lame, blind; and you will be happy, because they have nothing with which to repay you. For you will be repaid in the resurrection of the righteous ones.—Luke 14:13, 14.

Jesus Christ expressed a similar thought at Matthew 6:3, 4. Yes, we can rest assured that when we show kindnesses to needy ones our heavenly Father, Jehovah God, will reward us richly both now and in the eternal future. So, taking a comprehensive view of our sacrifices, we must admit that at meetings, when sharing the "good news" with others, and in attitude, word and action, yes, in all areas of life, we should be prepared to give our very best. We should not be halfhearted about such vital matters. What is at stake is Jehovah's approval and our being granted life. May we, therefore, live in harmony with the Scriptural assurance: "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."—Heb. 6:10. W 5/1 17, 18

Monday, February 18

For if they did not escape who begged off from him who was giving divine warning upon earth, much more shall we not if we turn away from him who speaks from the heavens.—Heb. 12:25.

Paul, in his letter to the Hebrews, gives much practical help and guidance in building up a true and strong faith, leading to a close relationship with Jehovah and Christ. Understandably, he makes many comparisons between the Jews making up fleshly Israel and those Jews who became the first members of spiritual Israel. Based on these comparisons, Paul shows how the Hebrew Christians enjoyed many advantages over those of fleshly Israel, but this also brought greater responsibility. All true Christians today can likewise apply these same things to themselves and be benefited thereby. Paul earlier on makes the point that if the word spoken through angels when the Law was given to Israel had to be treated with the greatest respect, then even more must Christians treat with respect the words brought to them.—Heb. 2:1-3. W 5/15 16-18b

Tuesday, February 19

He that remains in union with me, and I in union with him, this one bears much fruit; because apart from me you can do nothing at all.—John 15:5.

In this period that calls for vital decisions to be made, there is no uncertainty in our minds about to whom we, as fully dedicated Christians, should go. The way has been clearly identified for us. Speaking to those who had continued with him in his trials, Jesus said the above. How true those words of Jesus proved to be in the lives of the apostles

and other early disciples! And they have proved true down to our day. Although directed toward those who were in line for a place in God's heavenly kingdom, they state truths from which all of Christ's true followers can benefit. Earlier, Jesus had declared the truth found at John 3:16. And these words apply with equal force to all the sheep that Jesus spoke about at John 10:16: "I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; those also I must bring, and they will listen to my voice, and they will become one flock, one shepherd." W 3/1 1, 2a

Wednesday, February 20

Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. It says, not: "And to seeds," as in the case of many such, but as in the case of one: "And to your seed," who is Christ.—Gal. 3:16.

When God miraculously sent his only-begotten Son to become a perfect man on earth through birth from a virgin Jewess, the Son of God was made "a little lower than angels." (Heb. 2:9) What, though, is his status today—now? He has been resurrected by God to a heavenly station even far higher than that of the angels, due to his proving faithful to God down to a sacrificial death in innocence. That this lamblike Son of God might extend the benefits of his sacrifice to all mankind, Jehovah God resurrected him on the third day, to heavenly life, to immortality and to greater superiority over all angels. Thus he could serve as the "seed" for the blessing of all the nations of the earth. So, then, ought we not to be glad over this glorification of Christ in the heavens? Yes, for what a bright outlook on life for the future this gives us! W 1/15 15-17

Thursday, February 21

No longer go on walking just as the nations also walk in the unprofitableness of their minds, while they are in darkness mentally, and alienated from the life that belongs to God, . . . because of the insensibility of their hearts.

—Eph. 4:17, 18.

How were the people of the nations in Paul's day "walking"? As gleaned from a first-century eyewitness, they were walking without any genuine goal in life, overemphasizing amusement, seeking pleasure from any source. Ancient Ephesus contained a massive 25,000-seat amphitheater and a stadium that could offer spectacles to delight any fancy. These structures were products of the existing world empire, Rome, of which one historian said: "The moral condition of the empire is, indeed, in some respects one of the most appalling pictures on record." An unbelievable condition, one might say. While the gladiatorial contests are long gone, the fact is that in many lands the most popular movies and television programs are those that feature violence.—Eph. 4:19. W 6/1 6, 7, 11

Friday, February 22

Jehovah is taking knowledge of the way of righteous ones, but the very way of wicked ones will perish.—Ps. 1:6.

In a certain African land many thousands of our brothers are restricted in camps. Though some have been arrested, circuit overseers, as loving shepherds, have continued their upbuilding visits to the congregations. After reporting on the brothers' increasing difficulties, one of these concludes his report with the words: "Please, you must not forget us in your prayers." So let us remember

these faithful brothers, 'extending ourselves in prayers' on their behalf, fully confident that Jehovah will keep them in his love and relieve their burden in his own good time and way. (Rom. 15:30) Another country reports that while there was a decrease in the number of publishers there was an increase in the quality of their service. These faithful ones under ban continue to be richly blessed as they make the "law of Jehovah" their delight. No matter how hard the persecutions, these precious ones can draw comfort from the above words of the psalmist. W 1/1 8, 9, 11, 12a

Saturday, February 23

Become steadfast, unmovable, always having plenty to do in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in connection with the Lord.
—1 Cor. 15:58.

What hope would there be for the dead of mankind were it not for the promised resurrection? The resurrection of the dead is an absolute necessity since the human soul is not immortal. (Ezek. 18:4, 20; Isa. 53:12) For dead mankind to live again anywhere there needs to be a resurrection. That is why Jehovah God laid the basis for such a miracle to take place in his due time. When he raised his self-sacrificing Son from the dead on the third day, he opened the way for this worthy Son to ascend back to where he was before, to heaven. The Son took along with him the full redeeming value of his perfect human sacrifice. Never again will Jesus Christ die. He offered up one human sacrifice for mankind's sins forever. So, when he comes the second time, it does not mean his facing death. Due to the certainty of the resurrection Paul said the above. W 6/15 1a

Sunday, February 24

These are the things that the Amen says, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation by God.

—Rev. 3:14.

Why did Jesus thus speak of himself? Because he was God's first creation in heaven and God then used him as His collaborator in making all other things. The creating of the invisible heavenly angels preceded the creating of mankind. By reason of the creating of his only-begotten Son and all the holy angels, God has not remained alone like a hermit in his own spiritual realm. According to the Bible's account, these superhuman angels number up into the hundreds of millions. (Dan. 7:9, 10) Those myriads of angels will be at God's beck and call on the day of reckoning for all the earthly nations. They are also at the service of his associate Judge by means of whom he will judge the inhabited earth on his set day. By means of this associate Judge, God will make the coming day of reckoning for all the nations work out for our lasting good. Should we not share this good news with others? W 1/15 13-15, 18

Monday, February 25

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.

In order for us to be faithful in offering our spiritual sacrifices, we need to appreciate why Jehovah God invites us to do so. Our heavenly Father already knows our inmost thoughts. But he wants us to express our love for him by the positive good that we do for others. It is his desire that his servants be like him

in showing kindness and generosity. (Matt. 5:43-48) This provides the means for him to draw humans to himself. How so? By observing our fine way of life, others may come to recognize that real happiness comes from doing God's will. (Matt. 5:16) Since Jehovah God made us, he knows what is in our best interests. This is another reason for his inviting us to bring our gifts to him. A generous spirit contributes toward our enjoying peace of mind and heart as well as genuine happiness now, even as noted above. W 5/1 16, 17

Tuesday, February 26

Look intently at . . . Jesus. For the joy that was set before him he endured a torture stake, despising shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Indeed, consider closely the one who has endured such . . . that you may not get tired and give out in your souls.

—Heb. 12:2, 3.

By these words the apostle Paul encourages us with regard to prayer. Because of all that Jesus Christ the Son of God went through he can sympathize with our weaknesses, though without sin himself, and through him we can have access to Jehovah's throne of undeserved kindness and find help at the right time. (Heb. 4:15, 16) Finally, as Paul wrote to the Christians at Ephesus, we want to keep in mind that "prayer on every occasion in spirit" is closely tied in with putting on the "complete suit of armor from God." And like the apostle Paul, we should pray for ourselves and others that we may be given "ability to speak . . . to make known the sacred secret of the good news, . . . with boldness," even as we ought to speak it.—Eph. 6:10-20. W 5/15 20, 21b

Wednesday, February 27

The things that take place in secret by them it is shameful even to relate.—Eph. 5:12.

Yes, the people of the nations in Paul's day "gave themselves over to loose conduct to work uncleanness of every sort with greediness." (Eph. 4:19) Then it was the stage or theater that contributed greatly to these practices. A report tells that "art was left out of account, every thing was designed for mere sensual gratification." How shocking! It is the very epitome of "loose conduct," a shameless disregard for decency where one ceases to care what people say or think. Is it any different today? Sexual immorality has saturated the fare offered by the entertainment media. In some countries, pornographic movies have been shown even on the television screen, thereby reaching right into the home. In Italy, when a pornographic film was shown on TV, "the city all but came to a standstill while the show was on." How careful this condition should make true Christians be to heed the counsel Paul gives at Ephesians 5:3-14! W 6/1 12, 13

Thursday, February 28

Truly I say to you, If you have faith the size of a mustard grain . . . nothing will be impossible for you.

—Matt. 17:20.

Would this indeed be the experience of Jesus' disciples? Why, yes! And especially from the day of Pentecost in 33 C.E. For it was then, the 50th day from Jesus' resurrection to spirit life, that a miracle occurred among about 120 of his disciples who were assembled in a house in Jerusalem. Jehovah's spirit was poured out on them, empowering them to speak in many tongues about "the magnifi-

cent things of God." (Acts 2:1-11) The spirit also empowered Peter to explain from God's Word what all of this meant. Jesus' conquest had been rewarded by his being exalted to the right hand of God in heaven. Now it was their privilege to share in that conquest. This they started to do by bearing thorough witness to the multilingual crowd that had come together, exhorting them to repent, be baptized and embrace the grand Kingdom message. About 3,000 heeded Peter's words. Today Jesus' words are also proving true. W 2/1 9, 10

Friday, February 29

I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; those also I must bring, and they will listen to my voice, and they will become one flock, one shepherd.—John 10:16.

Although losing the physical association of the glorified remnant, the "great crowd" will be comforted by a numberless throng of new inhabitants of the paradise earth. Who are these, and from where do they come? These are other redeemed ones of mankind who will be resurrected from the land of the last enemy, the Adamic death. (1 Cor. 15:26) What a joy it will then be for the "great crowd" to meet the resurrected Job, yes, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, John the Baptizer, ah, yes, even the young children of Bethlehem who were dispatched to the realm of the dead by their enemy, King Herod the Great! What a joy also to meet known friends, the Fine Shepherd's "other sheep" who did not survive the "great tribulation" and enter directly into his 1,000-year-long reign! Such resurrected humans will be harvested as the afterfruits. W 6/15 16, 17b

Saturday, March 1

Sheer zeal for [Jehovah's] house has eaten me up, and the very reproaches of those reproaching you have fallen upon me.—Ps. 69:9.

It is autumn of the year 29 C.E., and the King-designate appears. John baptizes this perfect One, upon whom God's spirit now descends like a dove. Jehovah's own voice is heard from heaven, declaring: "This is my Son, the beloved, whom I have approved." (Matt. 3:17) Then in the spring of the year 30 C.E., after the Passover had been celebrated, up in Galilee, the challenging words ring out!—"Repent, you people, for the kingdom of the heavens has drawn near." (Matt. 4:17) Who is the proclaimer of this kingdom? It is none other than the anointed King himself, Jesus Christ. Back in Jerusalem, on the occasion of the Passover, he had shown his love of righteousness by driving out of Jehovah's temple those merchants who were trying to commercialize God's worship. It was then that the disciples of Jesus recalled that the psalmist had written the above of him. Should not all his followers have a like zeal? W 7/15 2, 3

Sunday, March 2

You will be witnesses of me both in Jerusalem and . . . to the most distant part of the earth.—Acts 1:8.

There was no stopping of the thorough witness that the early Christians, together with the apostles, were giving. It must be given to the extent that Jesus himself had prophesied. Persecution served only to extend the witness. (Acts 8:4) Soon the persecutor Saul became the apostle Paul, and the first Gentiles received the gift of the holy spirit. The good news spread like wildfire

into more and more new territories, even as can be seen from Acts 17:6 and Colossians 1:23. However, as the end of the Jewish system of things approached, it appears that some of those Christians began to grow weary. Faithful elders gave them needed encouragement. Thus Paul continually exhorted them to make their Christian hope "an anchor for the soul, both sure and firm." (Heb. 6:19) At all costs they must complete their Christian conquest! They were not the sort that shrink back. Those who held fast to their faith set a fine example for us today.—Heb. 10:39. W 2/1 14, 15

Monday, March 3

I do all things for the sake of the good news.—1 Cor. 9:23.

When approached by persons at variance with one another on personal matters, traveling overseers may lovingly but firmly admonish them from God's Word, with a view to restoring peace. In ways often unnoticed, they may impart spiritual upbuilding to those who have doubts regarding Christian conduct or who otherwise need to be 'snatched out of the fire.' (Jude 22, 23) As in the first century, these traveling overseers and their wives serve under a variety of circumstances. In many parts of the earth they move from place to place each week. To reach isolated areas or jungle territory, some travel by horseback or canoe, or walk long distances over mountain trails or passes. In the interests of the congregations they endure great hardships. Many have accepted assignments far away from their families and close acquaintances. But regardless of their situation, they willingly put themselves out, being ready to adapt. W 2/15 19, 20

Tuesday, March 4

Let fornication and uncleanness of every sort or greediness not even be mentioned among you.—Eph. 5:3.

True, not at all discos may sex be "intensified, exaggerated and magnified." A restaurant, for example, may advertise as a "disco," and the entertainment may be moderate in comparison with that of some other places. It would not be for the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses or the local elders to tell others that they should not go to such a place, but extreme caution is certainly in order. It is a fact that discos have a reputation for wild abandonment of moral restraints. And that includes disco music. There may be some disco music that is not morally degrading, just as there are still a few decent motion pictures. But the trend is unmistakable. The world's entertainment has deteriorated, being insidiously designed to foster the view that fornication is not necessarily wrong. But it is! And God will adversely "judge fornicators." (Heb. 13:4) Yes, fornication should not even be the subject of our conversations. W 4/1 21a

Wednesday, March 5

Jehovah will not desert his people for the sake of his great name, because Jehovah has taken it upon himself to make you his people.
—1 Sam. 12:22.

Once the nation of Israel was in the Promised Land, the high priest always represented God, while judges served as governmental representatives of the invisible Theocrat. Nothing else like it existed on earth! That typical theocracy continued on victoriously in spite of repeated efforts of idolatrous nations round about to destroy it. It continued on

even after the visible human kings were installed over the nation of Israel in 1117 B.C.E. How was that? Because the human king merely acted as the visible representative of the real Ruler, the heavenly Theocrat. He did not relinquish His rightful rulership because of democratic action on the part of the people. No democratic election was held, but God acted within his right and appointed their visible king. Testifying to this effect are Samuel's words above. What an encouraging thought that is for all those whom 'Jehovah has taken it upon himself to make his people' in our day! W 3/1 2, 3, 5

Thursday, March 6

Whenever you pray, say, "Father, let your name be sanctified. Let your kingdom come."
—Luke 11:2.

At Luke chapter 11 Jesus discusses the subject of prayer at some length. Similar to 1 Kings 8:41-43, priority is given by Jesus to his Father's name. Jehovah's name is certainly not sanctified in the world today. The spirit of nationalism, of putting self first and of self-indulgence, being content with "a form of godly devotion but proving false to its power," and other suchlike conditions cause God's name to be reproached and dishonored or completely ignored. (2 Tim. 3:5) So God must sanctify his own name in answer to this prayer. (Ezek. 36:23) The disgraceful state of affairs will be remedied when God's kingdom, in the hands of Jesus Christ, goes into action against the nations and their rulers, as described so vividly at Psalm 2. Each of us should ask ourselves: What attitude and course of action on my part will be in harmony with God's will, as outlined in his Word? W 5/15 1, 2, 4a

Friday, March 7

Finally, brothers, whatever things are true, . . . whatever things are righteous, whatever things are chaste, whatever things are lovable, whatever things are well spoken of, whatever virtue there is and whatever praiseworthy thing there is, continue considering these things.

—Phil. 4:8.

What about our choice of entertainment today? When we or our children turn on the TV set or go to a movie, what is seen? Is there any real difference between what we choose to watch and the 'shamelessness of the Roman theater and the savagery of the arena'? Actual cases tell of how some Christians have been negligent and have become ensnared in immorality because of what they made it a habit to watch. In contrast, what moral strength those early Christians displayed! Despite living in a world where men's hearts were so petrified they were not even aware that they were sinning and all sense of decency was forgotten, they managed to keep "considering these things" Paul mentions. Considering these things will truly be a protection for us. W 6/1 21, 22

Saturday, March 8

The God that made the world and all the things in it . . . made out of one man every nation of men, to dwell upon the entire surface of the earth.—Acts 17:24, 26.

The acknowledged need for a Supreme, Almighty Being did not force him to come into existence out of nothing, but the existence of all the starry heavens before the creation of man on earth establishes and demonstrates His eternal existence and activity. Rightly he is called "the God

of gods and the Lord of lords." That is what he was called by the most eminent lawgiver and jurist of ancient times, Moses. Such a comparison Moses could make intelligently, for he was personally acquainted with the gods of ancient Egypt and was also schooled "in all the wisdom of the Egyptians." (Deut. 10:17; Acts 7:22) Centuries later this Supreme God was called to the attention of the court that sat on Mars Hill in Athens. Because of his superiority over all national groups he is called "*King of the nations*." Even as Paul witnessed to his existence, so should we today.—Jer. 10:7. W 1/15 9

Sunday, March 9

The nations became wrathful, and your own wrath came.
—Rev. 11:18.

During World War I "the nations became wrathful," and they vented their wrath on the dedicated people of the Sovereign Lord Jehovah. Why? Because these were preaching the end of the Gentile Times in 1914 and the full establishment of Christ's kingdom in the heavens. This wrath of nations came to a head in the spring of 1918, markedly in the United States of America. This was three and a half years from the end of the Gentile Times and the installation of the anointed Jesus as a heavenly King. What happened to the Kingdom proclaimers on earth in 1918 runs quite parallel with what happened to Jesus at Jerusalem "at the half of the week." (Dan. 9:27) In his case a resurrection of the dead became necessary. Correspondingly, in 1918 the proclaimers of his kingdom were dealt what the persecutors thought was a "death blow," so that the Kingdom proclamation needed a revival. W 6/15 8b

Monday, March 10

I have made your name known to them and will make it known.—John 17:26.

Jesus was always zealous for Jehovah's name and reputation. He taught his disciples to pray for that name to be sanctified. (Luke 11:2) And in prayer to Jehovah, before being parted from his disciples, he said the above. Jesus was deeply concerned about seeing his Father's name cleared of all reproach—vindicated. This pioneering minister came with a world-shaking message. (Compare Hebrews 2:10; 12:2, RSV.) His was a dynamic preaching of the Kingdom for which he also taught his disciples to pray, "Let your kingdom come." On that occasion, on a mountain of Galilee, he counseled his listeners not to set their hearts on material things, but, rather, to 'keep seeking God's kingdom and his righteousness.' (Matt. 6:10, 19-21, 24-34) Jesus came to minister to mankind, of whom he is the future king, and to give his life as a ransom. (Matt. 20:28) All who exercise faith in his ransom sacrifice will find everlasting life in the realm of his kingdom. W 7/15 4, 5

Tuesday, March 11

Make me know your own ways, O Jehovah; teach me your own paths. Make me walk in your truth and teach me.

—Ps. 25:4, 5.

Jehovah God has purposed that, when the time limit expires, he will crush this Satanic system of things out of existence, along with those who promote it and prefer it. "Every plant that my heavenly Father did not plant will be uprooted," Jesus foretold. (Matt. 15:13) This will pave the way for God's new system "in which righteousness is to dwell." (2 Pet. 3:13) That

will mean an earthly society founded on truth, an earth inhabited only by truth-loving people! Therefore, if we love what is right and want to live in God's new order, it is imperative that we walk in the truth. We should have the attitude of the psalmist who wrote the above. Similarly, we should heed the prophet Samuel's counsel to ancient Israel: "You must not turn aside to follow the unrealities that are of no benefit and that do not deliver . . . Only fear Jehovah, and you must serve him in truth with all your heart."—1 Sam. 12:21, 24. W 7/1 6, 7

Wednesday, March 12

The gift of each one's hand should be in proportion to the blessing of Jehovah your God that he has given you.
—Deut. 16:17.

How clear Jehovah God's Word makes it that our whole way of life, our day-to-day living, our attitudes and motives, are all tied in with our offerings to Jehovah God! We must maintain purity in all respects. As with the Israelites, so with us, may 'our gifts be in proportion to the blessing of Jehovah.' Let us appreciatively count the blessings that our heavenly Father has conferred on us, overlooking none of them. Then we can determine whether we are rendering to Jehovah in proportion to his gifts to us. How wonderful it is that he knows our capabilities and yet does not specifically spell out for each one of us what we must render to him! He permits us to express our appreciation from the heart. And do we not want to give him what he deserves, namely, our very best? Anything less than that would not be good enough. Our best, then, let us give to him who has given us all we possess! W 5/1 18, 19a

Thursday, March 13

Keep on, then, seeking first the kingdom and his righteousness.—Matt. 6:33.

There is much work for traveling overseers to do in aiding those associated with the congregations to make advancement in Christian living. Some who are not yet free of worldliness may try to bring in practices that would relax the high standards of conduct established in God's Word. To guard against infiltration of worldliness, traveling overseers need to show discernment in observing subtle trends. They will want to encourage God's people to adhere closely to Scriptural principles with regard to their living habits, morality and dealings with others. They may need to remind elders to act decisively in maintaining moral, doctrinal and spiritual cleanness in the congregations. In line with the advice Timothy received, traveling overseers are urged to warn Christians against the encroaching influences of materialism. (1 Tim. 6:9, 10) By their own example in putting spiritual things first they encourage others to 'seek first God's kingdom.' W 2/15 16, 17

Friday, March 14

Look! My own servants will eat, but you yourselves will go hungry. Look! My own servants will drink, but you yourselves will go thirsty. Look! My own servants will rejoice, but you yourselves will suffer shame.—Isa. 65:13.

The true Christian congregation has given evidence of possessing God's spirit by producing its fruitage. (Gal. 5:22, 23) In these and in ever so many other respects, the Christian witnesses of Jehovah stand in bright contrast to all the many denominations that make up Christendom,

nominal spiritual Israel. Because Jesus Christ is with these, the encouraging words of Isaiah find fulfillment in them. In fact, that contrast began to be apparent from the early beginnings of the modern history of Jehovah's people. These representatives of the "faithful and discreet slave" under the direction of Jesus Christ expressed their strong faith in the Bible, including the Genesis account of creation, as being the inspired Word of God. Especially highlighted was the teaching of the ransom provided by Jesus' sacrificial death. W 3/1 4, 5a

Saturday, March 15

However, those who had been scattered went through the land declaring the good news of the word.—Acts 8:4.

Reports from a number of lands in northeast Africa tell of arrests, prison terms, torture and deaths, with other Witnesses under sentence of death. Watch Tower missionaries have been expelled. Still, the vast majority of the brothers and sisters have remained faithful and are determined to make Jehovah their refuge as tests continue. (Ps. 34:7) Some are able to continue their activity in full-time preaching work, and all of them say that they appreciate our prayers on their behalf. Then again, in a country on another continent brothers are displaying marvelous loyalty under ban. They report that many new ones are coming into the organization and there are congregations that have had a 100-percent increase since the ban two years ago, one congregation increasing from 17 to 48 publishers in that time. Does this not remind us of the activity and zeal of the newly established Christian congregation? W 1/1 13, 14a

Sunday, March 16

My heart has become astir with a goodly matter. I am saying: "My works are concerning a king."—Ps. 45:1.

Paul's applying Psalm 45:6, 7 to Jesus Christ proves that the whole psalm was prophetic. By studying it we shall gain information as to what God's anointed king will do for God's glory and man's lasting happiness. The sponsors of the psalm were official Levites who served in God's temple. The psalm fairly radiates enthusiasm. The enthusiasm is that felt over the coming in of a good government in the hands of an incorruptible righteous ruler. The occasion is something heart-stirring. The "goodly matter" that stirred the heart of the inspired psalmist has proved to be an outstanding feature of what Jesus Christ called "this good news of the kingdom." So "goodly" was the Kingdom message that it deserved to "be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations." (Matt. 24:14) Today, are our hearts stirred with the "goodly" theme of God's kingdom by Christ? If so, we will do all we can to let others know about that "good news." W 1/15 3-5a

Monday, March 17

I know he will rise in the resurrection on the last day.—John 11:24.

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and other ancient people of faith will be raised on that "last day" about which Martha spoke to Jesus just before he raised her brother Lazarus back to earthly life. The humans who are to be resurrected were redeemed by the ransom sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and with respect to these the prophet Isaiah wrote the words found at Isaiah 26:

19. Thus there will be a rebirth, a regeneration of the earthly dead. This will take place after Jehovah expresses his denunciation upon the bloodguilty world for all the innocent people that it brought down prematurely into Sheol, gravedom. That means after Har-Magedon. So that "last day" of which Martha spoke will see the human dead raised to life again instead of lying covered over in the bosom of the earth. (Isa. 26:20, 21) What a bedewed freshness of renewed human life that "last day" will bestow upon the redeemed dead of mankind! Earth will no longer be a global cemetery. W 6/15 9, 10

Tuesday, March 18

Be wise, my son, and make my heart rejoice, that I may make a reply to him that is taunting me.—Prov. 27:11.

There are many vital reasons for us to be walking in the truth. One is that a person who does so goes on record as upholding the rightfulness of Jehovah's universal rulership. That has been challenged by the spirit creature who turned rebel, Satan the Devil. Included in his challenge was the taunt that God could not produce persons who would stay loyal to him and his truths. (Job 1:6-12) So, standing firm for the truth under any pressure shows that there are people of integrity who will not compromise what is right. On the other hand, a person who does not walk in the truth does much more than merely walk in error. Intentionally or unintentionally he allows himself to become aligned with Satan, the "father of the lie," who has "blinded the minds of the unbelievers." (John 8:44; 2 Cor. 4:4) However, how we can be thankful that the God of truth has set a limit for the permission of untruth! W 7/1 5, 6

Wednesday, March 19

Because of the increasing of lawlessness the love of the greater number will cool off.
—Matt. 24:12.

Do you see lawlessness on the increase today? In many parts of the earth disrespect for law and order is rising to a flood tide. What of Christendom? As Jesus prophesied for our day, "the increasing of lawlessness" has had a devastating effect on many of her sects. The Bible, which advocates proper respect for law and order, is now regarded by many as out of date. Numerous churches have gone along with the permissive society of the day, winking at immorality and corruption—thus producing a crop of counterfeit Christians, of the kind that will not "inherit God's kingdom." (1 Cor. 6:9, 10) Lawless persons have even tried to penetrate the true Christian congregation, arguing that the "promised presence" of our Lord is not in this day. They dispute the Master's appointment of the "faithful and discreet slave" to care for his Kingdom interests. (Matt. 24:45-47) May all such happenings not cause our love to cool off! W 7/15 1-3a

Thursday, March 20

Reckon yourselves to be dead indeed with reference to sin but living with reference to God by Christ Jesus.
—Rom. 6:11.

By putting faith in Christ we can live, not as ones spiritually dead because of sins, blocked from communication with God, but as ones alive, serving God, in a positive, upbuilding way, actively obeying God's commands, upbuilding others. At Romans 6:10, the apostle Paul points out that Christ came to earth for the specific purpose of dealing

with that unclean, detestable thing—sin—a thing hated, yes, loathed by both God and Christ. Though Christ always took delight in doing his Father's will, sin is an enemy, and, in doing away with sin, Jesus had to undergo many trying experiences. He suffered and died to do away with sin. Now he is glorified in heaven, forever, in association with God. This being accomplished, he could enter on an upbuilding work, to bring people into close intimacy with God again, and to bring about God's will toward all who want life. Do Paul's words above apply to the way you are living? W 4/15 6, 7

Friday, March 21

With one accord all these were persisting in prayer.
—Acts 1:14.

"To persist" or "persevere" in something means to pursue a certain course steadily until the goal is attained. These verbs include the thought of overcoming difficulties and opposition before success is obtained. Fittingly, Acts 1:14 states the above concerning the little band of Jesus' true followers. They knew that Jesus had been raised from the dead and they had just witnessed his ascension heavenward, but there was much they did not understand. The promised holy spirit with power had not yet come upon them. They did not yet fully appreciate why God had permitted their beloved Leader to be impaled on that terrible torture stake. The men responsible for doing this were still in power and there was no sign of any change in their relentless opposition. So Jesus' followers, conscious of their need, persisted in prayer to the One in whom they had faith. They set a fine example for us. W 5/15 1, 2

Saturday, March 22

In all the nations the good news has to be preached first.
—Mark 13:10.

The desire to share with Jesus Christ in the vindication of Jehovah's universal sovereignty became a most powerful motivating force in the lives of Jehovah's Witnesses. It strengthened them to endure the worst persecution that ever befell Jehovah's Witnesses—during World War II. So Jehovah's visible organization came off victorious once again to his vindication. For dedicated, baptized persons to share in that victory, what did it take? Faith in Jehovah's theocratic organization. Did the remnant of spiritual Israelites and their companions, the "great crowd" of Christ's "other sheep," have such victorious faith? Yes! Since the end of that second total war, about 35 trialse years have passed. But, steadfastly, devoted Witnesses have kept their faith in Jehovah's organization. They know which one of all organizations on earth the Almighty God has used to give the greatest witness to his name and kingdom in all Christian history. W 3/1 20, 21

Sunday, March 23

Many are the calamities of the righteous one, but out of them all Jehovah delivers him.
—Ps. 34:19.

Truly, the book of Esther shows that Mordecai was a man of faith, courage, decisiveness, integrity and loyalty to Jehovah and to God's people. Esther was a discreet woman, who kept silent when necessary, but spoke fearlessly at the right time. She accepted counsel from Mordecai, even when following it endangered her life. Indeed, this beautiful and submissive woman displayed love, unself-

ishness and loyalty to her people. Both she and Mordecai trusted fully in Jehovah and prayerfully sought divine direction. What fine examples for God's people today! In the face of opposition and persecution, they are serving side by side, loyal to Jehovah and to one another. Yes, they are confident that Jehovah God will uphold and deliver them, even as he backed and delivered Esther, Mordecai and their people. (Phil. 1:27-30) So, let the praises of our God be proclaimed and may we ever trust in him, for Jehovah does not desert his people. W 3/15 23, 24a

Monday, March 24

Do not be getting drunk with wine, in which there is debauchery, but keep getting filled with spirit.—Eph. 5:18.

All persons, young and old, crave some stimulus, some refreshment, a change of pace, to lift their spirits above the day-by-day routine. The common thing for worldly people of the first century was to find refreshment by getting drunk. Their social gatherings often became mere drinking matches. How different it was to be with Christians! They had a fine source of refreshment. What was it? Paul tells us. The influence of God's spirit would produce the greatest delight for Christians. Hence, their social get-togethers would not reflect the debauchery of the unbelievers. Since God's holy spirit filled their hearts, what came out of their mouths would differ greatly from the mouthings of persons filled with wine. Rather than indulge in obscene songs, often accompanied by lewd dancing, they heeded Paul's advice to keep "speaking to yourselves with psalms and praises to God," thereby being refreshed inside.—Eph. 5:19. W 6/1 14a

Tuesday, March 25

Owing to this many of his disciples went off to the things behind and would no longer walk with him.—John 6:66.

Not all of Christ's followers were willing to correct outdated views. Some would take clarifications as an excuse to abandon the truth, instead of viewing them as evidence of Jehovah's progressive guidance of his people, even as has been the case with some of Jehovah's people today. For instance, when Jesus Christ introduced the illustration regarding the symbolic eating of his flesh and the drinking of his blood, the Bible record states the above. (John 6:53-66) How shortsighted that was! What a lack of appreciation as to how Jehovah God leads his people! Thirty-eight years later likely some of them paid a heavy price, as those who did not continue walking in the advancing understanding of truth also doubtless may have rejected Jesus' instructions to flee Jerusalem before it was destroyed. That cost them their lives, whereas those who continued to let Jehovah God guide them fled and were spared.—Luke 21:20-24. W 7/1 13a

Wednesday, March 26

Whatever you are doing, work at it whole-souled as to Jehovah, and not to men.
—Col. 3:23.

Today worldly pressure is aimed at making Christians abandon themselves to the pleasures, "recreation" and immoralities of godless people, those who not knowing God are the very ones who are about to "undergo the judicial punishment of everlasting destruction." (2 Thess. 1:6-9) Our protection lies in working as did Paul and all other zealous Christians of his time,

in "always having plenty to do in the work of the Lord," and working as noted above. (1 Cor. 15:58) Great satisfaction and joy are to be found in working after the pattern of the apostle Paul and others of the first-century congregation, publicly and "from house to house" and in bearing "thorough witness" that others may learn about "repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus." (Acts 20:20, 21) As we thus serve, may it always be said of us, as it was of our Master: "The zeal for Jehovah's house of worship has eaten me up."—John 2:17. W 7/15 20

Thursday, March 27

Let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, as we look intently at the Chief Agent and Perfecter of our faith, Jesus.—Heb. 12:1, 2.

What kind of conquest is the conquest by faith? (1 John 5:4) Well, to have faith means to be so thoroughly convinced concerning things unseen or things of the future that these become a reality to us. True Christian faith, far different from credulity built on superstition, is built on the sure foundation of Jesus Christ. Like 'gold, silver and precious stones,' it is incombustible. (1 Cor. 3:11-14) It is convinced of the existence of the one living God Jehovah and that he will vindicate his position as Sovereign Lord of the universe. This faith is anchored in the promises of the God "who cannot lie." It looks intently to Jesus as its Perfecter and as God's Chief Agent for fulfilling all of His grand purposes in connection with his kingdom. As long as we hold unflinchingly to this faith, we may say that we have conquered the world.—Titus 1:2; Heb. 11:1, 6. W 2/1 3, 4

Friday, March 28

The angels that did not keep their original position but forsook their own proper dwelling place he has reserved with eternal bonds under dense darkness for the judgment of the great day.—Jude 6.

Angels have assignments of work in heaven, serving Jehovah God as part of his heavenly organization. But certain angels saw something else that appealed to them, and so they forsook their "proper dwelling place." What did they see? These angels saw that the daughters of men were good-looking, and so they went taking wives for themselves. (Gen. 6:2) Yes, they forsook their proper place in heaven and materialized human bodies in order to have sexual relations with the beautiful women on earth. As a result of their immoral influence and that of their hybrid offspring, God sent the Flood. There is a lesson here for all of us, both young people and old. It is this: *Jehovah has a place for his true servants, and they should properly hold to that place.* Yes, to be precious to Jehovah, we must know our place in his arrangement and hold to it. W 4/1 3-5

Saturday, March 29

Now, please, soften the face of God, that he may show us favor.—Mal. 1:9.

The Most High was remonstrating with the Israelites. Through Malachi, he pointed out how sinful it was for people to bring blind, lame and sickly animals as sacrifices and for the priests to accept such blemished offerings. Next came the challenge found at Malachi 1:8. It took no great imagination on the part of the Israelites to realize the undesirable result of such a course in dealing with a human governor. How, then, could they

hope to receive the approval of the great King Jehovah God? They simply could not do so. It was in their best interests to act in harmony with Malachi's encouragement given above. Only by living up to Jehovah's requirements could they regain divine approval. Today we must make sure that we are benefiting from the instructive examples written in God's Word. It would not be fitting for us to use our resources to such an extent for our own pleasures that practically nothing is left for rendering spiritual aid to others. W 5/1 17, 18a

Sunday, March 30

O Jehovah, who will be a guest in your tent? Who will reside in your holy mountain? He who is walking faultlessly and practicing righteousness and speaking the truth in his heart.—Ps. 15:1, 2.

If we have this fine relationship with Jehovah God, even our economic situation should not overly concern us, especially in view of what Paul said at Hebrews 13:5, 6. Enjoying this fine relationship, we can help others to learn of these things. There is no greater joy than that of aiding others to come to a knowledge of God's truth and to be drawn into a good relationship with Jehovah and with his Son. That is why Jehovah's people visit the homes of the people, throughout all the earth, telling them the "good news," and calling again to conduct Bible studies. Thus, as new ones are brought into association with the Christian congregation, they, too, experience the joy of knowing the Father, Jehovah God, intimately and the one whom he sent forth, Jesus Christ. To all such, "this means everlasting life."—John 17:3. W 4/15 15, 17a

Monday, March 31

Memorial Date

After Sundown

God recommends his own love to us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

—Rom. 5:8.

What is involved in seeking God? And what action does he take toward the sincere seeker? The hindrance to our approaching God is human sinfulness. Our sins can block off communication just like a heavy cloud mass. They may keep us from even wanting to appeal to God; they may make us feel unclean and unworthy of approaching him. Never-

theless, if we do not recognize that we are all sinners, doing things that even our own consciences condemn each day, we are not in a position to approach God, and God will not hear our prayers. Actually, God himself has made the first move toward a relationship with him by making an arrangement to remove this barrier to communication and intimacy, even as Paul shows. Christ was a perfect, sinless man when he was on earth, but he took on himself the punishment of all sinners just as though he were the sinner. It is our privilege and duty to memorialize his death on this date. W 4/15 3, 4

Tuesday, April 1

I kept sending to you all my servants the prophets, daily getting up early and sending them. But they did not listen to me.—Jer. 7:25, 26.

Christendom has long had a commanding voice in affairs religious and political. According to the infallible Word of the God whom Christendom professes to worship, that system of nominal, professed Christianity is doomed, even as Jerusalem of the prophet Jeremiah's day was. By means of persons fully dedicated to God as Jeremiah was, Christendom has been duly warned of the sure destruction in store for her. Yes, just like during the final days of Jerusalem in Jeremiah's days, God has raised his anointed witnesses to be a modern Jeremiah class. Regularly, to Christendom's church members, Jehovah has sent these Christian witnesses of his, assisted by their companions, he, as it were, "daily getting up early and sending them." This has served to make known Jehovah's name. W 8/1 2

Wednesday, April 2

Not a promise failed out of all the good promise that Jehovah had made . . . it all came true.

—Josh. 21:45.

The word *truth* is defined as that which conforms to the facts, to reality. It signifies that which is right and genuine. The source, or foundation, of truth is the Almighty Creator of the universe, Jehovah God. He knows the truth about every aspect of his creation. He knows what is right and what is wrong, what is good and what is bad. He knows the truth about what has happened in the past and why, as well as the meaning of present world conditions. He also knows the truth about the future, since he already has determined what it will be. For such reasons the psalmist describes the Creator as "Jehovah the God of truth." (Ps. 31:5) So when God speaks, his words are always trustworthy: "Your word is truth." (John 17:17) When he issues instructions for human behavior, these are always right: "All your commandments are truth."—Ps. 119:151. W 7/1 1, 2

Thursday, April 3

Let fornication and uncleanness of every sort . . . not even be mentioned among you, just as it befits holy people.—Eph. 5:3.

By considering the matter of morals we can appreciate the power of first-century Christianity. The ancient world regarded sexual immorality as the norm. Yet the "children of light" broke free and stayed free from such immorality. There was nothing in all history to compare with the moral miracle that Christianity achieved. These disciples had a high standard to meet, as can be seen by Paul's words above. Not merely refrain from doing such things, but avoid even discussing them for the purpose of deriving some sensual pleasure. How far removed was his thinking from that of some today who feel, 'As long as you do not actually commit immorality, there is nothing wrong with watching it and discussing it as entertainment!' How did those early Christians feel about the gladiatorial games and the theater? Professed Christian writers of that time tell that they had absolutely nothing to do with them. Our attitude should be the same! W 6/1 17-19

Friday, April 4

Shall not God cause justice to be done for his chosen ones who cry out to him day and night, even though he is long-suffering toward them?

—Luke 18:7.

Luke 18:2-5 tells of a "judge that had no fear of God and had no respect for man" finally and begrudgingly seeing to it that a certain widow got justice. There was no doubt about her persistence, illustrating the 'need for us always to pray and not give up.' That judge is similar to the man

at Luke 11:7, for here we also see a complete contrast with what God is really like. Notice, too, Jesus' further comments as to what God will do, contrasting him with that "unrighteous" judge. We can learn much from these comments. This is why we must try to view all things from God's viewpoint, whether in some personal matter or in the outworking of his purpose. As Peter explained: "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. W 5/15 13, 14a

Saturday, April 5

Whoever is for deadly plague, to deadly plague! And whoever is for the sword, to the sword! And whoever is for the famine, to the famine! And whoever is for the captivity, to the captivity!—Jer. 15:2.

These words spoken to Jeremiah regarding Jerusalem during her time of the end in his day were words also used by Jesus Christ in his prophecy concerning the time of the end of Jerusalem in the first century C.E. (Luke 21:10, 11, 20-24) Also, the same things are called to our attention at Revelation 6:1-8, thus carrying the fulfillment of these events beyond 96 C.E. So the prophecy, in its final fulfillment, applies to the present doomed system of things, including apostate Christendom. Should any of us blind our eyes to the fact that since the end of the Gentile Times in 1914 we have seen these things? It has been just as predicted, as illustrated in the case of Jerusalem in Jeremiah's day and the Jerusalem of the days of Jesus' apostles. W 8/15 12, 13a

Sunday, April 6

Beg the Master of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest.—Matt. 9:38.

What glorious "good news" Jesus proclaimed, doing so throughout all Palestine! On the mountainside, in private houses, in the synagogues, in the temple, on the seashore and in other public places, he preached. He also performed miracles of healing, thus demonstrating how, in his kingdom, he would heal all mankind upon this earth. Thus he would bring them back to perfection of life in a global paradise. Since there was a great need for more preachers to proclaim this good news, Jesus himself started to meet this need by instructing and sending forth his twelve disciples. And how were they to carry out their work? Why, with the same zeal that their Master had demonstrated! He told them: "Into whatever city or village you enter, search out who in it is deserving." (Matt. 10:11) Back there, as has so often happened also in modern times, a householder's meek and considerate attitude would open the way for him to receive spiritual blessings with the prospect of everlasting life. W 7/15 6-8

Monday, April 7

Put up a hard fight for the faith that was once for all time delivered to the holy ones.—Jude 3.

From the beginnings of human history, the Devil has used immorality as a means of corrupting humans. (Gen. 6:2-5) Sexual degradation was rampant in early Christian times, even becoming a major threat to the purity of the congregation. Hence Jude, though desirous of writing his Christian brothers an encouraging letter about their common salvation, was compelled,

instead, to exhort them as above. Ungodly men, with their loose conduct, had slipped into the congregation. These were like the angels that sinned before the Flood, the filthy inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah and the Israelites that were corrupted by the immoral daughters of Moab and Midian. They were defiling the flesh and bringing animalistic influences in among God's people. So Jude counseled clean-minded Christians: "By building up yourselves on your most holy faith, and praying with holy spirit, keep yourselves in God's love."—Jude 20, 21. W 1/1 9

Tuesday, April 8

Who should not fear you, O King of the nations, for to you it is fitting; because among all the wise ones of the nations and among all their kingships there is in no way anyone like you.
—Jer. 10:7.

More about this God is found in the writings of inspired men who were, in many cases, eyewitnesses of events about which they wrote for our information today. No nations are able to hold their ground against this God. He was able to show his mastery over such world powers as ancient Egypt, Assyria and Babylon. It is foolish to think that he was merely another god of ancient history and that he passed out of existence with the writing of the last book of the Bible 19 centuries ago. This God is immortal, self-existent. Today he is able to take on as his antagonists all the mighty political powers of our world. As "King of the nations," he will call them all to account. The lasting good that will result to all lovers of righteousness and goodness from this it is our obligation to make known to others. W 1/15 10

Wednesday, April 9

Indeed, quite a bit of weeping broke out among them all, and they fell upon Paul's neck and tenderly kissed him, because they were especially pained . . . that they were going to behold his face no more.—Acts 20:37, 38.

Titus, Timothy and others were closely associated with Paul in the experiences he enumerated at 2 Corinthians 11:23-28. Exemplary faith made them worthy examples to imitate. Not only did the brothers highly respect these exemplary visiting "older men" for their fine work but they also expressed great personal affection for them. An outstanding case was when Paul met with the older men from Ephesus. After admonishing them (Acts 20:28), he warned of an approaching apostasy, and exhorted them to keep awake and assist the weak. After offering prayer together, those older men were moved emotionally as they bade farewell to Paul, being especially pained to learn that they would see his face no more. Today Jehovah's people are favored with older men who manifest similar qualities and are loved therefor. W 2/15 7, 8

Thursday, April 10

This is the conquest that has conquered the world, our faith.
—1 John 5:4.

Today we face a future that is due to bring the greatest upset in all human history. Down will come Christendom, the Devil's agency for religious persecution, and her religious mother, Babylon the Great. Up will come Jehovah's persecuted witnesses in an overwhelming display of his choice and approval of them before all heaven and earth. The former political pamperers of Babylon the Great will fight against these vindicated

witnesses of Jehovah in vain. They will lose the war against Theocracy! What, then, should be our position today? Is there any cause for us to lose faith in Jehovah's visible organization because of mounting difficulties in this world? Those who believe that Jehovah will never desert his faithful witnesses answer, "Absolutely not!" In demonstration of such faith, we will keep on sticking to it and working with it without slacking the hand. Our unwavering faith will be rewarded with victory and the crown of life! W 3/1 22, 23

Friday, April 11

Now these things went on befalling them as examples, and they were written for a warning to us upon whom the ends of the systems of things have arrived.—1 Cor. 10:11.

Balaam had the women of Moab and Midian extend their hospitality to the Israelites, evidently inviting them to a banquet of the best food and wine. The Israelites became relaxed as a result of eating the good food and drinking the heady wine, and likely sexy dancing was used to arouse their passions. They let down their guard, so that these women drew the Israelites into having sexual relations with them. They even got the Israelites to bow down to false gods. With what result? Jehovah's anger blazed against his people, and 24,000 of them were put to death! Think about it! Those 24,000 were poised to enter the Land of Promise, after many years of wandering in a desolate wilderness. Yet they lost out on the fulfillment of the promise because of being enticed into sexual immorality! Can you see a parallel in our situation today? There is one. —Num. 25:1-9, 16-18; 31:16. W 4/1 4, 5a

Saturday, April 12

"You are my witnesses," is the utterance of Jehovah, "and I am God."
—Isa. 43:12.

As Jehovah's servants we realize that today there is a great work to be done and a stand to be maintained, as is seen in our God-given name, Jehovah's Witnesses. This work and our stand require persistence. The message of God's kingdom calls for the destruction of the worldly nations. God's kingdom "will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms." (Dan. 2:44) This message is not popular with present-day rulers who display the spirit of nationalism. Their combined opposition is becoming increasingly manifest. They "have massed together as one against Jehovah and against his anointed one [the installed King, Jesus Christ]." (Ps. 2:2-6) For Jehovah God's servants today to say as did the apostles of the first century: "We must obey God as ruler rather than men," takes much courage. (Acts 5:29) Such courage and boldness are not dependent on our own resources and temperament, but they depend upon Jehovah's spirit obtained through study of God's Word and through prayer. *W 5/15 5, 6*

Sunday, April 13

"The sons of Judah have done what is bad in my eyes" is the utterance of Jehovah. "They have set their disgusting things in the house upon which my name has been called, in order to defile it."
—Jer. 7:30.

We should not pity Christendom because her destruction will affect so many human lives. Her course has brought great reproach upon God. Why should we not, first of all, think about him?

He is more important than all human creatures. Think of how Christendom with her hundreds of millions has brought shame upon his name and has persecuted his faithful witnesses who proclaimed his warnings and his lifesaving counsels. Do we have more compassion for unheeding, disobedient humans than for the name of the Most High God? True, their perishing with Christendom is lamentable, but their present course of shameful religious conduct is no less lamentable. In illustration of this, Jehovah said: "They have built the high places of Topheth, . . . in order to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire, a thing that I had not commanded."—Jer. 7:31. *W 8/1 15, 16*

Monday, April 14

Send out your light and your truth. May these themselves lead me.—Ps. 43:3.

Throughout the centuries, Jehovah has guided those who love him and who want to serve him. The psalmist who asked the above of God was one of these. The prophet Daniel knew that "there exists a God in the heavens who is a Revealer of secrets," and foretold that in this "time of the end," "the true knowledge will become abundant." (Dan. 2:28; 12:4) Just how does Jehovah guide his people in his truths? For one thing, he takes into account that he created humans with a free will. Thus, the apostle Paul took note of Philemon's "free will." (Philem. 14) Since God created this free will, he does not counteract it by forcing persons to believe his truths or to act in a certain way, like robots. So, during this Christian era, he lovingly appeals to righteous-hearted persons to associate with his people. *W 7/1 1, 2a*

Tuesday, April 15

He that has endured to the end is the one that will be saved.—Matt. 24:13.

Today there are many false prophets abroad, even as Jesus forewarned. (Matt. 7:15-23) However, Jesus stated the above concerning truly sheep-like ones. How may we demonstrate that we have this quality of endurance? Why, by sharing in the fulfillment of Jesus' words at Matthew 24:14. It is by our endurance in proclaiming "this good news of the kingdom" that we may attain to salvation. We are not alone in doing this work, for Jesus' prophecy on this "conclusion of the system of things" goes on to tell us that "when the Son of man arrives in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit down on his glorious throne." (Matt. 25:31) From the invisible heavens he directs a work of judgment, in which he separates the people of the nations. This work is climaxed by the "great tribulation," at which time the "goats" depart into "everlasting cutting-off," whereas the obedient "sheep" are invited to inherit the kingdom that the Father has prepared for them. *W 7/15 3-5a*

Wednesday, April 16

As you have accepted Christ Jesus the Lord, go on walking in union with him, rooted and being built up in him and being stabilized in the faith, just as you were taught, overflowing with faith in thanksgiving.—Col. 2:6, 7.

Our faith is something real. It is firmly founded on the Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the Christian congregation. As the remnant go on walking in this victorious faith, so it is our prayer that the "great crowd" of "other sheep," including those recently baptized, will become

stabilized in the faith, yes, overflow with faith. It is faith that stimulates all of us to make "public declaration for salvation," telling others the "good news." (Rom. 10:10) This faith prompts Christians to fine conduct, which reflects favorably on the precious name of Jehovah our God. Exemplary conduct, based on appreciation of moral values, has been much in evidence at our conventions. A Russian journalist was heard to say at the Munich convention: "Your conduct is your best sermon." *W 1/1 3, 4*

Thursday, April 17

The God that made the world and all the things in it . . . gives to all persons life and breath and all things.
—Acts 17:24, 25.

God, as Creator, has a certain relationship with all people, even as Paul told a group of philosophers in Athens. But those who are persistently wicked cannot enjoy intimacy with him. Nevertheless, he allows them to have children, to enjoy the good things of the earth, and to have the opportunity to repent, if they are so inclined. However, a closer relationship than being a mere creature of God is necessary for one to receive his favor and to have him as a friend and close companion. Harmony with him and his purposes is essential if one hopes to gain everlasting life. The marvelous thing is that everyone can have this relationship if he really desires it after having the opportunity opened to him, for Paul further told the Athenians that God has also provided for men "to seek God, if they might grope for him and really find him, although, in fact, he is not far off from each one of us."—Acts 17:27. *W 4/15 1, 2*

Friday, April 18

I entreat you by the compassions of God, brothers, to present your bodies a sacrifice living, holy, acceptable to God, a sacred service with your power of reason.—Rom. 12:1.

Our body members are the instruments through which we can speak and act. Hence, 'to present our bodies a living sacrifice,' we as Christians have to be active, 'doing all things to God's glory.' (1 Cor. 10:31) For that sacrifice to be "holy," we have to maintain moral and spiritual cleanness. And only by letting unhyppocritical love motivate our actions would such presenting of our bodies be "acceptable to God." (1 Cor. 13:3) When we lead a life of full devotion to Jehovah God in attitude, word and action because of deliberate choice, appreciating that it is right in view of the divine compassion that has been shown us, we will be performing sacred service with our "power of reason." Regardless of what our present hope may be, whether heavenly or earthly, can we not be wholehearted in our service to Jehovah God? W 5/1 8

Saturday, April 19

"Obey my voice, and I will become your God." . . . But they did not listen, neither did they incline their ear.
—Jer. 7:23, 24.

Christendom's "prophets" and "priests" have refused to take heed. They do not like to have their "flocks" disturbed. So they give them false assurances that belie God's prophecies. It was like that in Jeremiah's day. It was like that in the days of Christ's apostles. Do we want to be like those misled people and refuse to take heed? No! Millions today put their trust in a doomed religious structure.

The clergy of Christendom induce their church members to do so. The people of Jerusalem and of the land of Judah made a like mistake in the days of Jeremiah. We do not desire to imitate them. Jeremiah was commanded by Jehovah to stand in the gate of the temple and warn people of Jehovah's judgments. (Jer. 7:4-11) Particularly since 1919 C.E. have the modern Jeremiah class and their companions, the "great crowd" of "other sheep," been calling the world's notice to the defiled state of Christendom. W 8/1 3-5, 7

Sunday, April 20

You must put a mark on the foreheads of the men that are sighing and groaning over all the detestable things that are being done in the midst of it.
—Ezek. 9:4.

In his written Word, the Bible, Jehovah has denounced all wickedness. Shortly he will destroy the things that he has denounced. Under his expressed denunciation "no nations will hold up." Their "gods," the things that they have deified and idolized, will prove helpless and perish. Their worshipers will perish with them. Logically, our only help is the one living and true God, Jehovah. Cries for help go up to him from everywhere, from those who, like Jeremiah, deplore the godless conditions and from all others who are "sighing and groaning." Their hearts are rent because a "break-down" like that described by Jeremiah impends over all the nations due to the fact that their rulers have not searched for Jehovah as our only help. It is our obligation to search out these lovers of righteousness and bring them comfort. —Jer. 10:10-12. W 8/15 16, 17

Monday, April 21

Have the Christ dwell through your faith in your hearts with love.—Eph. 3:17.

To have 'Christ dwell in our hearts' would first mean that the spirit of the world must be driven out. How could Christ's spirit saturate the 'inner man' if Satan, the "spirit that now operates in the sons of disobedience," still operated within us or started to creep back into our lives? (Eph. 2:2) So ask yourself: "In my heart do I still enjoy the Satanic spirit of this system? Am I entertained by things that reflect its complete lack of moral sense?" We can easily present one appearance to others, when, in reality, inside, we are quite a different person. Christ dwells in our hearts by letting his example and teachings affect our feelings and actions. He said that his followers should not look at someone of the opposite sex with a passion for that one. In our thoughts do we obey those words? Do we earnestly avoid things that could arouse such feelings? Consider: Would Jesus be caught up in the spirit of the form of amusement that we are pursuing? W 6/1 4a

Tuesday, April 22

You have hidden these things from the wise and intellectual ones and have revealed them to babes.—Matt. 11:25.

Because Israel failed to keep walking in the truth, God withdrew his backing from that nation. That is why Jesus at the temple said to Israel: "Look! Your house is abandoned to you." (Matt. 23:38) He also declared that the 'kingdom of God would be taken from them and be given to a nation producing its fruits.' (Matt. 21:43) No longer would they be God's favored people. In the first cen-

tury C.E., God developed a new spiritual nation. This was the Christian congregation, an organization made up of people of many different nationalities. God's appointed spokesman, Jesus, laid the foundation for it, saying: "I am the way and the truth and the life." (John 14:6) By what he taught and accomplished, he proved that he really had the truth, and had Jehovah's backing. The first-century Christians proved the same, being identified clearly as God's Christian witnesses. It had come to pass upon them even as Jesus Christ had foretold. W 7/1 9, 10

Wednesday, April 23

O Hearer of prayer, even to you people of all flesh will come.—Ps. 65:2.

Thus Jehovah God inspired David to write. David often experienced the need for persistence in prayer. Sometimes the need was urgent because of the relentless pressure from his enemies. (Ps. 70:1-5) At other times the need arose on account of his own weaknesses and errors, some of which were serious. If you yourself happen to feel unworthy to approach Jehovah God in prayer on this account, thinking that he will not hear you, why not read and reread Psalm 51:1-12? As regards the above expression concerning "all flesh" coming to God, does it mean that anyone is free to do this and at any time? No. It actually works out the opposite way. As stated later in that same psalm: "Happy is the one you [that is, Jehovah God] choose and cause to approach, that he may reside in your court-yards." (Ps. 65:4) Though the invitation is open to all, the approach must be made in all sincerity. While faith may not be strong to begin with, it must be true. W 5/15 7, 8

Thursday, April 24

I am giving you a new commandment, that you love one another; just as I have loved you, that you also love one another.—John 13:34.

Yes, love binds all Christians world wide into an indivisible unity. (1 John 4:15, 16) What a grand privilege to be united with Jehovah God through his Son Jesus Christ, the One whose blood "cleanses us from all sin"! (1 John 1:7) Therein lies our conquest by faith: To keep on loving God and Christ, being co-workers with them in the worldwide harvest work that is now rapidly drawing to its close. (1 Cor. 3:9) John goes on to say: "This is what the love of God means, that we observe his commandments." (1 John 5:3) In this connection Jesus Christ told his apostles the above. How truly that did become an identifying mark of Christians in John's day, and what a marvelous identifying mark it is in our day! For never since the first century has there been on earth a people just like Jehovah's Christian witnesses—united in a bond of love that surmounts all barriers of language, tribe and race. W 2/1 18, 19

Friday, April 25

In no way is there anyone like you, O Jehovah. You are great, and your name is great in mightiness. Who should not fear you, O King of the nations, for to you it is fitting. —Jer. 10:6, 7.

Who is it that cannot see worldwide trouble ahead, the worst in human history? We do not need to have the prophetic foresight of Jeremiah to see this. So, then, how can any of us survive what even uninspired observers of world trends today predict? Where does true help lie? What or who is our help? It is not

some blind, unintelligent "kind providence." It must be some real person who sees the dangers of our situation as much as our wise political forecasters do, yes, even better than those highly intelligent men do. For certainly unintelligence cannot precisely help intelligent persons such as we are. Our only help is the One who was intelligent enough to make the whole universe, including us intelligences. He is "on top" of the situation. He is the One whom the prophet calls the "King of the nations," namely, Jehovah. W 8/15 3, 4

Saturday, April 26

Wherever you enter into a house say first, "May this house have peace." —Luke 10:5.

The seventy disciples were thus instructed to go to the houses of the people. The disciples were to accept gratefully the hospitality of those householders who listened to the "good news." They thus established a pattern that we seek to follow today. They pioneered a twofold work of teaching those households that gladly received them and of warning those who spurned the "good news." The record tells us that "the seventy returned with joy" because the demons had been made subject to them by the use of Jesus' name. But Christ showed that his disciples should, rather, rejoice in their heavenly prospects and their spiritual enlightenment. (Luke 10:17-24) Likewise today, Christians who expend themselves in teaching and preaching at the homes of the people have reasons for a great deal of joy because of their own relationship with God, their knowledge of his purposes and Jehovah's blessing on their efforts to declare the "good news" to others. W 7/15 9, 10

Sunday, April 27

Quit sharing with them in the unfruitful works that belong to the darkness, but, rather, even be reproving them. —Eph. 5:11.

The early Christians shunned debased amusements. They could see the inconsistency for those who had been elevated out of darkness, who had removed obscene talk, violence and immorality from their lives, deliberately to sit and watch such things as entertainment. They heeded Paul's words above. Their daily lives of purity in the midst of a debased world were a constant reproof to the people of the nations. No wonder these were labeled by the ungodly world as "enemies of mankind." Those disciples gladly showed that they were under a better influence than their carnal-minded neighbors. They demonstrated that they had been "made new in the force actuating [their] mind." And what a different "force" it was! Others could not help noticing. Are not these the kind of persons we want to be? Regardless of our profession, we either show the "fruitage of the light" or walk as the nations do.—Eph. 4:23; 5:9. W 6/1 20

Monday, April 28

You will call, and I myself shall answer you. For the work of your hands you will have a yearning.—Job 14:15.

The giving of the death-stroke to the Adamic death that we inherited is pictured for us by what the apostle John wrote at Revelation 20:13, 14. So anyone on earth dying after that will not die because of having inherited death from Adam. He dies for willfully violating Jehovah God's law and committing sin. His death then will be the second death, from which

he will never rise up. Jesus Christ releases mankind only from the Adamic death and our common grave, Hades, even as he assures us at Revelation 1:17, 18. Among those for whom the reigning King Jesus will use the key of Hades is a man famous for his patience, Job. Because of the woes mounting upon us today, some of us may get to feeling like Job and wishing that we were dead and buried in Hades. But we should have what Job had, faith in the resurrection. He knew that when this occurred on the "last day," he would be free from all the present troubles of mankind. W 6/15 17-21

Tuesday, April 29

Many will say to me in that day, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and expel demons in your name, and perform many powerful works in your name?" And yet then I will confess to them: I never knew you! Get away from me, you workers of lawlessness.—Matt. 7:22, 23.

At the same time that church members carry on their worship in this professed Christian system of things, they take part in "stealing, murdering and committing adultery and swearing falsely." They religiously sacrifice to other gods in addition to the Lord Jesus Christ. Materialistically they convert their religious structure into a "mere cave of robbers." (Jer. 7:9-11) Yet they pay lip service to Jesus Christ and call him "Lord." They think that because of doing this their worship is acceptable to God and Christ. But Jesus Christ will surprise them by calling them "workers of lawlessness," because of their not doing his Father's will. As Jeremiah exposed the religious hypocrites in his day, so must we. W 8/1 7

Wednesday, April 30

Now I exhort you, brothers, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that you should all speak in agreement, and that there should not be divisions among you.—1 Cor. 1:10.

By walking in the truth Jehovah God's true servants would uphold the rightfulness of his universal rule, bringing glory and pleasure to him, and many benefits to themselves. (Prov. 12:22; Isa. 2:3) In turn, God would use them as his modern-day witnesses, equipping them to deliver his message to this present generation. Would God use more

Thursday, May 1

*Who should not fear you, O King of the nations, for to you it is fitting; because among all the wise ones of the nations and among all their kingships there is no way anyone like you.
—Jer. 10:7.*

The Israelites acknowledged Jehovah God as their Lord and King. He was their King exclusively. (Ps. 147:19, 20) The theocratic government that he set up over ancient Israel was God's only earthly kingdom until Israel rejected Jesus Christ as the Messiah. First since the end of the Gentile Times in 1914 C.E. "the kingdom of the world did become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ"; and yet the worldly nations still refuse to have Jehovah as their King. (Rev. 11:15-18) From what standpoint, then, could Jeremiah address Jehovah as "King of the nations"? From the standpoint that among all those who were kings of the nations and who thus held kingship, He was the outstanding King. He rules as King of kings, the Superlative King. W 8/15 10, 11

than one organization to dispense his truths in these last days? Well, has God ever used more than one during any other period of judgment? In Noah's day, did any other boats with people in them, aside from Noah's ark, have God's protection and survive the flood? (1 Pet. 3:20) Were there two Christian organizations in the first century? No, God dealt with only one. So, too, in our day, there is still "one Lord, one faith, one baptism." (Eph. 4:5) That there could be only one united congregation Paul makes clear. W 7/1 12, 13

Friday, May 2

*He will certainly become like a tree planted by streams of water, that gives its own fruit in its season and the foliage of which does not wither.
—Ps. 1:3.*

The disciple James was writing to dedicated Christians who had taken the steps of repentance and conversion. They had turned around from their previous course, and had now dedicated themselves unreservedly to Jehovah to do his will henceforth. As the general tone of James' letter indicates, many were not living up to the terms of their dedication. They overlooked the need to keep that relationship with Jehovah in a healthy state. Relationships rarely, if ever, remain stationary. They cannot be taken for granted. They either progress, even though slowly, and, like a tree, take deeper root, or they deteriorate and commence to wither. That is what happened to the nation of Israel. Before it was too late, James was anxious to recover these spiritual Israelites who were similarly slipping back. What about us? How is our relationship with God? W 5/15 7, 8b

Saturday, May 3

Then there will be great tribulation such as has not occurred since the world's beginning until now, no, nor will occur again.—Matt. 24:21.

Let us take a lesson from the destruction of Jerusalem in 607 B.C.E. Let us not put our trust in what the clergy of Christendom think will serve as a religious charm to save her from obliteration. The "great tribulation" that is shortly coming upon her will be worse than that which overtook Jerusalem and its temple 37 years after Jesus had cleansed the defiled temple of Jerusalem. No true lover of God will pray that such a strange thing may never befall Christendom. Jehovah God ordered Jeremiah not to pray for Jerusalem and its profaned temple to be spared from the execution of His righteous indignation. Jerusalem's modern counterpart, Christendom, has proved unreformable. After all these years that Jehovah has sent his Christian witnesses to warn the people of Christendom, she keeps on in her badness to where she is unpardonable. Are you sharing in making that warning known? W 8/1 13, 14

Sunday, May 4

*As for us, we cannot stop speaking about the things we have seen and heard.
—Acts 4:20.*

From Pentecost onward the responsibility to proclaim the "good news" rested squarely upon the newly formed Christian congregation. Immediately, it met up with persecutions. But these only served to sharpen appreciation of its mission in upholding the sovereignty of Jehovah and in preaching his kingdom by Christ. Boldly Peter and John declared the above. Along with

other believers, they praised Jehovah and petitioned him as the "Sovereign Lord." (Acts 4:18-24) When a further wave of persecution struck these followers, they gave bold testimony before the Sanhedrin, saying: "We must obey God as ruler rather than men . . . we are witnesses of these matters." (Acts 5:29-32) Remaining unflinching in their support of the Sovereign Lord Jehovah and his Chief Agent, Jesus Christ, they continued to have God's holy spirit to help them in their preaching and teaching work. The same is also true of Jehovah's servants today. W 7/15 11, 12

Monday, May 5

*As obedient children, quit being fashioned according to the desires you formerly had in your ignorance, but, in accord with the Holy One who called you, do you also become holy yourselves in all your conduct.
—1 Pet. 1:14, 15.*

The holiness, purity or cleanness of Jehovah requires that his people remain pure. This fact was deeply impressed on the Israelites by the provisions of the Mosaic law. They were to remain separate from the immoral and degrading practices of surrounding nations, and avoid, if possible, touching a dead body or anything else that would defile them, and not eat animals that were unclean. When on military expeditions, the Israelites were under command to maintain cleanness in their camp. (Deut. 23:14) If an Israelite did become defiled in some way, he had to 'wash his garments, and he was unclean until evening.' (Lev. 11:40) Not until a new day would the person again have a proper standing with Jehovah. These laws foreshadowed the cleanness that God now requires of his people. W 5/1 1, 2a

Tuesday, May 6

By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love among yourselves.
—John 13:35.

Who are the ones who in our day maintain the separateness from the world, with its political corruption, its violence and its immorality, as mentioned by Jesus at John 15:19 and 17:14-16? Only Jehovah's Witnesses are willing even to suffer imprisonment or death because of following in Jesus' footsteps. They also manifest the characteristic mentioned above by which Christ's true followers can be identified. Many other scriptures show that such love would be a clear identifying mark of God's true servants. (1 John 3:10-12; 4:20, 21) What international group of people demonstrate this type of love for one another, not just by words, but by deeds? Over the years, who have refrained, in time of war, from slaughtering fellow believers in other nations, and from allowing racial, nationalistic or other prejudices to come between them? Only Jehovah's Witnesses. It is our privilege to make these facts known to others. W 7/1 17, 18

Wednesday, May 7

These are the ones that come out of the great tribulation.
—Rev. 7:14.

Many Christian companions of the remnant, a "great crowd" of them, are left behind after the remnant are caught away to meet their Lord in the air. During this time of the end they have become collaborators with the remnant in the final Kingdom witness to all the nations. This "great crowd" expect to survive the "great tribulation" in which this worldly system of things perishes. Thus they will be on hand when the happy

time arrives for the last ones of the remnant to "be caught away in clouds to meet the Lord in the air." (1 Thess. 4:17) How loving it would be for the "great crowd" living in that "last day" of resurrection to bid farewell to the surviving remnant as these finish their earthly course at the close of the "last day"! (John 6:53, 54) This may be no easy parting, but it could be accompanied by a heartfelt interchange of affection between those departing and those left behind on a paradise earth. No more will the "great crowd" see them. W 6/15 15b

Thursday, May 8

At any moment that I may speak concerning a nation . . . and it actually does what is bad in my eyes by not obeying my voice, I will also feel regret over the good that I said to myself to do for its good.
—Jer. 18:9, 10.

Centuries previous to this statement, God had favored the land of Egypt in the days when Joseph was made its food administrator. But when Egypt's Pharaohs began to oppress Israel, and even tried to wipe it out of existence, Jehovah intervened. He plagued the land of Egypt and destroyed Pharaoh and his military hosts and freed His chosen people, the Israelites. According to the same rule of action, when the kingdom of Judah rebelled and persisted in its bad ways, Jehovah purposed to overthrow it. Those rebels even returned bad to God's prophet Jeremiah for the good he was seeking to do to them. (Jer. 18:11-20) Then, even as it became agreeable to Jeremiah for God's adverse judgments to be executed upon those rebels, it is agreeable to us to have His judgments executed on Christendom.—Jer. 18:21, 22. W 8/15 13

Friday, May 9

By means of him we have . . . the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his undeserved kindness. This he caused to abound toward us in all wisdom and good sense.—Eph. 1:7, 8.

What a contrast the course of the world was with the course of those in the first century who genuinely followed Christ! (Eph. 4:19) These had once walked under the influence of the system and its ruler, Satan, and their very nature had been to do "the things willed by the flesh." But they had changed. The elevated truths of Christianity opened up an entirely new outlook on life. Imagine, God was willing to sacrifice his own Son, his "loved one," so they could have their heavy debt of sin forgiven! (Eph. 1:6; 2:3) What a great price! What mercy and undeserved kindness! So not only did they have the truth, but they also were given the "good sense" to be able to deal successfully with the everyday problems of life. There was a religion of power. God's spirit had raised Christ from the dead, and now what results it produced in the lives of those believers! W 6/1 16, 17

Saturday, May 10

You, O man of God, flee from these things.—1 Tim. 6:11.

There are many pressures that the Devil brings on us, all of which are aimed at turning us away from God's kingdom and his righteousness. (Matt. 6:33) Paul warned about the subtle influence that "the love of money" can have in leading a person astray from the faith. This "love" can cover a wide range of things, not only money itself, but all the material things and pleasures that money can buy. This "love of money" can

become time-consuming and make everyday life complicated and destructive of Christian faith. As a result, a person can get stabbed "all over with many pains." (1 Tim. 6:10) Paul counseled Timothy that, rather than pursue riches, he should "set his sights" on a spiritually rewarding goal. In reliance on Jehovah, you young people today can succeed likewise in "fighting a fine fight of faith." (1 Tim. 6:12) And so can you older ones! Confident of Jehovah's help, let us be determined to fight the fine fight of faith down to the end of this wicked system!—Heb. 13:4-6. W 1/1 12-14

Sunday, May 11

Subject yourselves, therefore, to God; but oppose the Devil, and he will flee from you. Draw close to God, and he will draw close to you.
—Jas. 4:7, 8.

In his drawing close to us, if we draw close to him, does God do anything of a direct, personal nature? In so many instances, what is it that is the one thing that touches and draws out the heart of the truth seeker? In addition to the truth, is it not the genuine and warm personal interest shown by the one who is being used as God's minister? When the truth seeker attends his first meeting with us, he may not understand too much of what is said, but he is deeply impressed with the sincere friendly atmosphere manifested by all, besides the personal attention and welcome extended to him. In this way he feels that, in response to his own efforts in seeking after truth and the Giver of truth, now Jehovah God is drawing close to him. As he progresses, he experiences other evidences of God's direction and blessing.—Jas. 1:5. W 5/15 5b

Monday, May 12

You are indeed more handsome than the sons of men. Charm has been poured out upon your lips.—Ps. 45:2.

Is God's king according to our liking? He should be, if we like this description of him. Jesus Christ was a perfect man, as perfect as the first man Adam in the garden of Eden. The psalmist's description of him differs altogether from that given in Isaiah, chapter 53, where he is pictured as God's suffering servant. But when we view him in the light of what he really does, he takes on a beauty that does not depend on facial features but that still surpasses the handsomeness of all other men, even that of Adam. The king's lips were well formed. But it was what poured forth through those lips that added charm to them, and this charm was from God. The message of God's kingdom that he spoke imparted charm to his lips. (John 7:46) We who recognize him as our Teacher are charmed by what he says. As his disciples we add charm to our lips by repeating what he said. Do we make use of every opportunity to do so? *W 1/15 7-9a*

Tuesday, May 13

All those listening to him were in constant amazement at his understanding and his answers.—Luke 2:47.

Thousands of persons have come to a knowledge of God's truth through the witnessing of youths at school. As a Christian youth, do you have the courage and love for Jehovah to speak up in behalf of his Word and principles? And just as important: Do you have the moral strength to conduct yourself in harmony with God's righteous require-

ments? If you do, then you are among a choice crowd of young people world wide who are keeping their proper place. They are using their opportunities to praise Jehovah. Young people can often be particularly effective in giving a witness, generally relating better to other youths; you are able to speak their 'language,' as it were. Also, some adults are inclined to listen to you youths, even as the older men at Jerusalem's temple listened to 12-year-old Jesus. Therefore, do not minimize the fine contribution that you can make to Jehovah's praise. God can use you in having the "good news" preached. *W 4/1 17, 18*

Wednesday, May 14

Have regard for those who are working hard among you . . . give them more than extraordinary consideration in love because of their work.
—1 Thess. 5:12, 13.

We well know that we live in "critical times," the closing period of the foretold "last days." (2 Tim. 3:1) Nevertheless, timely reminders often can help us to ward off any creeping indifference toward the dangers that confront us. An enemy world and its ruler continue to exert increasing pressures to weaken faith, to mislead and to ruin. (1 John 5:19) Subtly Satan tries to draw us away from the living God into a fruitless, worldly way of life, thus cutting us off from Jehovah God. To avoid such a tragic outcome, we need every provision Jehovah makes to keep ourselves spiritually strong. Among such provisions is the arrangement for traveling overseers to serve us, strengthening the congregations and stirring them to greater activity in serving God. If we are wise, we will accord them consideration. *W 2/15 1, 2a*

Thursday, May 15

Do not put your trust in fallacious words, saying, "The temple of Jehovah, the temple of Jehovah, the temple of Jehovah they are!"—Jer. 7:4.

Like the Israelites to whom Jeremiah delivered Jehovah's message, the religionists of Christendom view their "temple," upon which they call the name of Christ, as if it were a charm against calamity at God's hands. They claim to have a continuity of things from Christ's own day and so they consider Christendom to have a charmed life, safe from extinction. However, if a person puts his trust in her 'charmed life,' does this guarantee his safety from calamity and destruction with her? Paul warns that in the "last days" people would be "having a form of godly devotion but proving false to its power." (2 Tim. 3:1, 5) So, then, when a person goes through outward formalities in a house or institution professedly dedicated to God but at the same time defiled by mixture with false worship and worldliness, does this ensure his being protected from God's expression of righteous displeasure? Absolutely not! *W 8/1 8, 9*

Friday, May 16

I am giving you a new commandment, that you love one another . . . By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love among yourselves.—John 13:34, 35.

Our neutral stand has served to stamp us as true Christians. How so? In that among us and among us alone are to be found true the words of Jesus as given above. Because of having this love we ward off all demands to get us involved in strife among tribes, nations, races or political parties. Being no part of the world, we

stand squarely on the principle announced by the apostles to the Jewish rulers: "We must obey God as ruler rather than men." (Acts 5:29) At the same time we heed the counsel found at Romans chapter 13 about being in subjection to the superior authorities. How have we been able to harmonize these seemingly conflicting requirements? By applying the principle of relative subjection. Yes, we obey all in authority so long as obedience to them does not violate any of God's commands. Our conscientiousness in these matters has also stamped us as unique. *W 3/1 11, 12a*

Saturday, May 17

May my prayer be prepared as incense before you, the raising up of my palms as the evening grain offering.—Ps. 141:2.

God's law to Israel outlined specific instructions regarding incense. After listing its ingredients and how it should be prepared, the Bible says: "It is to continue as something holy to Jehovah. Whoever makes any like it to enjoy its smell must be cut off from his people." (Ex. 30:34-38) In this way, profane use of holy incense was strictly forbidden. What can we learn from this? The incense was pictorial of the acceptable prayers offered up by God's faithful servants, as noted above. Also, we read that "the incense means the prayers of the holy ones." (Rev. 5:8) How important it is that we highly value the privilege of prayer! We can show such appreciation by praying regularly, making our requests in harmony with God's will. Selfish, wrongly motivated prayers would be comparable to the misuse of incense and would not be given a favorable hearing by our heavenly Father. —Jas. 4:3. *W 5/1 8, 9a*

Sunday, May 18

Every day in the temple and from house to house they continued without letup teaching and declaring the good news about the Christ.—Acts 5:42.

Like those apostles, where we have the freedom we search "from house to house" for those who are worthy to receive the "good news." When we find them, we can revisit them and aid them through a free Bible study in the home. Of course, certain aspects of our work are different today, in that we do not go to temples or synagogues to preach. Also, we now have the help of the printed page, automobiles and other means of travel to facilitate our work. Thus home visits are an admirable way of distributing the printed message and returning to teach God's Word to those who respond to the "good news." The apostle Paul also set a fine example in public preaching—in the synagogues, in the marketplace, on a riverbank—wherever he could find Jews and others to talk to. For two years, in a school auditorium in Ephesus, he gave daily talks to new disciples. Do you make use of every opportunity to preach and to teach? *W 7/15 15, 16*

Monday, May 19

The virgins in her train as her companions are being brought in to you. They will be brought with rejoicing and joyfulness.—Ps. 45:14, 15.

Where does the rejoicing of these virgin companions of the Bride take place? It is true that they are said to enter into the palace of the king, who is heavenly, but do they marry the king? No! Of course not, for they do not get as far as even being espoused to him. The members of the "king's daughter" class are espoused to Christ down

here on earth, even while they are still human. Therefore, the bridesmaids, who are merely "in her train" and are not in line for marriage to the Bridegroom King, would be an earthly class. They make their appearance on earth when the heavenly marriage is about to be consummated. They picture the "great crowd" who began appearing in this "time of the end," manifesting themselves since 1835. By being preserved through the coming "great tribulation," they will be alive here on earth when the heavenly marriage takes place. *W 1/15 9, 10b*

Tuesday, May 20

Do not go beyond the things that are written.—1 Cor. 4:6.

Always there is the need to pay strict attention to this counsel of the apostle Paul. Although many of us have had to adjust our views as regards the end of this wicked system of things, can we deny that we are in the "time of the end"? Surely the evidence of the impending end of this system grows daily, as we see the deepening breakdown of institutions such as marriage, family, government and worldly religion, as well as increasing crime and violence, and growing disrespect for God. (2 Tim. 3:1-5) While an undetermined length of time yet remains for these "last days," one thing is certain. Those who continue to walk in Jehovah's advancing light, and are willing to be readjusted, will be part of the anointed remnant and the "great crowd" who "come out of the great tribulation" into Jehovah God's new order. "The Lamb, who is in the midst of the throne, will shepherd them [the great crowd], and will guide them to fountains of waters of life."—2 Pet. 3:14, 15; Rev. 7:9-17. *W 7/1 18-20a*

Wednesday, May 21

I myself well know that my redeemer is alive, and that, coming after me, he will rise up over the dust. . . . Yet reduced in my flesh I shall behold God.—Job 19:25, 26.

During the time of Job's affliction, he did not see God's face as being favorable to him. Do we today sometimes feel that, because of the trouble God lets come upon us, he is looking with disapproval upon us, and we should like to see a change of facial expression toward us? On the coming "last day" there will be a resurrection, and this very fact will signify that God looks with favor upon redeemed mankind. Job believed that there would be a resurrection for him and others of mankind because there was a "redeemer." Job had confidence in his personal integrity toward God. Hence he felt sure that there would be a "redeemer" for him. This "redeemer" would rise up after Job's death, but Job would leave behind a good record for his "redeemer" to consider. In the confidence that the coming "redeemer" would furnish a basis for the resurrection, Job exclaimed the above. *W 6/15 21-23*

Thursday, May 22

I well know, O Jehovah, that to earthing man his way does not belong. It does not belong to man who is walking even to direct his step.—Jer. 10:23.

After we examine the warning examples of history, we have to agree with these words of Jeremiah. Because a man can walk he may think that he can walk in whatever way he desires and still reach his destination. He may feel that Jehovah God has nothing to do with the matter. So the political rulers try to steer national affairs while ignoring

the lessons of Bible history. They scoff at the modern-day Jeremiah class who, with their companions, predict world calamity in a "great tribulation." (Matt. 24:21, 22) They pay no attention to Bible prophecy and think that they can determine the outcome of matters, directing their steps to lasting peace and prosperity. Still, though they walk as they desire, Jehovah as "King of the nations" will make them stumble into the foretold destruction during the unavoidable "great tribulation." May we not make their mistake! *W 8/15 18, 19*

Friday, May 23

You were once darkness, but you are now light in connection with the Lord. Go on walking as children of light.—Eph. 5:8.

Today, like a vicious wind, the "spirit of the world," under the direction of Satan, is attempting to sweep all mankind into a course that will inescapably lead to a chasm of destruction, at the expression of God's wrath. (1 Cor. 2:12; Eph. 5:6) To avoid such wrath requires that a Christian, as it were, 'walk against the wind.' He must struggle if he is to walk as a 'child of light,' and not as the 'nations walk' or conduct themselves. (Eph. 4:17) Where must our efforts be directed for us to be victorious in this struggle? Paul answers by urging us "to be made mighty in the man [we] are inside with power through [God's] spirit." Here is the area that we must work on, namely, the 'inner man,' what we are inside, in the "secret person of the heart." This must be strengthened. How? The key is in the following verse: "To have the Christ dwell through your faith in your hearts with love."—Eph. 3:16, 17; 1 Pet. 3:4. *W 6/1 2, 3a*

Saturday, May 24

Share with the holy ones according to their needs. Follow the course of hospitality.
—Rom. 12:13.

Traveling overseers and their wives should appreciate the hospitality extended by the congregation. (Heb. 13:1, 2) They must learn to adjust to the varying circumstances in their assignments. They are subject to limitations, just like those of us who may have some health problems, and need sufficient rest in order to maintain their pace each day. So due consideration needs to be given to such matters in advance. Of course, the traveling overseers and their wives should not expect anything elaborate. Whatever may thoughtfully be arranged in the way of modest, suitable accommodations and wholesome meals should be received with genuine appreciation. To the extent that elders and the rest of the congregation properly prepare and build up enthusiasm for the visit, to that extent everyone will benefit. If preparation is inadequate or left to the last minute, maximum results obviously will not be gained. W 2/15 6, 7a

Sunday, May 25

They received the word with the greatest eagerness of mind, carefully examining the Scriptures daily as to whether these things were so.
—Acts 17:11.

What does the evidence show regarding the vital fruit of God's spirit, love? Who measure up? Where do we see a great crowd of people of all different nationalities and races united together in Jehovah's name to serve him loyally and to tell others about his kingdom? Yes, where do we find a genuine worldwide brotherhood bonded by love? An impartial investigation of

God's Word, comparing it to the teachings and practices of Jehovah's Witnesses, will provide the evidence that God's spirit is indeed backing them, and that he is using them as his instrument for proclaiming truth today. However, all persons who have a love for the truth are invited to examine this claim that Jehovah's Witnesses really do have the truth. In doing so, they should imitate what those persons in the first century did who listened to the preaching of the apostle Paul. By our field service and informal witnessing we can help such persons. W 7/1 19, 20

Monday, May 26

I tell you, Although he will not rise up and give him anything because of being his friend, certainly because of his bold persistence he will get up and give him what things he needs.—Luke 11:8.

At Luke 11:5-7 we see that the one in a position to supply the supplicant's needs at first definitely refused to take any action. He was most unwilling. Rather than showing himself to be like the heavenly Father, he stands out in sharp contrast. By doing so, the point of the illustration was made just that much more forceful. Just picture that man who, "because of his bold persistence," got what he needed even at midnight! His persistence paid off. What an encouragement for us to put into practice Jesus' own application of that illustration: "Keep on asking—seeking—knocking." (Luke 11:9) Do not give up in praying or weaken in faith because of persistent opposition to your work of Kingdom-preaching or disciple-making, or due to living in a divided household, or because of fighting some personal weakness. W 5/15 6, 8a

Tuesday, May 27

Remember, now, your Grand Creator in the days of your young manhood.—Eccl. 12:1.

Only by serving as God's Witnesses and by conducting ourselves properly are we in our proper place. (Ps. 148:1, 12) And young ones are specifically urged as above. The question is: Are you in your proper place? Are you giving praise to Jehovah? Open your Bible to Psalm 148. Note the repeated urgings there to praise Jehovah. Why, the sun, the moon, the stars, the trees, the animals, the birds; yes, all the creations of God are urged to praise him. And consider in what a wonderful way they do so. A sunrise or a sunset blazing with gorgeous color is a glowing tribute to the Grand Maker of the sun. The stars at night scattered above like sparkling diamonds on black velvet, or the silvery moon shining on the waves of the sea, reflect that a Great Architect is responsible for these lovely things. We could go on and on noting how the things that Jehovah has made really do praise him. But what about "you young men and also you virgins"—you young women? Do you praise Jehovah? W 4/1 7, 8

Wednesday, May 28

Because you are not part of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, on this account the world hates you.
—John 15:19.

That Jesus Christ has been with his "faithful and discreet slave" class all along is seen in their getting to comprehend the great difference between the organization of Jehovah and that of Satan. No interfaith for Jehovah's people! They do not make common cause with false religion nor with any other part of Satan's world. (2 Cor. 4:4; 6:14-16)

To them and to them alone apply the above words of Jesus. Consequently their neutrality toward worldly conflicts and politics has indeed stamped Jehovah's Witnesses as unique. Especially was this so with the beginning of World War II. Even though their neutral stand has caused and is causing many of our brothers to suffer severe persecution, imprisonment and at times even death, it has, nevertheless, time and again served them in good stead, resulting in their lives being spared, as in Northern Ireland, Lebanon, Rhodesia and other strife-torn lands. W 3/1 10a

Thursday, May 29

The prophets are saying to them: "You will see no sword, and there will be no famine to happen to you, but true peace is what I shall give you in this place."—Jer. 14:13.

For Christendom during this "time of the end," the situation has been just as it was with the Israelites during the days when Jeremiah declared Jehovah's judgment message to them. Nevertheless, Christendom's clergy persist in contradicting what the Jeremiah class and their companions, the "great crowd," have been declaring as a warning to all people. These witnesses of Jehovah meet up with the same situation that Jeremiah did. Such prophesying that there is no likelihood of calamity at Jehovah God's hand is designed to quiet the fears of the people. It raises false hopes in the bosoms of Christendom's church members. It throws them off guard as far as any sudden outbreak of the "great tribulation" is concerned. Consequently, like a thief in the night it will come upon them, and they will suffer eternal loss. May none of God's people be caught off guard then! W 8/15 15, 16a

Friday, May 30

The Lamb, who is in the midst of the throne, will shepherd them, and will guide them to fountains of waters of life.
—Rev. 7:17.

Thus, those who look to Jehovah for guidance can look forward confidently to the establishing of a new system in which "the righteous themselves will possess the earth, and they will reside forever upon it." There, "the wicked one will be no more." But in his place, the meek and teachable will "find their exquisite delight in the abundance of peace." (Ps. 37:10, 11, 29) So, as has been the case for the past 100 years with the modern organization of Jehovah's people, we today are confident it will also be during the remainder of these last days that "God is our God to time indefinite, even forever. He himself will guide us until we die." (Ps. 48:14) And then, in his new order, we can with equal confidence look forward to Jehovah's continued guidance of his servants throughout eternity, without their having to die at all, because "he that does the will of God remains forever."—1 John 2:17. W 7/1 21, 22a

Sunday, June 1

Do not be afraid because of their faces, for "I am with you to deliver you," is the utterance of Jehovah.—Jer. 1:8.

Christendom's conditions are bad religiously, morally, socially, judicially, with no hope of relief. As in Jeremiah's case, Jehovah today has not minced words in stating his judicial decision against Christendom. He has commissioned his servants to declare a corresponding straightforward message of calamity to the

Saturday, May 31

Afterward we the living who are surviving will, together with them, be caught away in clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and thus we shall always be with the Lord.
—1 Thess. 4:17.

Because human eyes are not strong enough to see spirit bodies, the resurrection of the dead in Christ is unseen to humans. That is why, since the start of Christ's presence, mankind has not seen him nor been aware of the resurrection of his disciples. The apostle Paul speaks of himself as if surviving on earth until that happy event for spirit-begotten Christians when he says the above. He did not here mean that the spirit-begotten Christians like himself would not die but would be "caught away," human body and all, into the skies amid literal clouds. Paul died. Spirit-begotten Christians today surviving during Christ's presence must likewise die. Like seeds planted in the ground, they must each be sown a physical body by dying a human death. How are they caught away to meet the Lord? By instantaneously experiencing a spiritual resurrection. W 6/15 17-19a

modern counterpart of ancient Jerusalem and Judah. Unsparringly, unwaveringly, the Jeremiah class and their companions must adhere to all He commands them in His Word. All nations, including those of Christendom, are marching to Har-Magedon. It is the battle of God Almighty, in which he will clear the earth of the wicked system that Satan has used to blind the people for all these centuries. Har-Magedon will bring to a close the "great tribulation." W 9/1 24-26

Monday, June 2

God is the judge. This one he abases, and that one he exalts. For there is a cup in the hand of Jehovah, and the wine is foaming, it is full of mixture. And surely its dregs will be poured out from it; all the wicked ones of the earth will . . . drink them.—Ps. 75:7, 8.

What a foreboding appearance the state of world affairs has taken on in our generation! According to what informed persons are saying about the trend of world affairs, the "destiny of the nations" is nothing pleasant to contemplate. It is certain to be a bitter potion for humankind to drink. In the face of continual failure of desperate human efforts to stave off world catastrophe, we feel driven to ask, Does some Higher Intelligence, yes, God, have a hand in the matter? Here the significant statement in an old song comes to mind. The nation of Israel to which the song composer belonged did not go down to permanent ruin along with neighboring nations, but, under Divine Providence, it arose again. Thus we have a song well suited for our times. W 9/15 1, 2a

Tuesday, June 3

Then the king will say to those on his right, "Come, you who have been blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the founding of the world."
—Matt. 25:34.

On May 31, 1935, at a convention in Washington, D.C., these were shown to be the same as the "great multitude" spoken of at Revelation 7:9 (AV). So they were galvanized into action, even as can be seen by the fact that on the following day, Saturday, June 1, there was programmed for them an opportunity for water baptism. Great was the

joy of 840 candidates, most of whom were immersed with the hope of being classed by Jehovah with the prospective "great multitude." It proved to be an outstanding baptismal event. It was as if the floodgates had been opened up, and throngs streamed through into a publicly confessed relationship with Jehovah, entering into the "one flock" of the Fine Shepherd to associate with his spiritual "brothers." It was as if the "faithful and discreet slave" had used a "key of knowledge."—Luke 11:52. W 10/1 19, 21, 22a

Wednesday, June 4

People will deliver you up to local courts, and you will be beaten in synagogues and be put on the stand before governors and kings for my sake, for a witness to them.
—Mark 13:9.

To this day, Jehovah's people are having to appear before judges and rulers in many lands, as "a witness to them." This is because God's servants give their primary allegiance to Christ's kingdom, which Jesus himself described as being "no part of this world." (John 18:36) It is also because they share zealously in the fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy: "Also, in all the nations the good news has to be preached first." (Mark 13:10) Has this been accomplished since 1914? Certainly it has! Not in mere human strength, but by the power of God's spirit, Jehovah's Witnesses have covered the earth with a campaign of preaching and disciple-making. Today more than two million Witnesses are proclaiming the millennial hope 'to the extremities of the earth.' (Rom. 10:18) By his dynamic energy God is sustaining his people in a wonderful way. W 10/15 6, 7

Thursday, June 5

But let him keep on asking in faith, not doubting at all.

—Jas. 1:6.

Do you pray only at stated times, as at meals or at meetings? Are your prayers just from the mind and expressed on the lips, or do you keep "making supplication" and earnest entreaty from the heart, sometimes with "groanings unuttered"? (Rom. 8:26) Whatever the need, you can do as Nehemiah did unobserved when before the king: "At once I prayed to the God of the heavens." (Neh. 2:4) His prayer of faith was answered. Remember, too, that though you can be helped by the prayers of others, no one can really substitute for you in prayer. We know that Jehovah answers the petitions of those who persist in prayer and who keep watching. (Luke 11:5-13; 18:1-8) And other Bible writers were inspired to give practical counsel on the closely related subjects of prayer and faith. James, for example, early in his letter, reminds us that we should "keep on asking God" for wisdom in meeting and enduring various trials. *W 5/15 19a, 1, 2b*

Friday, June 6

It does not belong to you to get knowledge of the times or seasons which the Father has placed in his own jurisdiction.

—Acts 1:7.

That those who talked with Jesus did not have knowledge about all the details of God's Kingdom rule is evidenced by the question that they asked him after his resurrection: "Lord, are you restoring the kingdom to Israel at this time?" (Acts 1:6) Instead of answering by telling them about every aspect of Kingdom rule, Jesus declared the above. Why did Jesus handle

the matter in this way? Because the disciples held deep-seated but erroneous views of the Kingdom. They believed that the Kingdom would throw off Roman domination. Yet the truth was that the Kingdom was to be heavenly, and that those chosen to rule with Christ would be taken from the earth to heaven. Further, their question shows that they expected the Kingdom to be established immediately. But that was not to be, for many centuries would pass instead. All such was in keeping with the principle stated at Proverbs 4:18 and the way God is dealing with us today. *W 7/1 6a*

Saturday, June 7

The sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running into battle.—Rev. 9:9.

One day of the 1922 Cedar Point convention was set aside for house-to-house group witnessing, and it was reported that 10,000 books were distributed by the Kingdom publishers. Down to this day, special programs of house-to-house preaching at conventions add to the joy of those assembled. During the 1920's and 1930's this vigorous witnessing from house to house was like a locust plague passing through Christendom, even as the above scripture puts it. A "mighty" army of zealous Witnesses swarmed through the cities and towns of Christendom, exposing wrong doctrines and hypocritical religious practices. This often stung the clergy into active opposition. The 'locust' band gave notice concerning the approaching day of Jehovah's vengeance on all defamers of his name, and comforted all honest-hearted ones with the glad tidings of a paradise earth to be restored under God's kingdom. *W 7/15 10, 11a*

Sunday, June 8

Jehovah himself gives the saying; the women telling the good news are a large army.
—Ps. 68:11.

Most of the traveling overseers are married and their wives accompany them. While he is the one with whom to talk about serious problems, sisters in the congregation especially can benefit from his wife's association and example in the field. She works under her husband's direction and will be pleased to accept invitations from sisters to accompany them in various features of the service. Always, it is appreciated if the fine support for field activity in the morning can be continued during the afternoon, when perhaps local sisters can provide transportation and share in the work. This often frees the husband to make additional appointments. So sisters have a fine opportunity in this way to add to the effectiveness of the visit. In this way both the sisters in the congregation and the traveling overseer's wife can have a share in fulfilling the prophecy long ago uttered by the inspired psalmist. *W 2/15 11a*

Monday, June 9

Neither let us practice fornication, as some of them committed fornication, only to fall, twenty-three thousand of them in one day.—1 Cor. 10:8.

We are now right at the portals of God's promised new system, poised to enter it as the Israelites were about to enter the Promised Land. Judging from past examples, what would you expect Satan to attempt? Yes, to maneuver God's people into situations where they would commit sexual immorality, so that Jehovah would judge them as unfit to enter his righteous new system. Would you not agree

that the immorality of Satan's world poses a real threat to the spiritual health of Christians today? Some older ones may have little idea of what younger Christians daily face in the way of exposure to sexual immorality. An astonishing number of today's youths begin sexual activity in their early teens or before, and sexual escapades are a common topic of conversation. Yes, the pressure on young ones to commit immorality is tremendous. So, "flee from fornication."—1 Cor. 6:18. *W 4/1 5-8a*

Tuesday, June 10

When this people . . . asks you, saying, "What is the burden of Jehovah?" you must also say to them, "You people are—O what a burden! And I shall certainly abandon you," is the utterance of Jehovah.—Jer. 23:33.

Today Jehovah's message for this political, religious, commercial system of things is heavy with doom bespeaking ruinous calamity. It is accordingly a heavy responsibility for us to declare Jehovah's message for this "time of the end." So when we answer people's questions about the destiny of this system of things, let us be sure to tell what is really the "burden" of Jehovah. When Christendom's laity class or prophets or priests ask us to tell them frankly on what points the weight of Jehovah's Word bears down, we are obliged to tell them that Christendom's people themselves are a "burden" to him, yes, "O what a burden!" So he will rid himself of this "burden" by abandoning Christendom to calamity. For this work Jehovah "like a terrible mighty one" will strengthen us in our weakness.—Jer. 20:7-11. *W 9/1 31, 40, 41a*

Wednesday, June 11

Keep praying that [your flight] may not occur in wintertime; for those days will be days of a tribulation such as has not occurred from the beginning of the creation which God created until that time, and will not occur again.

—Mark 13:18, 19.

Yes, the way of survival will not be easy. We, individually, may fail to make it if we delay flight during a favorable season like summer until the wintertime of "tribulation." In these abnormal times, no one can expect to keep on living a normal life. The course of wisdom today is to flee to the side of God's kingdom, and to stay there, expending oneself in a life of self-sacrifice on behalf of Kingdom interests. (Matt. 6:33) As we face up to the greatest of all tribulations, we can be thankful for Jesus' assurance that Jehovah will "cut short the days" in order to save "flesh" devoted to him—that of the "chosen ones" who will later rule with Christ and that of the "great crowd" who form a nucleus of those who will live on earth during the millennium.—Rev. 5:9, 10; 7:9-17. *W 10/15 16, 17*

Thursday, June 12

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.

A review of the history of this "slave," as contrasted with the history of Christendom, brings us to what conclusion? This, that Jesus Christ has been true to his promise. He has been with his Christian congregation as repre-

sented by that "slave" from the time of Pentecost, 33 C.E., down to this very day. Jehovah's spirit does indeed rest richly upon that "slave" and those associated with it, as they keep obeying the commands to preach the good news of the Kingdom and to make disciples. To stay with Jesus Christ is to stay with those whom he is pleased to use. Outside the true Christian congregation, what alternative organization is there? Only Satan's organization consisting of his political "wild beast" and his Babylonian world empire of false religion. *W 3/1 16a*

Friday, June 13

Cease becoming unreasonable, but go on perceiving what the will of Jehovah is.—Eph. 5:17.

Satan's methods rarely change; so be alert that your Christian "sense of decency" is not slowly altered. Stop and think: How far has your conscience allowed you to go? Is it too far? In the field of entertainment, is your course little different from that of persons "past all moral sense"? Much that is morally rotten is paraded before us as if it were perfectly sound. That is why we must "keep on making sure of what is acceptable to the Lord." (Eph. 5:10; 4:19) So when it comes to entertainment provided by the world, selectivity is the key. Illustrating this, it has been said: "The greater part of the movie is pretty good, but many always have the sex scenes, so if you want to see the rest of the movie, you have to watch the sex." But is viewing most of the "pretty good" movie worth the possible moral damage from the film's "sex scenes"? By viewing such films, are we not ignoring the apostle Paul's fine counsel above? *W 6/1 10-12a*

Saturday, June 14

They have built the high places of Topheth, . . . in order to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire.

—Jer. 7:31.

When it comes to pity, for whom do we have more pity? For the idolatrous parents who faced an accounting with Jehovah? Or for the sons and daughters screaming as they were being offered as human sacrifices to the false god Molech? Still those sacrifices back there pale into insignificance as to number when compared with the human sacrifices that Christendom has offered up to her unchristian gods during the centuries. Though pretending to be the visible kingdom of the Prince of Peace, she has offered up countless sons and daughters to the god of war. She has sacrificed scores of millions of her finest young church members in the two most sanguinary wars of all human history, and in many minor wars. Blasphemously Christendom calls this Christianity. We can demonstrate our thankfulness for having gotten free from this God-dishonoring religious organization by doing what we can to help free others. *W 8/1 17, 18*

Sunday, June 15

Through him let us always offer to God a sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of lips which make public declaration to his name.—Heb. 13:15.

Our offering "the fruit of lips" would include sharing in the fulfillment of Matthew 24:14. Are we truly giving our best to this important preaching work? Do we eagerly seize opportunities to give a witness? Is our life as Christians exemplary so that "the fruit of lips" constitutes an acceptable sacrifice of praise? (Rom.

2:21, 22) Public expressions at Christian meetings are also a part of our sacrifice. Obviously, this necessitates our being present when fellow believers are assembled for worship. Do we really long to be with others of like precious faith? Or, do we allow other activities and interests needlessly to occupy the time that we could be with our brothers? We do well to imitate the example of the psalmist who compared his intense desire for communion with Jehovah God in association with fellow worshippers to the longing of a hind for water.—Ps. 42:1, 2. *W 5/1 10, 11*

Monday, June 16

O Jehovah, . . . do set a watch over the door of my lips. Do not incline my heart to anything bad.—Ps. 141:3, 4.

At John 14:23, Jesus pointed out that God and Christ are equally close to those who come to Christ. And after telling his disciples that he was going away to be with his Father, Jesus showed that Jehovah God was closer to them than they imagined. (John 16:27) Certainly one having intimacy with God would enjoy protection against falling into badness. Even though God allowed Christ to encounter temptation, a thing common to all men, God does not try anyone with bad things. (Jas. 1:13) On the other hand, he will not forcibly prevent a person from choosing a bad course. Rather, when temptations or trials arise, God protects the person who has intimacy with him by opening his eyes clearly and sharply to the danger that he is in. He sets a 'guard and a watch' over him. One associated with Jehovah God will have strong warning signals presented to his attention. Have you not found this to be true in your own case? *W 4/15 5-7a*

Tuesday, June 17

They gathered them together to the place that is called in Hebrew Har-Magedon.

—Rev. 16:16.

We cannot minimize what Jehovah God is going to do at Har-Magedon just to please the political rulers of Christendom or even those of the whole world. We have to 'hew to the line,' as Jeremiah did to King Zedekiah in obedience to Jehovah. (Jer. 21:1-7) At Har-Magedon the rulers of this system of things must reckon with God the Almighty, not with mere fellowmen. As respects the people who patriotically support the political operators of this system of things, they also face the executional forces under Jehovah's command. In Jeremiah's day the executional forces were the Babylonian armies under Nebuchadnezzar. In the coming war at Har-Magedon they will be Jehovah's holy angels led by his Son Jesus Christ. The rulers of Christendom have refused to reform and seek reconciliation with God. So all lovers of truth must individually choose the "way of life." (Jer. 21:8) It is our privilege, yes, duty, to aid them to do so. W 9/1 26-28

Wednesday, June 18

We shall find in this Daniel no pretext at all, except we have to find it against him in the law of his God.—Dan. 6:5.

Being aware of Daniel's custom of praying and offering praise to his God three times each day, the conspirators caused the king to sign an edict that anyone who made a petition to any god or man for 30 days, except it be to the king, must be thrown into the lions' pit. The edict became the unchangeable law of the Medes and the Persians. (Dan. 6:6-9) This is similar

to the situation today in many lands where petty officials or clergymen, stung by the refusal of Jehovah's people to become part of the world or to soft-pedal their Kingdom activity, and jealous of God's blessing on their work, try to "get" the Witnesses and put them out of action. These opposers know well that Jehovah's people are usually the most law-abiding and honest persons in the community. So they trump up charges involving idolatrous ceremonies and salutes, and the shouting of partisan or patriotic slogans. W 10/15 7a

Thursday, June 19

Throw all your anxiety upon him, because he cares for you. Keep your senses, be watchful. Your adversary, the Devil, walks about like a roaring lion, seeking to devour someone.—1 Pet. 5:7, 8.

Tests keep coming to Jehovah's people due to issues involving neutrality, nationalism, idolatrous ceremonies, or through opposition of unbelieving family members, fellow workers or students, and others. But God's servants have been safeguarded by his power as they press on in the assurance of a happy outcome and reward. The Lord Jesus Christ assured anointed Christians at Smyrna of this at Revelation 2:10. Likewise, integrity-keepers among the "great crowd" may look forward to a "crown" of everlasting life in a paradise earth. (Jas. 1:12) Though the Devil, in his opposition to God's kingdom, may take on the frightful likeness of a "roaring lion," we need not fear him, if we keep our senses and are watchful. We are not alone in our fight with persecutions. Moreover, we are invited to throw all our anxiety on Jehovah—"because he cares for us." W 1/1 3-5a

Friday, June 20

He has set a day in which he purposes to judge the inhabited earth in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and he has furnished a guarantee to all men in that he has resurrected him from the dead.—Acts 17:31.

For the coming day of reckoning, Jehovah God has appointed a personal representative, an associate judge. What more remarkable "guarantee" could the Almighty God give of his set day for judgment for all the inhabitants of earth than the resurrecting of his associate judge from a martyr's death? This "guarantee" by God is nothing to be shrugged off, as the majority of those Supreme Court justices on Mars Hill did. This "guarantee" is furnished by the "King of the nations." It is nothing to be scoffed at as something unscientific and ridiculous. In the first century C.E. there were more than 500 eyewitnesses to the existence of that "guarantee" from God, including the apostle Paul himself. As he ably and fearlessly witnessed to that "guarantee" on every occasion, so should we do today.—Jer. 10:7. W 1/15 11, 12

Saturday, June 21

Repent, you people, for the kingdom of the heavens has drawn near.—Matt. 4:17.

An electrifying message this! God's kingdom was indeed at hand, in the person of the anointed Jesus himself. Throughout Galilee, in the Roman province of Perea and on into Jerusalem itself, Jesus preached the glad tidings as world conqueror and Messiah. Thousands listened. Many became his followers. But the ruling class, and especially the religious leaders, became his bitter opponents. Jesus did not

waver in his integrity, for he knew that he must be a conqueror down to the end. When finally he faced death on a torture stake and the Roman governor questioned him with regard to his kingship, he could reply: "You yourself are saying that I am a king." (John 18:37) Faithfully, he continued to bear witness to Kingdom truth. To the last he never faltered in making known his Father's name, and he sanctified that precious name in the face of every reproach Satan could hurl against it. What a fine model Jesus left for us to follow! —1 Pet. 2:21. W 2/1 7, 8

Sunday, June 22

Into all the earth their sound went out, and to the extremities of the inhabited earth their utterances.—Rom. 10:18.

Among the early Christians there was no division into clergy and laity. Those believers in the Lord Jesus Christ were not merely pew-sitters. They were men and women of action, intensely involved in witnessing "publicly and from house to house." (Acts 20:20) They literally "filled Jerusalem with their teaching" and preached the good news "in all creation that is under heaven." (Acts 5:28; Col. 1:23) They were successful because, as historian E. Arnold notes in his book *The Early Christians*: "Even the most simple members of their communities were messengers, spreading the truth entrusted to them." It must be the same today, for these words of Paul apply to all believing Christians: "With the heart one exercises faith for righteousness, but with the mouth one makes public declaration for salvation." (Rom. 10:10) And again the result is that multitudes are hearing the good news, even as Paul noted. W 7/15 7a

Monday, June 23

He gave . . . some as shepherds and teachers, with a view to the readjustment of the holy ones, for ministerial work.—Eph. 4:11, 12.

Today, because Jehovah's spirit is operating on his people, hardworking qualified men of many years' experience are available for visiting the congregations. Though they are imperfect men, they demonstrate many of the fine qualities that characterized Paul, Timothy and others. At the present time, there are numerous traveling overseers who have more than 30 years' experience in full-time work. Almost all these men have served also as overseers in local congregations and as pioneers. Others have spent years in the missionary field or at a branch office of the Watch Tower Society. The presence of such men in a congregation is a blessing, enabling all to derive strength from the spiritual things they have to share. Their visits help us in our service and worship as well as in cultivating Christian personalities. Do you truly make full use of their visits? *W 2/15 13*

Tuesday, June 24

The praise of Jehovah my mouth will speak.—Ps. 145:21.

During much of the year, you youths are in close company with classmates, as well as schoolteachers. So your conduct is on stage, as it were. Ask yourself: Does my conduct reflect well on Jehovah, the God with whom people identify me? Remember, how you behave will either contribute to his praise or bring reproach on him. And here is something else to think about: Do I take advantage of opportunities at school to speak about Jehovah's purposes?

Should not our attitude be that of the psalmist David? Many Christian youths have adopted the view that school is their "territory," and so are alert to occasions when they can give a witness. Are you? However, some youths find it difficult to witness to classmates or teachers, feeling somewhat embarrassed to be identified as Bible students or persons interested in talking about God. But if they would become open about it, they not only would be much happier but also would win the respect of many of their teachers and classmates. *W 4/1 11, 12*

Wednesday, June 25

Men, keep on the watch and praying, in order that you do not come into temptation. The spirit, of course, is eager, but the flesh is weak.—Mark 14:38.

We should not take ourselves individually for granted, however long we have been Jehovah's servants. (1 Cor. 10:12, 13) Not only must we heed the admonition at Luke 11:9 to 'keep on asking—seeking—knocking,' but also, as Jesus stressed the need for this day, we must heed his above words. This calls for all-around persistence, withstanding the pressures of apathy and opposition from without, but also overcoming weaknesses from within. Keep praying in faith that you may prove faithful and not shrink back. (Heb. 10:39) In severe trial, keep praying as Jesus did in his hour of greatest need, that above all else *God's will* should take place. God is well pleased with such prayers. He allows us to demonstrate our depth of concern, intensity of desire and genuineness of motive. He, though long-suffering, will execute justice speedily when the time is ripe. *W 5/15 16, 17a*

Thursday, June 26

I have many things yet to say to you, but you are not able to bear them at present.—John 16:12.

An important consideration relative to God's guidance of his people is that God gives the understanding of his truths *in his own time, and in his own way.* (Dan. 12:9) Too, Jehovah leads his people progressively in the truth. Having created the human mind, Jehovah knows that too little spiritual "food" will not sustain it properly, but too much at one time may be more than humans can absorb, even as Jesus noted in the above words. To illustrate: When a person emerges from a long period of confinement in a dark room, it is best if he is exposed to light gradually. Too much light too soon can be shocking, perhaps even damaging. Similar is the need for progressive enlightenment with God's truths. It corresponds with what the wise man says: "The road the righteous travel is like the sunrise, getting brighter and brighter until daylight has come." (Prov. 4:18, *Today's English Version*) Jesus well knew that it was Jehovah's way to make plain his truths progressively. *W 7/1 3, 4a*

Friday, June 27

Prophet to the nations I made you.—Jer. 1:5.

The choice of life or death faced the nation of Israel in the days of Jeremiah, so what this international prophet said and did affects us. The God who commissioned Jeremiah as his spokesman wanted him to be a public figure, one commanding the attention of kings, of princes, of priests, of the populace, yes, of an emperor, Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon. Jeremiah also commands the world's at-

tention today through his recorded prophecies that have been preserved for timely consideration by all of us in these critical days. The aging generation that has witnessed world events since 1914 C.E. has seen many changes among the rulers of the nations. Jeremiah saw a continual deterioration morally and religiously among the last four kings of Judah. Have we not seen equally grievous things occur among the political rulers of the nations that profess to be Christian? Since this is so, how important it is for us to steer clear of having anything in common with them! *W 9/1 7-10*

Saturday, June 28

Throw all your anxiety upon him, because he cares for you. Keep your senses, be watchful . . . take your stand against [the Devil], solid in the faith.—1 Pet. 5:7-9.

What must Christians do when they come face to face with persecutions and other trials? They must be courageous. They must humbly submit to the trying circumstances and pray, being confident that their brothers everywhere are praying fervently in their behalf. Peter gives the above fine advice. There have been many modern-day examples of Jehovah's people being thrown into a lions' pit, as it were. Lionlike emissaries of the Devil are seeking continually to devour God's people. However, his Witnesses persevere in prayer, throwing their anxiety on Jehovah, and take their stand "solid in the faith." Yes, modern-day examples show how true it is that Jehovah cares for and stands by his prayerful servants. Our fervent prayers to Jehovah will bring us safely through trials as integrity-keepers.—Ps. 7:1, 2; 57:1-4. *W 10/15 10-12a*

Sunday, June 29

The kingdom of the world did become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will rule as king forever.
—Rev. 11:15.

Now that the Gentile Times ended in 1914, we know that the day for Jehovah to hold an accounting with the Gentile nations for "their error" must be very near. Never has the world been the same since 1914. Secular historians cannot explain the reason for this. But the reason simply is that about October 4/5, 1914, or 2,520 years from the desolating of Judah and Jerusalem after the Babylonian conquest, the Gentile Times of uninterrupted world domination ended. Since the "kingdom of the world" had now become the kingdom of the Lord God, Jehovah caused the birth of his kingdom from his heavenly organization and seated his Son at his right hand on the celestial throne. Since then this royal descendant of King David has joined Jehovah God in world rule amidst his enemies before he tramples them to death. It is our privilege to make these vital truths known to all who will hear. W 9/15 11a

Tuesday, July 1

He will separate people one from another, just as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.—Matt. 25:32.

How do the "sheep" and the "goats" identify themselves as such? This is a consequence of a work of witnessing carried out on earth by the "brothers" of the king and their companions, a work that reaches "to the most distant part of the earth." (Acts 1:8) In the main, this has been a global campaign of preaching from house to house. Such activity results in the appreciative re-

Monday, June 30

You wives, be in subjection to your husbands, as it is becoming in the Lord.—Col. 3:18.

It was on the seventh day of the feast that King Ahasuerus had made for all his princes, military men and nobles, that his heart was in a merry mood with wine. He asked of his court officials that his wife, beautiful Vashti, be brought before him and his guests. But she refused to come. Enraged, the king sought the advice of seven of his closest princes, a council of wise men well versed in legal matters. What was to be done with Vashti? A chief spokesman of the seven princes, Memucan, contended that Vashti had wronged, not only the king, but also the princes and people of the entire empire. Her conduct would become known and all the wives, even princesses, would despise their husbands. So, Memucan suggested that the king decree that Vashti might no more come before the king and that her royal dignity be given to a better woman. Then all the married women would honor their husbands. That principle of wifely subjection applies to Christians. W 3/15 6, 7

sponse to spiritual things that is suggested by the King's words to the "sheep" class: "I was a stranger and you received me hospitably." (Matt. 25:35) He counts their receiving his "brothers" as something being done to him. In conjunction with it there has been angelic aid in declaring the "good news," for how often has it happened that a sincere person has prayed to God for help, only to find one of Jehovah's Witnesses standing at his door! And how often has a Witness been guided to call at a home when spiritual aid is needed the most! W 7/15 6a

Wednesday, July 2

Should the righteous one strike me, it would be a loving-kindness; and should he reprove me, it would be oil upon the head, which my head would not want to refuse.—Ps. 141:5.

It is good for congregation elders to recognize that the traveling overseer is imperfect even as they themselves are. On occasion it may seem to the local elders that he has erred in judgment, even as the apostle Peter was not without fault. Like any other elder, the visiting overseer should never feel that he is above counsel. If a number of elders are disturbed about something that he said or did, it would be a kindness for them to ask him about it. It may have been a misunderstanding or an oversight, in which case allowance can be made and the matter covered over in love. On the other hand, they may have a valid point of counsel that he will need to apply in order to serve his brothers in a more beneficial way. If so, he should feel as David did. In fact, should not every one of us feel that way, ever welcoming constructive counsel? W 2/15 20a

Thursday, July 3

The path of the righteous ones is like the bright light that is getting lighter and lighter until the day is firmly established.—Prov. 4:18.

Because Jesus Christ was using the "faithful and discreet slave" class, their understanding of God's Word kept getting ever clearer and more accurate. They came to appreciate that "Jehovah" was the meaningful name of the one true God and that it applied only to the Creator. They also gained a unique appreciation of God's cardinal attri-

butes of wisdom, power, justice and love. With the light on God's Word shining ever more brightly, God's people got to see more clearly why he has permitted all manner of wickedness and suffering. No others who profess to be Christians have been able to explain this. Why has Jehovah permitted these conditions? Because of the issue of the rightfulness, the deservedness of Jehovah's universal sovereignty brought into question by Satan's rebellion; also the related question as to man's being able to keep integrity in spite of all that the Devil could do. W 3/1 8, 9a

Friday, July 4

I myself shall collect together the remnant of my sheep out of all the lands to which I had dispersed them, and I will bring them back to their pasture ground, and they will certainly be fruitful and become many. And I will raise up over them shepherds who will actually shepherd them.
—Jer. 23:3, 4.

Only the Creator, who "made out of one man every nation of men, to dwell upon the entire surface of the earth," can provide the needed Governmental Shepherd for gathering all peoples into one fold. (Acts 17:26) Yes, the ideal shepherd we find in the God of the Bible, Jehovah. He can provide a governmental shepherd better than those last four kings of Jerusalem, whose badness resulted in the scattering of their sheeplike subjects. In view of the disappointment that imperfect human rulers leave behind for their subjects, the heavenly Shepherd Jehovah has promised to provide such a superior governmental shepherd. So after pronouncing woe upon the disappointing "shepherds" of the kingdom of Judah, he inspired Jeremiah to say the above. W 9/1 1, 7a

Saturday, July 5

He that has endured to the end is the one that will be saved.—Mark 13:13.

In these days of the fulfillment of Jesus' "sign," there have been many instances of Jehovah's providing holy spirit and guidance when most needed, as in the case of a certain circuit overseer who was sentenced to death for preaching the "good news." Holy spirit helped him to gain the victory eventually, causing a higher court to reverse the decision, thus setting him free to continue preaching the good news of God's kingdom. (Mark 13:4, 11) As Jesus also foretold, unbelieving family members have risen up as persecutors. Betrayal of the Witnesses by their own rebellious children has taken place occasionally, as happened in a refugee camp in Africa. Also, in comparatively peaceful lands, Jehovah's people have at times had to contend with bitter opposition from marriage mates or other family members. (Mark 13:12) As they witness tactfully and try lovingly to help such opposers, all such Witnesses are sustained by the above assurance. *W 10/15 8, 9*

Sunday, July 6

Know the love of the Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may in everything be filled with all the fullness that God gives.—Eph. 3:19.

We should never feel that having Christ dwell in our hearts merely means studiously accumulating a number of Biblical facts. (Eph. 3:17, 18) It is true that the more you fellowship with a person, the more you understand that one's thinking. Yet it is not until you begin to imitate that person in his way of dealing with others or imitate his life course that you can genuinely

appreciate his feelings. So, too, one cannot merely through the reading of books comprehend the love of Christ, but when one becomes like Christ, then, by sympathetic experience, one can know that which "surpasses knowledge." What an exalted goal! What a high example for which to reach! With God's help it can be done, despite our imperfect abilities, for Paul says that God is able to "do more than superabundantly beyond all the things we ask or conceive." The question is, Are we doing our part?—Eph. 3:20. *W 6/1 6, 7a*

Monday, July 7

Woe for the earth and for the sea, because the Devil has come down to you, having great anger, knowing he has a short period of time.

—Rev. 12:12.

We are living in this short period of woe right now! Thus, in his anger, Satan is having pressure applied on us in an all-out effort to get us to conform to the world's behavior. How is he doing this? Well, what was involved in causing angels to leave their proper place in heaven? Yes, it was an improper desire for sexual relations. Consider, too, what occurred shortly before the Israelites entered the land of Canaan, after wandering in the wilderness for nearly 40 years. When the Moabites saw them, they felt "a sickening dread." This was because the Israelites were so numerous, and because Jehovah's blessing was upon them. (Num. 22:1-3) So the Moabites hired the prophet Balaam to get God to curse the Israelites. This scheme failed. But eventually Balaam, no doubt under Satan's guidance, came up with a plan that succeeded. It involved illicit sex relations. *W 4/1 2, 3a*

Tuesday, July 8

He is able also to save completely those who are approaching God through him, because he is always alive to plead for them.—Heb. 7:25.

Though Christ was innocent, he suffered the complete penalty for mankind's sins. (1 Pet. 2:24) This was purposed by God centuries earlier, even as foretold at Isaiah 53:5. Christ's action in substituting for mankind counterbalanced all demands of justice for sins committed and laid the foundation for removing condemnation from all who acknowledge their own sins and exercise faith in God's arrangement. Also, the fact that Christ did not remain dead, but was resurrected and now lives, guarantees his ever-present help, so that a person can enjoy a close relationship with God, even as we are assured at Romans 4:25. He appeared in God's presence to present the value of his sacrifice. Today he is the glorified High Priest whom John saw in vision and of whom Paul wrote as above. (Rev. 1:12-16) God did this so that we might have a good relationship with him. Are you fully benefiting from it? *W 4/15 4, 5*

Wednesday, July 9

Everything is from you, and out of your own hand we have given to you.—1 Chron. 29:14.

Does it not seem strange that imperfect humans should even think about giving anything to the Great Creator, Jehovah? Why, there is not a thing in the whole universe that does not already belong to him, even as can be seen from such scriptures as Hag-gai 2:8 and Psalm 50:10-13. Surely God has no need of gifts from anyone, for he is complete in himself. From Exodus 19:5, David knew that

Jehovah owns the whole earth. In later years, when making contributions for the temple, David prayerfully addressed the Most High in words as above. So David recognized that we humans cannot enrich the Almighty in any way. Indeed, whatever we may give is merely a returning of a small part of what we have received from the Source of "every good gift." (Jas. 1:17) But does this mean that our bringing of gifts to God has no value? Does he spurn the offerings of his devoted servants? Not at all. Jehovah invites humble worshipers to bring gifts, as at Psalm 96:8. *W 5/1 1-3*

Thursday, July 10

Draw close to God, and he will draw close to you.—Jas. 4:8.

What an encouragement to be decisive in a right way and, finally, what a heartwarming appeal! One might be decisive and persistent out of a sense of duty, but to draw close to someone calls for something much deeper. It must come from the heart, prompting one to put oneself out and be ready to make sacrifices in order to gain and enjoy the desired close personal relationship. Notice that James does not say that if we draw close to Jehovah God, then he, so to speak, is just sitting there waiting to welcome us. Rather, if we take a definite personal course of action in drawing close to God, then he too will take a corresponding action on his part. How does he do this? Well, he has already made certain fine provisions, including his Word and the gift of his Son as our Redeemer, so that it is possible for imperfect, sinful humans to draw close to him. These provisions are open to all who wish to take advantage of them with a sincere and true motive. *W 5/15 4b*

Friday, July 11

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.—Isa. 54:17.

Most prophecies are given only in general outline. Therefore, faith is required to await the outworking of the details. An example of this has to do with the Bible's prophecies showing that this present wicked system will be destroyed and replaced by "new heavens and a new earth." (2 Pet. 3:13) However, enough aspects of the overall sign of the impending end are given in the Bible to mark clearly the present time as the "last days," "the time of the end." (2 Tim. 3:1; Dan. 12:4) This has incited God's servants to intensify the work of fulfilling Jesus' words at Matthew 24:14. We have had success in doing this and in surviving as an organization, also in prospering spiritually despite enormous persecution, likewise in putting on and displaying the new personality in this degraded world. All of this is testimony to the fact that Jehovah has indeed backed us up. W 7/1 16a

Saturday, July 12

Every day in the temple and from house to house they continued without letup teaching and declaring the good news about the Christ.—Acts 5:42.

During those days there was no time for disputes about foods and other trivia. They had to close ranks and present a united front against the enemy without. So doing, they experienced that of which the apostle Paul later wrote: "The kingdom of God . . . means righteousness and peace and joy with holy spirit." (Rom. 14:17) The "good news" was spreading like wild-

fire. There was no dampening the joy and zeal of the apostles. When Gamaliel's wise advice to "let them alone" was heeded, they "rejoiced because of having been counted worthy to be dishonored on account of Jesus' name." And how did they react to the Sanhedrin's order to stop preaching? The above tells. To this day, Christians who boldly proclaim Jehovah's sovereignty and kingdom, while upholding right principles in unity with their brothers, are assured of the help of the holy spirit and of joy in their work.—Matt. 25:21. W 7/15 13, 14

Sunday, July 13

However, when you catch sight of the disgusting thing that causes desolation standing where it ought not . . . then let those in Judea begin fleeing to the mountains.—Mark 13:14.

All persons who yearn for the oncoming millennium are deeply involved in the fulfillment of these words of Jesus. With the discerning eye of faith, Christians can even now see that "disgusting thing"—the U.N.—"standing where it ought not." The desolating of false religion draws near! (Rev. 17:16) She has miscalculated in placing her trust in this "disgusting" beast! As the reader discerns these things, what should he do? "Begin fleeing to the mountains." Happily, "those in Judea" have not delayed their flight to Jehovah's protective "mountains" outside the province. Consequently, today, in over 200 lands and territories around the globe, Jehovah's people are warning of the early end of this system of things. They have heeded the call at Revelation 18:4 to "Get out of her." They have made themselves "no part of the world."—John 15:19. W 10/15 10, 13, 14

Monday, July 14

In the prophets of Jerusalem I have seen horrible things, committing adultery and walking in falsehood; and they have strengthened the hands of evildoers in order that they should not return.—Jer. 23:14.

Inasmuch as the Messianic kingdom was born in the heavens at the close of the Gentile Times in 1914, overseers now serve as princely shepherds on earth. (Isa. 32:1, 2) Under the heavenly King, the one called "Jehovah Is Our Righteousness," the restored remnant and their companions reside in a spiritual paradise. No such paradise of spiritual peace and security exists today in Christendom. She finds herself in a state polluted with adultery and stricken with spiritual famine. Her condition is heart-breaking and is the forerunner of an outcome still more heartrending. It will make a person reel like a drunken alcoholic. The ones responsible for this are the clergy of Christendom. They have failed their church members. It is just as God said of the false prophets and priests in Jeremiah's day. W 9/1 14-16a

Tuesday, July 15

"My works are concerning a king." May my tongue be the stylus of a skilled copyist.—Ps. 45:1.

Are we joining in with the psalmist and saying for everybody to hear: "My works are concerning a king"? We have no reason to be ashamed of this king, God's own anointed one. So our principal "works" should be our speaking, teaching and preaching about this royal Messiah. We are working mainly in behalf of his Kingdom interests, not in behalf of any of the worldly kingdoms that are nearing

their disastrous end. We are stirred to use our tongues in advertising God's kingdom and his anointed King. What our tongues utter flows forth like the writing made by the pen or stylus of a scribe who is skilled in making manuscript copies of the Holy Scriptures. What flows forth from our tongues we also want to write down for others to read with joy. Better still, we are able today to put it in print, rolling it off high-speed printing presses by the millions of copies in scores of languages for distribution among the reading public world wide. W 1/15 6a

Wednesday, July 16

I saw, and, look! a great crowd, which no man was able to number, out of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb.—Rev. 7:9.

The year 1935 proved to be a thrilling time for Jehovah's Witnesses. They held a convention in Washington, D.C., on May 30 through June 3. On May 31, a stirring address was delivered to the conventioners and was broadcast over the radio. Sheeplike persons interested in everlasting life on an earth in a paradise state had been especially invited to attend the convention. The interest of all the conventioners was captured by the theme misunderstood up till then, namely, the "great multitude" (Rev. 7:9, AV) seen in vision by John. To the particular delight of the visible and invisible audience, the members of that "great multitude" were identified. They are the earthly "sheep" class of Jesus' parable recorded in Matthew 25:31-46. They survive on earth and in this way "come out of the great tribulation."—Rev. 7:14. W 10/1 18, 19a

Thursday, July 17

Let us not give up in doing what is fine, for in due season we shall reap if we do not tire out.—Gal. 6:9.

Congregation elders, family heads and others are continuing to exert themselves most commendably in 'working what is good toward those related to them in the faith,' and the fine fruitage of this is to be seen in the bond of love and affection that so strongly unites Jehovah's people throughout the earth. (Gal. 6:10) By this they are identified as Jesus' disciples. The "Victorious Faith" International Conventions have been a milestone in the forward movement of God's people on earth. They have provided a needed stimulus. The past few years have been a time of readjustment. Many of us had hoped that before now we might see the wind-up of this wicked system of things. True, we have seen the biggest-ever readjustment in the administrative organization of the Witnesses, but the wicked system of things has not ended. Obviously, Jehovah still has work for us to do. W 1/1 16, 15

Friday, July 18

By their fruits you will recognize them . . . every good tree produces fine fruit, but every rotten tree produces worthless fruit.—Matt. 7:16, 17.

How can we determine who really has the truth today, thus qualifying to be used by God as his witnesses in the earth? A basic principle in determining the true from the false was laid down by Jesus when he said the foregoing. Yes, there would have to be "fruitage" or evidence that God's powerful holy spirit was indeed backing this people. And what kind of fruitage

would that power of God produce in his servants? His Word answers: "The fruitage of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, mildness, self-control." (Gal. 5:22, 23) Note, especially, the fruit listed first, that of love. One way that God's true servants must manifest this is as Jesus said: "You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole mind." (Matt. 22:37) Love for God is shown in many ways, such as by loving God's name. W 7/1 14, 15

Saturday, July 19

Is there no balsam in Gilead? Or is there no healer there? Why is it, then, that the recuperation of the daughter of my people has not come up?—Jer. 8:22.

Persons who today adhere to Christendom may feel grieved at such a message as ours. Long ago Jeremiah felt grieved at the prospect of destruction to the temple at which he served as priest and because the nation of which he was a member was to suffer slaughter and dispersion. In despair of the spiritual recovery of his own people and in all sincerity and with no vindictive feelings, he could exclaim the above. The shattered spiritual condition of ancient Jerusalem and the land of Judah was unhealable. They were therefore really shattered by the Babylonians in 607 B.C.E. Today, at this late date, no spiritual 'balsam of Gilead' exists, able to heal Christendom. So now, before destruction strikes her "suddenly," let all lovers of true and lasting peace with Jehovah flee from her. However, for them to be able to do so they need help. Are we doing all we can to aid them? W 8/1 24, 25a

Sunday, July 20

Let this one fact not be escaping your notice, beloved ones, that one day is with Jehovah as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day. Jehovah is not slow respecting his promise, as some people consider slowness.—2 Pet. 3:8, 9.

Nineteen hundred years have passed since the days of the apostles. It is even as Peter put it. So, what if Jehovah's day is scheduled for a few more ticks of his time clock? Are we not glad that this has enabled some hundreds of thousands more of his "sheep" to be gathered? While that clock keeps on ticking away, tens of thousands of former Catholics in southern European lands are flocking to the Kingdom, hundreds in isolated islands of the sea are abandoning their idolatry and thousands of Asians are breaking free from Oriental superstitions to embrace the "good news." Jehovah's thieflike day has not yet arrived, for he still has work for us to do in gathering the "other sheep." Jehovah is not slow. Let us not be slow in seizing every opportunity to share fully in His work. W 2/1 15, 16a

Monday, July 21

Get out of her, my people, if you do not want to share with her in her sins.—Rev. 18:4.

In an effort to gain Christian balance and soundness of understanding, a small congregation of sincere Bible students divorced themselves from all of Christendom's religious organizations. They turned their backs on its sectarian creeds and followed the example of the first-century Bereans who searched the Scriptures daily to arrive at the apostolic faith. This fully dedicated congregation exerted

itself vigorously in defense of the ransom sacrifice of Jesus Christ and of his promised official "presence." They earnestly sought to prove worthy of being Jehovah's visible organization. So they kept free from any alliance with sectarian organizations of this world. The approach of the end of the Gentile Times in 1914 made it all the more urgent for this dedicated congregation of Christians to keep free from involvement with worldly organizations as well as with Christendom. 'Get out of Babylon the Great!' was the urgent call. W 3/1 15-17

Tuesday, July 22

The things that you learned as well as accepted and heard and saw in connection with me, practice these; and the God of peace will be with you.—Phil. 4:9.

The traveling overseer's talks cover the matter of worship, Christian living and more effective ways to preach the "good news." Those who have taken to heart the Scriptural encouragement and exhortation have resolved to "practice these," and have often been aided to make decisions and adjustments in their lives that have resulted in their advancement. Appreciating this, we should want to share fully in each meeting, taking in points of counsel that apply to us personally. Our attitude toward the visiting overseer can also help us to benefit from his presence. Some may be hesitant to approach him because of his busy schedule. However, he is there to help. So all should feel free to get acquainted. We can discuss with him what we have learned at meetings, points of interest in the publications, field experiences and questions about improving our personal service activity. W 2/15 8, 9a

Wednesday, July 23

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.—Jer. 25:33.

Jehovah's victory shout will resound throughout heaven and earth. (Jer. 25:30) The Jeremiah class and their companions keep pointing ahead to this, although victory for Jehovah means calamity for all nations. Should the Jeremiah class therefore be called 'mere calamity howlers'? No! Otherwise, Jehovah God, who gives them their message, should also be called a calamity howler. In merciful warning he says the above. What about "those slain by Jehovah" in the approaching "great tribulation" that will culminate in the "war of the great day of God the Almighty" at Har-Magedon? (Rev. 16:14, 16) Do we want to be among them? No! For to be slain by him then would mean the judicial execution of us by him. In view of the many slain, Jehovah will need to use his powers to dispose of the carcasses, for the Jeremiah class and their companions would never be able to bury them all. W 9/15 20, 22, 24a

Thursday, July 24

Tell us, When will these things be, and what will be the sign of your presence and of the conclusion of the system of things?—Matt. 24:3.

Logically, a choice such as faced Noah and his family should be facing us at some time as that predicted end approaches. From the way in which Bible prophecy has been coming true since World War I, which marked 1914 as the year for the Gentile Times to close, Bible Students have known that we are living in "the conclusion of the system

of things." By this year, 1980, we find ourselves far advanced into the concluding period of this system of things. So now, more than ever before, the pressure is upon us to choose "the way of life" and to reject "the way of death." (Jer. 21:8) This choice is mercifully placed before us by the Life-Giver of all those who breathe. Besides the Deluge we have another illustration in human history where the choice was between continued life and an abrupt end of the privileges of life. This had to do with the nation of Israel during the days of Jeremiah.—Jer. 1:1-5. W 9/1 6, 7

Friday, July 25

Let the man on the housetop not . . . go inside to take anything out of his house; and let the man in the field not return to the things behind to pick up his outer garment. Woe to the pregnant women and those suckling a baby in those days!—Mark 13:15-17.

In Bible times, when disaster threatened, it would have been foolhardy for a man to descend the outer stairs from his roof chamber and enter the house to retrieve his possessions. Also, a farmer, stripped down to work in his field, would jeopardize his chances of escape if he returned to pick up a fine outer garment. Likewise today, salvation is to be found in fleeing to God's kingdom and continually placing the Kingdom interests first—not in trying to salvage material things from a doomed world. And it will be a hard time for families that have ignored Jehovah's provision for escape. Happily, God-fearing parents, who are striving to raise their little ones theocratically, can expect that obedient minors will come under family merit, which can mean salvation for them. W 10/15 15, 16

Saturday, July 26

Cursed is the one acting cunningly when there exists in him a male animal, and he is making a vow and sacrificing a ruined one to Jehovah.—Mal. 1:14.

At Psalm 96:8 we read: "Ascribe to Jehovah the glory belonging to his name; carry a gift and come into his courtyards." Of course, Jehovah wants fine offerings that are prompted by appreciative hearts. These would be gifts that involve self-denial as well as prayerful and thoughtful preparation. For example, while the Mosaic law was in force, an Israelite could not bring just any animal to the gate of the tabernacle courtyard and expect to receive favorable recognition from Jehovah God. The Law required animals to be without blemish, for which reason Jehovah pronounced a curse on those offering blemished animals. (Lev. 22:21, 22) Yes, only the best was appropriate as an offering to the Holy One, Jehovah. Another important requirement was that of a person's having the right heart motivation, even as can be seen from Jehovah's words at Isaiah 1:11-15. W 5/1 3-6

Sunday, July 27

Satan himself keeps transforming himself into an angel of light.—2 Cor. 11:14.

At times Satan proceeds as "a roaring lion." (1 Pet. 5:8) His other method of attack is more subtle, which is described above. He acts like a serpent, not to frighten, but to beguile and seduce, as "the serpent seduced Eve by its cunning." (2 Cor. 11:3) As an evidence of this tactic, there is one thing that Satan knows that he does not want you to know, and that is that his time is short. As a result of the war in heaven, following

the birth of the Messianic kingdom in 1914, he was hurled down to the earth. (Rev. 12:1-12) If he can persuade us that the time of the end is not so short after all, then he has won half the battle. We would lose the sense of urgency and fail to keep wide awake. We could easily become fully occupied with the normal pursuits of life. Surely in this we must learn to look at things from Jehovah's viewpoint and try to appreciate how he counts time, keeping in mind the words of the apostle Peter at 1 Peter 4:7 and at 2 Peter 3:8, 9. W 5/15 9, 10b

Monday, July 28

Look! The fear of Jehovah—that is wisdom, and to turn away from bad is understanding.—Job 28:28.

That more than a surface knowledge of Jehovah God is necessary was noted by Job. After remarking about some of the marvelous facts of creation that scientists can understand and explain only after much research, he says: "Look! These are the fringes of [God's] ways, and what a whisper of a matter has been heard of him!" (Job 26:14) Later, Job points out that the real wisdom requires more of us than learning the mere "fringes of his ways"—something more than scientific facts. We must come to know the fineness of God's personality, to fear him as the One who upholds right principles, and to follow these principles. This wisdom can be gained only by a study of his Word. To the one who thus seeks to achieve a happy relationship with God, we read: "Happy is the one you choose and cause to approach, that he may reside in your courtyards. He will certainly be satisfied with the goodness of your house."—Ps. 65:4. W 4/15 10a

Tuesday, July 29

Flee from fornication.
—1 Cor. 6:18.

Young women today face tremendous pressures to commit immorality and males perhaps face even greater peer pressure to do so, since generally more young men engage in fornication than do young women. Sadly, reports have been received showing that many young Christians have also succumbed to the pressures of a sex-oriented world, just as the 24,000 Israelites of old fell victim to temptations from the immoral Moabites and Midianites. Surely this is a snare that Satan is still using to entrap God's servants! What can we do to protect ourselves and realize Jehovah's blessing? First, it is vital to be sensitive to Jehovah's direction and not consider the requirements of his Word as being of human origin. Fornicators will not inherit Kingdom blessings. "God will judge fornicators and adulterers." (Heb. 13:4) No human legislation can change God's law. Human acceptance or approval does not make a wrong practice right in Jehovah's sight. Sexual relations by unmarried persons are wrong. W 4/1 8-10a

Wednesday, July 30

The things that take place in secret by them it is shameful even to relate.—Eph. 5:12.

Scenes depicting what is done in secret are now flashed before the viewers. In view of what Paul states, what should be our attitude toward watching any part of such as entertainment? Rather than consulting a list of rules, a Christian must use his own "perceptive powers" and "cease becoming unreasonable [Greek: senseless, lacking moral intelligence]." (Heb. 5:14; Eph. 5:17) It may mean

our avoiding completely certain movies or TV presentations that could otherwise have some very entertaining features. How good it is when individually we can encourage one another to pursue a course that is "acceptable to the Lord"! Paul warned the congregation that certain ones would play down the straightforward counsel of the Scriptures. (Eph. 5:6, 10) Empty talkers could be a bad influence on others. With regard to persons who persist in walking disorderly, the apostle recommends "stop associating with him, that he may become ashamed." Yes, stop associating with him socially on his terms. W 6/1 12, 13a

Thursday, July 31

My own God sent his angel and shut the mouth of the lions, . . . forasmuch as before him innocence itself was found in me.—Dan. 6:22.

Because of his integrity-keeping course, Daniel was thrown into the lions' pit. But did that mean that his God had deserted him? Why, never! Nor does Jehovah forsake his witnesses today when they are thrown into filthy prisons. Daniel had not even been abandoned by King Darius, who spent the night fasting. Surely, Jehovah's protection proved to be more powerful than the unchangeable edict of Medo-Persian law. Next morning, when the king hurried to the lions' pit and inquired of Daniel whether his God whom he was serving with constancy had been able to rescue him, Daniel could reply as above. Prayer to Jehovah is as important today as in Daniel's time, and how effective it can be! Similarly, the Devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking to devour someone.—1 Pet. 5:8. W 10/15 9, 10a

Friday, August 1

I shall break this people and this city as someone breaks the vessel of the potter so that it is no more able to be repaired.—Jer. 19:11.

Dramatically Jeremiah illustrated Jehovah's prophecy by crashing the earthenware flask at the Valley of Hinnom. By public demonstrations far greater than that, the Jeremiah class has notified Christendom of her impending doom. Take, for example, that convention at Cedar Point, Ohio, in September of 1919. There the president of the Society delivered an address in which he pointed out that the blessing of the clergy upon the then proposed League of Nations would prove fruitless. That international organization for world peace and security would not succeed. Certainly it failed in 1939, when the German dictator Adolf Hitler precipitated Christendom into World War II. Another example was the radio lecture given by the Society's president. It was entitled "Effect of Holy Year on Peace and Prosperity," and its ear-tling message also greatly annoyed the clergy of Christendom. W 9/1 17, 18

Saturday, August 2

I saw another angel flying in midheaven, and he had everlasting good news to declare as glad tidings to those who dwell on the earth.—Rev. 14:6.

In explaining one of his parables, Jesus said: "The field is the world . . . The harvest is a conclusion of a system of things, and the reapers are angels." (Matt. 13:38, 39) The apostle John saw in vision angelic activity at this time of the end, and so wrote the above. How could all peoples of mankind be advised of the "everlasting good

news" concerning God's Kingdom rule, and of the impending fall of the world empire of false religion and its destruction? (Rev. 14:7, 8) Would it be by Christendom's method of going into so-called pagan lands, building schools, hospitals and relief centers and incidentally preaching to the "rice Christians" that came to them? No, the angels of heaven have guided a far different missionary service in recent years. Starting in the year 1943, we have been operating the Gilead School for the express purpose of training missionaries. W 7/15 16, 17a

Sunday, August 3

I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; those also I must bring, and they will listen to my voice, and they will become one flock, one shepherd.—John 10:16.

Only the outbreak of the "great tribulation" can block further entrance of humans into the ranks of the sheep-like ones who will make up the "great crowd." The way of escape from destruction with this doomed system of things will then be a lost opportunity for salvation. For all these years since 1935 the door into the Fine Shepherd's "one flock" has stayed open. Reportedly, more than two million have gone in. The Fine Shepherd, Jesus Christ, said: "I am the door of the sheep." (John 10:7-9) As such, he is still admitting the friends of his spiritual brothers and separates them from the "goats." All those who now want to, let them listen to the Fine Shepherd's "voice" as it is now expressed through his spiritual "brothers" yet on earth. O how grand their privilege to enjoy opportunities of service and the safety of the "one flock" under the "one shepherd"! W 10/1 24a

Monday, August 4

Stand firm, therefore, with your loins girded about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and with your feet shod with the equipment of the good news of peace.—Eph. 6:14, 15.

Encouraging reports come from many lands where Jehovah's Witnesses are bearing up under restrictions and proscriptions. How should we react to such reports? For one thing, they are a clear evidence that "the final part of the days" is now on us, that we are living in the most urgent of times and must gird ourselves to stand firm under trials of faith. (Isa. 2:2) Jehovah has strengthened our brothers to gain the conquest over the tide of bitter persecution that continues to advance in many parts of the world. And just as we pray fervently that Jehovah will watch over our brothers who are even now undergoing persecutions, we should pray that our heavenly Father will deliver us ourselves, our families and our congregations—yes, and all the new ones who are even now coming to a knowledge of the truth—from every device of the wicked one. *W 1/1 15, 16a*

Tuesday, August 5

Like these good figs, so I shall regard the exiles of Judah, whom I will send away from this place . . . I shall certainly cause them to return to this land.—Jer. 24:5, 6.

Babylon the Great took many of God's servants captive in order to stop their preaching of God's kingdom. Those oppressed captives of Babylon the Great were likened to the "good figs" of Jeremiah's vision. After World War I ended, Jehovah broke the power of Babylon the Great and, in 1919, he opened

the way for them to act upon his command: "Get out of her, my people." (Rev. 18:4) The spiritual Israelites who responded by breaking free were restored to God's favor and were put to work in his Kingdom service. They readily spearheaded the worldwide preaching of the Kingdom good news. To this day Jehovah has not seen good to let them be uprooted from their paradisaic spiritual estate into which he has brought them. To the contrary, more than 2,000,000 persons who are not spiritual Israelites have responded to the Kingdom preaching, thus taking up living under a figurative fig tree with its goodness and sweetness in more than 200 lands. *W 9/15 13, 14*

Wednesday, August 6

In your splendor go on to success . . . and your right hand will instruct you in fear-inspiring things.—Ps. 45:4.

People of Christendom today may claim to be shocked at the presenting of God and Jesus Christ in executorial capacities. (Ps. 45:3, 4) But how do they feel about the nations of Christendom of which such persons are patriotic citizens? Are the hands of such nations clean from the stain of blood, shed, not in theocratic warfare, but in unchristian warfare? Let such bloodguilty nations recall that, after the deluge that wiped out all of earth's population except Noah and his family inside the ark, God said to them: "Anyone shedding man's blood, by man will his own blood be shed, for in God's image he made man." (Gen. 9:6) Christendom has led the nations in shedding blood by political wars, religious crusades and persecuting conscientious Christians who stuck to the Bible.—Num. 35:33, 34. *W 1/15 19a*

Thursday, August 7

The end of all things has drawn close. Be sound in mind, therefore, and be vigilant with a view to prayers. Above all things, have intense love for one another.

—1 Pet. 4:7, 8.

As this wicked "system of things" closes in for its last-ditch effort to destroy God's people, we truly need to remain unruffled, awake and prayerful, confident in our conquest by faith. We need to be united in that intense love, which is so much a distinguishing mark of Jehovah's own people throughout the earth. (John 13:34, 35) Where, in all human history, has there been a people like Jehovah's Witnesses today? This is the only brotherhood that has penetrated into the remote corners of the earth. What force, other than Jehovah's spirit, could have united two million "out of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues" into so marvelous a unity of belief, purpose and activity? Together, we have won the conquest by faith, and together we show forth that faith by witnessing to Jehovah's kingdom by his Son.—Rev. 7:9. *W 2/1 17a*

Friday, August 8

Having a tender affection for you, we were well pleased to impart to you, not only the good news of God, but also our own souls, because you became beloved to us.—1 Thess. 2:8.

Are you interested in having a fuller share in the Kingdom work elsewhere? If the territory in your own congregation is well worked, ask the traveling overseer for suggestions as to where your assistance could be used to better advantage in another area. In each country throughout the earth, those looking after the

work are desirous of helping you to expand your efforts. And never be fearful, nor hold back from accompanying your traveling overseer in the field service. His sole aim is to give you encouragement and help rather than to criticize what you do. Of course, if he has some suggestion to offer, then be pleased to accept it. He is not to take himself too seriously, but should be mindful of dealing with others in a kind, loving manner, even as Paul did. So feel free to avail yourself of his help. It will add to his joy and to yours. *W 2/15 12, 10a*

Saturday, August 9

I am convinced that neither death nor life nor angels nor governments nor things now here nor things to come nor powers nor height nor depth nor any other creation will be able to separate us from God's love that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.—Rom. 8:38, 39.

When God has drawn a person to Jesus Christ, what is that one's situation? Jesus acknowledged that all persons belong to the Father and that those whom Jehovah draws are given to Jesus, turned over to him for their care and Christian growth. Jesus Christ looks to God to cause his work and sacrifice to bear fruit. Jesus said also that God had given him authority over all flesh. (John 17:2) By exercising this authority he can protect those whom God draws to him, safeguarding them from wicked, vicious opposers of the truth. Accordingly, no persecution, sickness, hardships, opposition, or anything else, even death, should be feared by us, even as Paul shows. Under Jesus Christ the Fine Shepherd, we who follow him faithfully are assured of everlasting life.—John 3:16. *W 4/15 17, 18*

Sunday, August 10

This is his name with which he will be called, Jehovah Is Our Righteousness.—Jer. 23:6.

Though not given this name literally, Jesus Christ fulfilled this prophecy. Thus during World War I the remnant was dispersed by the clergy and nations of Christendom that were then engaged in world war. But from 1919 onward Jehovah used the glorified Jesus Christ to collect the dispersed remnant together into a spiritual unity world wide. The members of this repentant, restored remnant of spiritual Israelites were cleansed and thus made fit to proclaim "this good news of the kingdom" internationally, in "all the inhabited earth." (Matt. 24:9-14) In this way, by God's undeserved kindness through Christ, they were declared righteous or were vindicated. Jehovah proved to be their Backer, their "champion," and they became his Christian witnesses. (Isa. 43:10) Inasmuch as this favor was to come through the Royal Shepherd, Jesus Christ, the name "Jehovah Is Our Righteousness" deserved to be attached to him. W 9/1 9, 11a

Monday, August 11

Look! I am with you all the days until the conclusion of the system of things.
—Matt. 28:20.

Through Jesus Christ, Jehovah God has made ample provision to lead his dedicated servants in the progressive light of truth, with everlasting life in view. Shortly before ascending to heaven, Jesus strengthened the faith of some 500 of his disciples gathered in Galilee with the above words. How has Jesus been with them? By means of his holy spirit; but also in another way. Earlier, Jesus had assured his followers that he

would appoint a "faithful and discreet slave" that would care for his interests and feed his followers down through the Christian epoch with food at the proper time. Proving faithful, this "slave" class would be appointed by Jesus at his presence over all his belongings. Yes, also by means of this "faithful and discreet slave" Jesus has been with his followers. (Matt. 24:45-47) Because he has been with his anointed followers, the Christian congregation has indeed been "a pillar and support of the truth."—1 Tim. 3:15. W 3/1 3, 4a

Tuesday, August 12

Flee from the desires incidental to youth.—2 Tim. 2:22.

If an establishment puts the emphasis on sex, and the clientele, as a whole, has little regard for the fine, wholesome moral standards of God's Word, obviously this is not a proper place for a Christian. This would be so whether it is known as a "disco" or by some other name. Remember, Satan's world is doing all it can to squeeze us into its mold, so should we not expect that Satan would use enticing entertainment as a lure to entrap us? Recall how the Israelites were lured by what at first seemed to be innocent entertainment, yet 24,000 lost their opportunity of life in the Promised Land. We do not want that to happen to us, do we? So then we need to resist worldly pressures; we need to fight against being fashioned after this system. Do not be deceived! Often those who get into moral difficulties are those who have been going to discos and other questionable places of entertainment. Going to such places is not in keeping with the apostle Paul's fine advice for us to flee from the desires incidental to youth. W 4/1 20a

Wednesday, August 13

[Encourage] one another, and all the more so as you behold the day drawing near.
—Heb. 10:25.

Do we appreciate that we cannot live without Jehovah, "the source of living water"? (Jer. 2:13) While at meetings, we would certainly want to derive the greatest benefit. This we can do by seeking to apply the above inspired advice. Since the great day of Jehovah for executing his judgment is bound to come, do we not have good reason to give prayerful consideration to what we can do to strengthen and encourage our brothers? Surely we do not want any of them to be found in a disapproved state when that day comes. (Luke 21:34-36) Do the expressions we make reveal that we are genuinely concerned about the spiritual welfare of our brothers? Through our comments at meetings, are we promoting love, an unselfish interest in the eternal welfare of others? Do our statements encourage all to continue performing fine works, being zealous in proclaiming the "good news" and being exemplary in all aspects of daily living? W 5/1 11, 12

Thursday, August 14

You [Jehovah] must do according to all that for which the foreigner calls to you; in order that all the peoples of the earth may get to know your name so as to fear you the same as your people Israel do.—1 Ki. 8:43.

True, the Holy Scriptures, by and large, center around God's people and apply to them, especially the Christian congregation that constitutes spiritual Israel, "the Israel of God." (Rom. 15:4; Gal. 6:16) In comparison with such, you may consider yourself to be an outsider or a foreigner, so

to speak, because of your previous way of life and total lack of interest in religion. Many are in such a position today. Do not quickly give up, however. Keep in mind that among the many petitions that Solomon presented to Jehovah at the dedication of the temple, he prayed for the foreigner as above. Additional insight and encouragement for these foreigners is the inviting description given at Isaiah 56:6-8. These foreigners are not regimented, but gladly join themselves to God out of love for his name and all for which it stands. W 5/15 11-13

Friday, August 15

Take this cup of the wine of rage out of my hand, and you must make all the nations to whom I am sending you drink it. And they must drink and shake back and forth.
—Jer. 25:15, 16.

The "cup" from which all the nations will drink in the oncoming future contains the bitterest potion that they will ever have drunk. The lessons that we can draw from history ancient and modern indicate that. The fact that all the nations are bound to drink such a gagging potion makes it certain that God, the "King of the nations," judges them to be "wicked." (Ps. 75:8; Jer. 10:7) So, at his hand, they will be forced to drink the very dregs out of the "cup" of the foaming, heavily spiced wine. But what about us who hope for a future that turns out happy? How can we escape from drinking along with the doomed nations that death-dealing potion out of the "cup"? Logically, we need to listen to whatever counsel is given by the One who will hold out that "cup" to the nations at his due time and then act promptly in line with that counsel. Will we do so? W 9/15 3a

Saturday, August 16

Jehovah himself will certainly give forth his voice before his military force, for his camp is very numerous.
—Joel 2:11.

These days are no time for complacency. As God's prophet Joel declares: "The day of Jehovah is coming, for it is near!" (Joel 2:1) Though this is to be a day of gloom and anguish for false religionists, those who love God can rejoice now in spiritual enlightenment that is like the "light of dawn spread out upon the mountains." (Joel 2:2) As a 'locust' army, they carried the Kingdom message from house to house. God's prophet describes their zealous course of action at Joel 2:2, 3. True, there has never been a spiritual army like these anointed witnesses of Jehovah! They have marched through the earth, exposing the error of Babylonish religions, completely devastating any Eden-like appearance of their realm of activity, but bringing comfort to those homes that receive the "good news." Protected by the myriads of heavenly angels, these spiritual "locusts" have carried forward their house-to-house visits. The common people hear them gladly. W 7/15 12a

Sunday, August 17

This is what the love of God means, that we observe his commandments.—1 John 5:3.

If we love Jehovah God we will be a people for his name. We will uphold it and make it known throughout the earth. Love for God would also mean believing in, and talking about, his incoming government for all the earth, his heavenly kingdom for which Jesus taught us to pray. (Matt. 6:9, 10) Who among mankind today make God's kingdom the central doctrine

of their teaching and preaching as did Jesus? Who call on people in their homes to tell them what God's kingdom will accomplish on earth? Who fulfill the commission Jesus mentioned when he foretold what is stated at Matthew 24:14? Love for God means obeying all his laws. When there is a conflict between Jehovah God's laws and the laws of men, the Bible rule for those who really have the truth is: "We must obey God as ruler rather than men." (Acts 5:29) That means being no part of the world, being neutral as Jesus and the first-century Christians were. W 7/1 16, 17

Monday, August 18

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.
—Rev. 14:13.

In the light of what Paul writes in 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17, it must be during the presence of Christ, not before it begins, but after, that these words apply. Even during his being invisibly present in spirit there will be spirit-begotten Christians on earth who will "die in union with the Lord." These especially are to be happy in dying during his presence. Their death in the flesh does not terminate their deeds for any length of time. Why not? Because "the things they did go right with them." This requires a transfer of operations, from works in the flesh on earth, to works in the spirit in the heavenly realm. (See 1 Corinthians 15:42-44.) So these "happy" resurrected ones follow up their earthly "labors" with works in spirit bodies in the spirit realm. They do not have to sleep in death waiting for Christ's presence. W 6/15 8, 9a

Tuesday, August 19

Strip off the old personality with its practices.—Col. 3:9.

No, do not patch up the old personality, but 'strip it off,' get rid of it. Why? Because its "deceptive desires," which linger in our "treacherous" heart, can corrupt or make the old personality go from bad to worse. (Jer. 17:9) To justify their patronage of obviously degrading entertainment, some Christians have reasoned: 'It does not bother my conscience, so what is wrong?' Could it be that their conscience is wrong and the desires of their hearts are deceiving them? The mere fact that our conscience does not bother us is in itself no assurance that our course is fine. (1 Cor. 4:4) The consciences of many in the early Corinthian congregation had become so desensitized that they tolerated immorality in their midst, even boasting about it. What misguided consciences! It is easy to let our consciences gradually become defiled by "deceptive desires." Yes, ever so gradually Satan endeavors to have his depraved standards accepted.—1 Cor. 5:1, 2, 6; Eph. 4:22. W 6/1 8-10a

Wednesday, August 20

From the prophets of Jerusalem apostasy has gone forth to all the land.—Jer. 23:15.

As Christendom's most reprehensible ones, her clergy will drink the potion of death. The modern Jeremiah class has been prompt and fearless in calling world attention to the clergy's apostasy. At the general convention of the International Bible Students Association in Indianapolis, Indiana, on August 24-31, 1925, the main feature was the adopting of a resolution entitled "Message of Hope," which thoroughly exposed the apostasy of Christendom's

clergy. The Association's president introduced the resolution after delivering his talk entitled "A Call to Action." Paragraph 28 of that talk said: "The time has come for Jehovah to make for himself a name in the earth. The church has a part in this to the extent of being the witnesses for the Lord." So, from the start of the year (1926) following the resolution and its distribution world wide in a tract, the Jeremiah class made a noteworthy effort to set the name of Jehovah before all mankind. W 9/1 20-22a

Thursday, August 21

For nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom, there will be earthquakes in one place after another, there will be food shortages. These are a beginning of pangs of distress.—Mark 13:8.

Truly, the "pangs of distress" have brought much sorrow to mankind since 'nation began to rise against nation' in world war. And whether these nations will attempt the suicidal course of all-out nuclear warfare remains to be seen. But they can not, and will not, wipe mankind from the face of the earth! For the "chosen ones" and their companions there is the firm promise of deliverance. (Matt. 24:21, 22) And Jesus assures us that, just as the approach of summer is to be recognized by the young leaves that the fig tree puts forth, so these things happening must soon reach their culmination with Christ's coming to execute judgment. Moreover, the Revelation that Jesus later gave the apostle John assures us that 1,000 years of God's kingdom by Christ Jesus will follow the passing away of the Devil and all his works.—Rev. 20:2, 3. W 10/15 18, 19

Friday, August 22

When the Son of man arrives, will he really find the faith on the earth?—Luke 18:8.

As persecutions envelop more and more of Jehovah's people throughout the earth, we are compelled to ask the question: "Shall not God cause justice to be done for his chosen ones who cry out to him day and night?" (Luke 18:7) Jesus gave the answer: "I tell you, He will cause justice to be done to them speedily." Do we have faith that this will be so? We should, for it is in this context that Jesus said the above. Let us then be determined to stand firm in this faith, yes, resolved to keep "standing firm in one spirit." (Phil. 1:27, 28) Knowing that we have Jehovah on our side, backing us up, we can say with the apostle Paul: "If God is for us, who will be against us?" We can be determined that nothing—be it persecution or a tide of materialism—will be able "to separate us from God's love that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Because of such unflinching faith, and activity based on that faith, may we all come off "completely victorious."—Rom. 8:31-39. *W 1/1 18, 19a*

Saturday, August 23

[These] through faith . . . effected righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions.—Heb. 11:33.

Among the Scriptural accounts of great courage displayed in the face of faith-testing trials are those of the prophet Daniel and his three companions. One such occasion was in the matter of food, as recorded at Daniel 1: 8-19. This took courage, similar to the courage that has been required on the part of young witnesses of Jehovah in some lands today, for example, in refusing school lunches

that contain blood products. Later, Daniel's three companions took a firm stand on the issue of idolatry. (Dan. chap. 3) Further, it took courage for Daniel to stand before mighty Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon and to make known the interpretations of that ruler's dreams—especially since Daniel's prophesying indicated the eventual crushing of the Babylonian Empire. Similarly it has required courage on the part of many of Jehovah's people today to speak out boldly concerning God's judgments against all the doomed systems of this world. *W 10/15 3-5a*

Sunday, August 24

God is your throne to time indefinite, even forever; the scepter of your kingship is a scepter of uprightness.—Ps. 45:6.

The war of the great day of God the Almighty at Har-Magedon is inexorably ahead for all earthly nations. Jehovah, as Commander in Chief of all the heavenly armies, will give the victory to his grand Field Marshal, Jesus Christ, because this one is "King of kings and Lord of lords." (Rev. 19:16) He will hold the final day of reckoning with all the opposed nations. Their accounts will be settled by their everlasting destruction. That victory will vindicate the universal sovereignty of God the Almighty. Because he successfully uses Jesus Christ to gain this victory, God will count him worthy to retain his heavenly throne. As long as God lasts, the throne of his anointed King will last. Because he loved righteousness and hated lawlessness, Christ's scepter was bound to be wielded in behalf of uprightness. This betokens good for mankind. It is our privilege to tell this good news. *W 1/15 1, 2b*

Monday, August 25

They try to heal the breakdown of the daughter of my people lightly.—Jer. 8:11.

The clergy of Christendom are still looked to as spiritual physicians. But since the end of World War I, have they succeeded in healing the spiritual wound, "the breakdown," that Christendom has suffered? The record of now 60 years since then furnishes the facts about the clergy. It shows that they have failed to get at the root cause of what ails her and why she will not survive the "great tribulation" but will experience destruction under God's adverse judgment. They merely keep treating the symptoms but do not treat the real cause of Christendom's doomed position before God. They have healed her breakdown superficially, slightly, skin-deep, "lightly," as if it were a light matter with Jehovah God. The religious remedies that the clergy have applied have not improved matters, have not prevented rank worldliness from invading the churches. May our elders never be so negligent as to the danger of worldliness invading the congregations.—1 Pet. 5:2, 3. *W 8/1 14, 15a*

Tuesday, August 26

[May] the tested quality of your faith . . . be found a cause for praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.—1 Pet. 1:7.

Among the ways a traveling overseer can benefit a congregation is by sitting in with the local body of elders to consider recommendations. He can help them toward making a balanced determination as to whether a certain brother is truly a spiritual man, exemplary in bearing fruit and so really qualifies for responsibility. Traveling overseers truly

put forth great effort in our behalf. Let us benefit from their service. Let us accept any due counsel that they give to help us to overcome or endure personal problems or to draw closer to the brotherhood in love. They can indeed help to strengthen our resolve to withstand the pressures from this world, and to keep fully clad with spiritual armor as we stand firm in our fight against the Devil. (Eph. 6: 11-18) Yes, let us appreciate the visits of the traveling overseers as another provision to help us to cultivate the quality of faith described above. *W 2/15 22, 23a*

Wednesday, August 27

For the vision is yet for the appointed time, and it keeps panting on to the end, and it will not tell a lie. Even if it should delay, keep in expectation of it; for it will without fail come true. It will not be late.—Hab. 2:3.

Though the "great tribulation" may not have come as soon as many of us had expected, that is no reason for discouragement. God does not change. (Mal. 3:6) Nor have his grand purposes changed. (Isa. 55:11) God's time to execute judgment draws closer with each day. So let us remember the words of Isaiah 30:18: "Jehovah is a God of judgment. Happy are all those keeping in expectation of him." It is not our dependence on some time period, but our wholehearted confidence in Jehovah as the God who "cannot lie," that enables us to gain the victory of faith. (Titus 1:2) This confidence will at last bring us to the point where, like Joshua of old, we will be able to say to our companions in this conquest of faith the words found at Joshua 23:14; 21:45 and Habakkuk's words above. *W 2/1 13, 14a*

Thursday, August 28

Keep abstaining . . . from blood.—Acts 15:29.

The earnest, extensive and persistent efforts made on every level to instill upright moral principles into the minds and hearts of all those associated with us are unique among those religious groups professing to be Christians and further stamp us as being Christ's true followers. What counts with us is quality, not quantity. And further marking us as no part of the world is our stand on the use of blood. Today it is only those people bearing Jehovah's name that clearly understand and obey the Scriptural injunction against blood, a command involving the sanctity of life. With us our spiritual well-being comes first. This stand has made us unpopular with not a few, for we adhere to it even at the risk of our lives. However, often our stand has spared us the untoward side effects that so frequently accompany blood transfusions. How explicitly and repeatedly God's Word states the matter and yet who, apart from Jehovah's people, wholeheartedly subscribe to it? None! W 3/1 12, 13a

Friday, August 29

Cursed is the able-bodied man who puts his trust in earthing man and actually makes flesh his arm, and whose heart turns away from Jehovah himself. Blessed is the able-bodied man who puts his trust in Jehovah, and whose confidence Jehovah has become.
—Jer. 17:5, 7.

During this conclusion of "the system of things," when lawlessness increases and Jehovah awaits his time to punish rampant wickedness, the human heart proves to be most "treacherous," yes, "des-

perate," as humanity finds itself hard pressed. If we try to satisfy the heart in ways contrary to God's counsel and standards of righteousness, it will bring on us his adverse judgment. (Jer. 17:9-11) Under today's pressures toward taking a wrong course, let not our hearts deceive us and move us to do unscriptural things. Remember: the course of action we take will determine whether we deserve to receive a curse or a blessing. Jehovah sets forth the course that will lead to his curse and the course that will lead to his blessing. W 8/15 20a

Saturday, August 30

What I say to you I say to all, Keep on the watch.
—Mark 13:37.

The closing words of Jesus' great prophecy contain a strong warning for all of us. Some may have been lulled into drowsiness, or even into sleep, because the Son of man did not come to reckon with the nations at an expected date. How dangerous! Jesus counsels: "Concerning that day or the hour nobody knows, . . . but the Father." (Mark 13:32) Our not knowing that time provides strong reason for keeping wide-awake. Further, loyalty to our Master, demonstrated by our zealously preaching the good news concerning his arrival, requires constant wakefulness. When the Son of man arrives suddenly, therefore, to execute judgment, may he find us, not sleeping, but very active in doing our Father's will. For we will be blessed if we have heeded Jesus' words above. May we be sustained by Jehovah's precious promises, on through the "tribulation" and into the splendid peace that will last for 1,000 years under God's kingdom by Christ! W 10/15 20, 21

Sunday, August 31

They keep on crying with a loud voice, saying: "Salvation we owe to our God, who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb."—Rev. 7:10.

The "great crowd" of other sheep, here referred to, come under the obligation to commit themselves to Jehovah's Fine Shepherd, Jesus Christ. They show this by "consecrating," dedicating, themselves to Jehovah God through Christ. Scripturally such a dedication should be attested to by water baptism in the name of the Father, the Son and the holy spirit.

Monday, September 1

If you will not listen to me by walking in my law . . . this city I shall make a male-diction to all the nations of the earth.—Jer. 26:4-6.

Jeremiah was a priest, and yet, by obeying Jehovah's command to sound this warning he was not attempting to mix priesthood with statecraft. He was just giving a warning from Jehovah for the benefit of the nation. Today those of the Jeremiah class and their companions realize that they have no right to butt in on politics in any nation or bloc of nations, not even nations of Christendom. They know that, despite her claims, Christendom is not in a covenant with Jehovah. The facts belie her claim. Hence, Jehovah's servants know full well that they have no commission from Jehovah to dictate to the nations or to take an active part in the politics of such nations. Their faithfully declaring Jehovah's warning to Christendom as well as to non-Christian nations is no taking part in worldly politics. In strict neutrality they abstain from all politics. W 11/1 5, 6

Tuesday, September 2

If you will strictly obey my voice and will indeed keep my covenant, then you will certainly become my special property . . . And you yourselves will become to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.—Ex. 19:5, 6.

Certainly the words "a kingdom of priests" point to a government ideally suited to the needs of all mankind. Its priests represent and serve God the Savior of mankind. In itself, the "kingdom of priests" is a "nation," a national group clean enough to be called "holy," fit to be used by God. It was meant to be God's "special property," just as a wife is the special property of her husband. But it ignored the special obligations of this favored relationship. The fact that the Law covenant did not work cannot be disputed. How glad we can be, therefore, that God did not give up in making arrangements in behalf of that desired "kingdom of priests." Looking to that ideal government for mankind, he replaced the old covenant with the new covenant mediated by Jesus Christ. W 11/15 22, 23

Wednesday, September 3

He did not hold back from punishing an ancient world, but kept Noah, a preacher of righteousness, safe with seven others when he brought a deluge upon a world of ungodly people.—2 Pet. 2:5.

Today is not the first time that a whole world of people faced death, a sudden death, all together, even as the historian, the apostle Peter, shows. Yes, there were the way of life and the way of death set before the world at the time of Noah. It was a case of either a person's unbelievably staying outside the ark and not living through the deluge or a person's getting inside the ark with Noah and his family and thus escaping a violent death with the ungodly world. Because Noah and his family chose the way of life before the deluge burst forth, we find ourselves here today, more than four thousand three hundred years later. The lesson furnished by Noah and his family should not be lost on us today. Why not? Because the Holy Scriptures predict a similar end to the ungodly world of people that has grown up and fills the earth till now. *W 9/1 2, 3, 5*

Thursday, September 4

The Sovereign Lord Jehovah will not do a thing unless he has revealed his confidential matter to his servants the prophets.—Amos 3:7.

It is logical that the God of truth would want his human creation to walk in the truth. How is this to be done? By getting an accurate knowledge of who God is and what his purposes are; then by learning what he wants us to do, and doing it. This really means that walking in the truth becomes a way of life, "The Way," as the Bible puts it. (Acts 9:2) One reason why

God wants humans to walk in the truth is that it brings glory and joy to the Creator when his human creation reflects his fine qualities. Another is that, since God made humans, he knows what is best for them. Therefore, those who follow his instructions bring the greatest benefits, even eternal benefits, to themselves and others. An additional reason is that by walking in the truth, humans can be privileged to be associated with the people that God uses to inform truth seekers about his purposes. It is like the Bible times of which Amos wrote. *W 7/1 3, 4*

Friday, September 5

Haman kept seeing that Mordecai was not bowing low and prostrating himself to him, and Haman became filled with rage.—Esther 3:5.

For some reason King Ahasuerus appointed Haman as prime minister. Also, by royal command all the monarch's servants at the gateway of the palace grounds were to bow low and prostrate themselves to Haman. But not Mordecai! He persistently refused to prostrate himself. This filled Haman with rage. Why had Mordecai taken such a resolute position? Well, Haman was an Agagite, probably a royal Amalekite. God had decreed the eventual extermination of the Amalekites because they showed hatred of God and his people by attacking the Israelites in the wilderness. Hence, godly Mordecai staunchly refused to prostrate himself before Haman. Bowing would denote, not just respect, but peace and possibly homage toward this Amalekite. Mordecai was unyielding because this was a matter of maintaining integrity to God. May we, too, be unyielding. *W 3/15 16, 17*

Saturday, September 6

Like the bad figs that cannot be eaten for badness, . . . "I will send against them the sword, the famine and the pestilence, until they come to their finish off the ground that I gave to them and to their forefathers."—Jer. 24:3, 10.

Do we shudder over the horrible outcome to King Zedekiah and the other symbolic "bad figs"? May they be a warning example to us not to imitate their course of action. If spiritual Israelites and their companions do not live up to their dedication, if they do not uphold Jehovah's universal sovereignty, if they do not support the Messianic kingdom of his Son Jesus Christ, they will have an outcome like that of those ancient "bad figs," in the coming "great tribulation." (Matt. 24:21, 22) Then, also, the religious population of Christendom, who pretend to be spiritual Israelites, will come to their calamitous finish like "bad figs." Truly, it behooves us to be like Jeremiah and his secretary Baruch and his few devoted friends, men faithful to Jehovah who survived Jerusalem's destruction. *W 9/15 18*

Sunday, September 7

I thoroughly bore witness both to Jews and to Greeks about repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus. —Acts 20:21.

As Paul "thoroughly bore witness," Christians today search for spiritually inclined householders, making return visits to those homes and studying with interested persons. Later, as necessary, shepherding calls are made by faithful overseers. There was every reason why Paul and others of his day should not hold back in their house-to-house preaching and teaching. Those were critical times. The

Jewish system of things was fast approaching its destruction. The Roman emperors were encouraging idolatry. By peoples who were "given to the fear of the deities," there was a pressing need to seek "the God that made the world and all the things in it," the One who was then "telling mankind that they should all everywhere repent," (Acts 17:22-31) The need for "thorough witnessing"—from house to house, by informal witnessing, in the marketplaces, by making return visits, by conducting Bible studies—is urgent today. *W 7/15 17-19*

Monday, September 8

Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mould.—Rom. 12:2, Phillips.

The fact is, in the degenerate world in which we live it is not easy to serve Jehovah, particularly for you Christian youths. There are many pressures exerted to try to force you to leave your proper place. Recall that even some of God's angels in heaven were tempted to leave their proper dwelling place, and they have forever lost Jehovah's favor. And what was it that caused them to leave? Improper sexual interests. So we should not be surprised that major temptations today would be sexual ones. The Scriptures often urge us to resist the Devil's efforts to sidetrack us from the narrow road to life, even as noted above. Think seriously about this admonition. It was recorded for our protection and guidance. It is more important than ever before that we be on guard against being fashioned after this system. Why? Because recently Satan and his angels were thrown out of heaven, for which reason there is woe for earth's inhabitants.—Rev. 12:12. *W 4/1 21; 1, 2a*

Tuesday, September 9

Your word is a lamp to my foot, and a light to my roadway.—Ps. 119:105.

A major blessing that results from having a good relationship with God is the enjoyment of great freedom of thought and speech. For proof of the power of God's Word in this matter, look at the nations called "Christendom." Though they have never really been close to God, they have, in the last two centuries, generally allowed free circulation of the Word of God. The Bible has become a household book, and though it is rejected by many now, there have been men, even in ruling positions, that have tried to follow the Bible's fine moral principles. This has promoted freedom of thought and speech and has liberated men from the bondage of the Dark Ages. In proportion to the Bible's circulation in these lands, the living standards of the people have improved. While such incidental association with God through his Word has brought enlightenment and better living, people who make the Bible their guide in living profit in far greater measure. W 4/15 9, 10a

Wednesday, September 10

After the three and a half days spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet . . . And they went up into heaven in the cloud, and their enemies beheld them.—Rev. 11:11, 12.

The spiritual resurrection of the dead in Christ in the spring of 1918 would parallel Jesus' own resurrection on Nissan 16, 33 C.E., "at the half of the week." (Dan. 9:27) Thus they did "rise first." (1 Thess. 4:16, 17) Their doing so did precede the resurrecting of those surviving to

Christ's presence, and to the killing of Kingdom preaching. A similar time period comes into play in connection with God's prophetic witnesses pictured in Revelation, chapter 11. According to Revelation 11:3-7, they were killed after prophesying for 1,260 days, or 3½ years. But they have a resurrection. This prophetically pictured the reviving of the remnant in Kingdom service in the spring of 1919. Their ascending to worldwide prominence was, however, not in fulfillment of 1 Thessalonians 4:17. Rather, it was a reviving like that foretold at Ezekiel 37:1-14. W 6/15 10-12b

Thursday, September 11

Beloved ones, let us cleanse ourselves of every defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in God's fear.—2 Cor. 7:1.

The righteous principles incorporated in God's law to Israel have not changed. They apply at all times, in all situations and under all conditions. That is why Christian witnesses of Jehovah today would want to consider soberly their own standing before God. Each one might ask himself: 'Am I striving to remain clean mentally, morally, physically and spiritually? Do I contribute personally to the cleanness of the Christian congregation—a cleanness that causes it to stand out in contrast to a wicked, unclean generation? Does the way in which I care for and use my home and other possessions, including my fleshly body, demonstrate close adherence to Jehovah's way? Is this true of my whole way of life?' Our affirmative answer to these questions would be an evidence that we are striving to heed the inspired exhortation to guard against "every defilement of flesh and spirit." W 5/1 5a

Friday, September 12

Beware, brothers, for fear there should ever develop in any one of you a wicked heart lacking faith by drawing away from the living God.—Heb. 3:12.

This is where our faith must ring true in order to have the required tested quality. The heart is involved. After quoting Jehovah God's comment on fleshly Israel that "they always go astray in their hearts," Paul makes the above strong warning for our benefit. We cannot stand still. If we do not "draw close to God" in ever-growing faith as we appreciate him more fully, then there is the danger that we will "become hardened by the deceptive power of sin," and commence drawing away, not realizing what is happening. We should help one another in this respect and "keep on exhorting one another each day." We will win "only if we make fast our hold on the confidence we had at the beginning firm to the end." This firm confidence, this unshakable faith, must be maintained in order for us to inherit the "kingdom that cannot be shaken" and its blessings. W 5/15 19b

Saturday, September 13

[Jehovah] will roar upon his abiding place. A shout like that of those treading the winepress he will sing out against all the inhabitants of the earth.—Jer. 25:30.

That day will be great for Jehovah. It will be a joyful occasion for him, because then he will fight for the cause of his universal sovereignty. He will send Jesus Christ into battle, to gain the victory that far exceeds any victory won by Nebuchadnezzar. This will give Jehovah cause for shouting more exultingly than the joyful treaders of the wine-

press do as they prepare the wine that will gladden the heart of both God and man. Jehovah's servants are certain about His victory at Har-Magedon. So they refuse to keep still about this coming vindication of Jehovah's sovereignty, even though the rulers of worldly nations are displeased at such a bitter potion. Courageously the Jeremiah class and their companions obey the command given to Jeremiah back there: "As for you, you will prophesy to them all these words, and you must say to them" the above words. W 9/15 18, 19a

Sunday, September 14

In place of your forefathers there will come to be your sons, whom you will appoint as princes in all the earth.—Ps. 45:16.

The worthy God-fearing males among all earthly subjects of this king he can make "princes in all the earth." Logically, the "great crowd" that survive the "great tribulation" and become the first earthly subjects of his kingdom will furnish the King with his first "princes" to serve as earthly representatives of him. What a grand privilege that will be! These "princes" from among the "great crowd" will be joined by others in official service, for faithful men from Abel to John the Baptist will be resurrected and be made his princely representatives. What a grand, incorruptible government such an arrangement will guarantee for all mankind! This is the greatly needed government that Jehovah purposes to establish to replace today's national governments that must shortly reckon with his victorious Jesus Christ. What a privilege is ours to make this glorious Kingdom hope known to all who will hear! W 1/15 13, 14b

Monday, September 15

Since Christ suffered in the flesh, you too arm yourselves with the same mental disposition; because the person that has suffered in the flesh has desisted from sins, to the end that he may live the remainder of his time . . . for God's will.—1 Pet. 4:1, 2.

Do we have Christ's spirit of not only "loving righteousness, but *hating* lawlessness"? If so, we are letting the spirit of Christ fill our inner selves, we have the "same mental disposition" as the Christ. (Heb. 1:9) Vital, then, are personal study and meditation on the Bible if we are to be "rooted and established on the foundation," so as to be able to grasp mentally the truth of God's Word, and particularly as it relates to the example of love provided by the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. What is deeply rooted cannot easily be pulled up; what is established on a solid foundation cannot easily be moved away. So we must keep our spiritual 'root and foundation' strong by letting the knowledge of Christ flow deep into the "man [we] are inside."—Eph. 3:16-18. W 6/1 4, 5a

Tuesday, September 16

I do hold this against you, that you tolerate that woman Jezebel, who . . . misleads my slaves to commit fornication.—Rev. 2:20.

It is only by putting up a "hard fight for the faith" that we can expect to remain free from contamination by worldly uncleanness. (Jude 3) In his message to the congregation in Thyatira, Jesus, the Son of God, said the above. The idolatrous Jezebel, wife of King Ahab, was notorious for her immorality. When her son Jehoram asked the anointed king Jehu whether it was

peace with the house of Ahab, he responded: "What peace could there be as long as there are the fornications of Jezebel your mother and her many sorceries?" And after disposing of Kings Jehoram and Ahaziah (of Judah), Jehu proceeded to execute Jezebel, 70 sons of Ahab and all others who remained of his house, as well as all the practitioners of the immoral Baal religion. (2 Ki. 9:22-10:28) May we heed this warning example today, so that we do not step out of the way of righteousness to probe into the "deep things of Satan."—Rev. 2:24. W 1/1 10, 11

Wednesday, September 17

Pay attention to yourselves that your hearts never become weighed down with overeating and heavy drinking and anxieties of life, and suddenly that day be instantly upon you as a snare.—Luke 21:34, 35.

Sad to say, many Witnesses in countries where the going is comparatively easy, where we do not have to live in constant danger of arrest, imprisonment or loss of life, are not doing well. These include many prosperous lands, where enticements to pleasure and immorality abound. But none should ever lose sight of this fact: *We must endure in our conquest by faith until we are released from this wicked system of things, whether that be through death or by surviving the "great tribulation."* How urgent it is that all have this clear appreciation! The evidence is plain that the world is tottering on the brink of destruction. The "last days" have almost run their course. Hence, the closing words of Jesus' prophecy on the conclusion of the system of things should ring out in startling clarity to all of us today. W 2/1 11, 12a

Thursday, September 18

They try to heal the breakdown of my people lightly, saying, "There is peace! There is peace!" when there is no peace.—Jer. 6:14.

Jeremiah was not among those of his day who were saying "Peace!" when there was none. Likewise, the Jeremiah class of today is not among those in Christendom who imitate those men in Jeremiah's day who persisted in saying "Peace!" Who finally will prove to be the truth-tellers, those proclaimers of "Peace!" or the so-called calamity howlers? For a peaceful outcome of worldly matters men are feeling obliged to look upward for supernatural help. But it is not to the God of the ancient prophet Jeremiah that they look as their Source of a stable, lasting peace. The supernatural forces for peace to which they look will prove to be false gods, absolutely helpless! (Jer. 8:1, 2) In Jehovah's eyes, devout worshippers of false gods do not earn for themselves protective holiness, especially not when they claim to be in Christian relationship with Jehovah God and yet break his plainly stated commandments.—Ex. 20:1-6. W 8/1 1-4a

Friday, September 19

Give him the customary welcome in the Lord with all joy; and keep holding men of that sort dear.—Phil. 2:29.

A variety of activities is scheduled for the traveling overseer's visit with a congregation. The success of the visit depends, in large part, on the preparations made by the congregation beforehand. There is a need for planning times and locations for service, setting aside territory for group activity, and bringing congregation records up-to-date and mak-

ing them available for checking. Publishers would benefit greatly by making arrangements to share in the work. Some may be able to serve as auxiliary pioneers. A number of elders and ministerial servants may be able to adjust their affairs to share in group activity during the midweek. The elders can give careful thought to the agenda for the elders' meeting that week. Enthusiastic prior announcement of the week's arrangements can contribute toward a full period of stimulating association and activity. All such is in keeping with Paul's counsel above. W 2/15 5a

Saturday, September 20

"You are my witnesses," is the utterance of Jehovah, "even my servant whom I have chosen . . . I—I am Jehovah, and besides me there is no savior."—Isa. 43:10, 11.

From the record of the book of Esther, we can see that courageous Esther, not only revealed her identity as a Jewess, but boldly exposed Haman as an enemy of God's people. Comparably today, those who have since World War I become anointed followers of Jesus Christ have, with earlier anointed ones, courageously identified themselves as spiritual Jews and, as such, witnesses of Jehovah, particularly since 1931. And they certainly have enemies. For instance, like Haman, the clergy of Christendom have sought the destruction of Jehovah's people. But genuine Christians boldly have exposed these hateful foes whose schemes will get them no farther than did those of the unscrupulous Amalekite, Haman. This is so because Jehovah's people, who speak God's Word with boldness, have divine support in facing persecution. W 3/15 14a

Sunday, September 21

You will be witnesses of me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the most distant part of the earth.
—Acts 1:8.

Here Jesus divided off Samaria from "all Judea." For that matter, throughout his earthly ministry he distinguished between circumcised natural Jews and circumcised Samaritans. The Samaritans were not in the Law covenant Moses had mediated for the Israelites at Mount Sinai. So, while some of them got baptized at Philip's hands in the name of Jesus Christ as being the Messiah, they did not, on this account, become "born from water and spirit," for they had not then received the holy spirit. (John 3:5) It was first when Peter and John, as apostles, "went laying their hands upon them," that they "began to receive holy spirit." (Acts 8:17) Here the first baptized Samaritans became "born" from spirit as well as from water and were qualified to enter God's heavenly kingdom. Thus in behalf of these Peter used the second of "the keys of the kingdom of the heavens."—Matt. 16:19. W 10/1 15, 24-26

Monday, September 22

Keep looking, keep awake, for you do not know when the appointed time is.—Mark 13:33.

As loyal watchmen, the "faithful and discreet slave" class have been and are looking forward to see what Jehovah God has in store. From their vantage point they have discerned the gathering evidence of the nearness of the great tribulation that will mark the end of this system of things in fulfillment of Jesus' prophetic words found at Matthew chapters 24 and 25, Mark 13 and Luke 21. We can be certain that in the post-

tribulation new order grand blessings are in store for humankind. A literal earthly paradise, peopled with humankind whom Jesus Christ ransomed! What a grand prospect! Truly all lovers of truth and righteousness long for the approaching unhindered rule of the kingdom of God and keep praying for it even as Jesus taught us to pray. (Matt. 6:10; Rev. 20:6; 21:4) Because of this hope, the "faithful and discreet slave" has alerted all of God's people to the sign of the times indicating the nearness of God's Kingdom rule. W 3/1 14, 15a

Tuesday, September 23

I myself have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant.—Jer. 27:6.

Today is the name of any man feared by all the nations just as the name Nebuchadnezzar was feared internationally back there, from and after the 23rd year of Jeremiah's prophesying? (Jer. 25:3) No! No man of this 20th century will go down in modern history as being like ancient King Nebuchadnezzar. True, in Romans 13:1, 6, Paul says that law-abiding Christians pay their taxes to the "superior authorities" because these "are God's public servants." But no single politician today could be prophetically called by Jehovah God "my servant." The only person that can be called "servant" in fulfillment of this prophecy through Jeremiah is Jehovah's greatest servant. This one is his now highly exalted Son, Jesus Christ, to whom he has given a name higher than that of any other creature in heaven and on earth. Although worldly rulers do not today fear him, they will do so in the coming war of Har-Magedon. W 9/15 7a

Wednesday, September 24

In the world you are having tribulation, but take courage! I have conquered the world.
—John 16:33.

These were Jesus' parting words of counsel to his disciples. He himself displayed that quality of courage to a remarkable degree, and he wanted his devoted followers to do likewise. He had told them that the world would hate them because they were no part of the world even as he was no part of the world, as is seen from John 15:18-21. However, what is embraced in Christlike courage? Does it mean "foxhole" bravery, as shown by soldiers in the heat of battle? No, it means much more than that. Christian courage calls for the display of exemplary moral strength at all times. It demands unswerving support for God's kingdom under any and all circumstances. It requires steadfastness, endurance and a sustained loyalty to right principles. True courage includes resoluteness and a positive determination to press forward and to succeed, even in the face of seemingly overwhelming opposition and difficulty.—Phil. 3:13, 14. W 10/15 1, 2a

Thursday, September 25

I did not hold back from telling you any of the things that were profitable nor from teaching you publicly and from house to house.—Acts 20:20.

To whom did Paul thus 'thoroughly bear witness'? Only to those who became elders? No, for he adds that he witnessed "both to Jews and to Greeks about repentance toward God and faith in" Jesus. (Acts 20:21) So, new persons who needed to know the elementary teachings on repentance and faith were included among those who were

taught "publicly and from house to house," right from the start of Paul's missionary service in Ephesus. This phrase "from house to house" translates the Greek *kat oikous*. Many well-known versions of the Bible use this expression—"from house to house." This is because the Greek preposition *kata* is in a "distributive" sense. (Compare the similar use of *kata* at Luke 8:1—"from city to city," "from village to village"; and at Acts 15:21—"in city after city.") Thus it may be said that Paul's 'thorough witnessing' was *distributed* house after house. W 7/15 16, 17

Friday, September 26

Here is where it means endurance for the holy ones, those who observe the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.—Rev. 14:12.

Naturally we all like to hear predictions of good things to come shortly, within our lifetime. This exposes us to a great temptation. We may like to accept some prediction as the truth because we like it and this might induce us to take an action that would result in harm to us. This is particularly the case when our eternal future is involved. Such is the case NOW! Why is this so now? The reason is that the highest question for settlement is now squarely before all mankind. That question is, Who shall rule the world? What has pushed this predominant issue to the fore is not the endless contest between the free-enterprise, capitalistic nations and the socialistic, Communistic nations. Rather, the proclamation that Jehovah's people have made about His kingdom by Christ is the factor that has done so. This has required endurance on the part of both the Jeremiah class and their companions. W 11/1 1, 2a

Saturday, September 27

If food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat flesh at all, that I may not make my brother stumble.

—1 Cor. 8:13.

We want you youths to be happy, but Satan has enticements, entertainment—even as in the ancient past—that can lure you into activity that will bring you Jehovah's disapproval. Avoid these pitfalls, and help others to avoid them. Even if you have thought that going to certain discos may not be morally harmful to you, consider the effect that your going there may have on other Christians. As a result of seeing you go, they may be put off guard as to the potential danger, and become involved in wrong conduct. Paul was willing to give up doing things that in themselves were not necessarily wrong in order to protect the spiritual health of his Christian brothers. If he were with us today, could you imagine him relaxing at a disco? Let us work together, then, as a united body of Christians, to resist worldly pressures so that all of us may enjoy Jehovah's favor and life in God's righteous new system. W 4/1 22, 23a

Sunday, September 28

This is what Jehovah . . . has said: "If these regulations could be removed from before me, . . . those who are the seed of Israel could likewise cease from proving to be a nation before me always."

—Jer. 31:35, 36.

To keep in relationship with Jehovah God, the great crowd of other sheep needs to remain united with the remnant of spiritual Israelites. Why? Because these spiritual Israelites are the holy nation of which Jehovah said the above. Yes, Jehovah could no more

let spiritual Israel pass out of existence from within his universal organization than he could let the heavenly luminaries that regulate light for our earth cease to be. In the heavens spiritual Israel will be the New Jerusalem in which Jesus Christ will reign as King over the surviving great crowd and all the human dead resurrected to life in a paradise earth. Until that blessed time it is the privilege and duty of both the remnant and the great crowd of other sheep to keep witnessing to Jehovah's name and kingdom. W 11/15 25, 26a

Monday, September 29

Jehovah himself will sustain him upon a divan of illness; all his bed you will certainly change during his sickness.

—Ps. 41:3.

A relationship in which God recognizes the person as his friend would have infinitely great and lasting blessings. The one whom God would choose for such intimacy is described at Psalm 15. Only such a person will come to fear God and really come to know him. Such a friend of God faces the same general problems that everyone else encounters. But he is not left without help. The Christian may become seriously ill. Often, physical illness has an undesirable effect on one's spiritual health. Good balance is hard to maintain during sickness. God deeply sympathizes with the sick one. More than that, he gives help, even as the psalmist shows above. God does not promise that his servant will in all cases recover full health. But he assures the Christian that he will stand by him and make his sickness bearable. And even if he does not recover, God causes all things to work for his good.—Rom. 8:28. W 4/15 11-13a

Tuesday, September 30

Whenever you vow a vow to God, do not hesitate to pay it, for there is no delight in the stupid ones. What you vow, pay.—Eccl. 5:4.

In the Law's provision about vows, the Israelites were commanded: "You must render up an offering made by fire to Jehovah, a burnt offering or a sacrifice to perform a special vow." (Num. 15:3) Many vows were made as an appeal to God for his favor and help. Provided that the Most High granted the request, the one making the vow voluntarily obligated himself to do some-

Wednesday, October 1

My Father has kept working until now, and I keep working.—John 5:17.

The inspired Gospel writers relate how the early disciples of Jesus associated with him in the work of preaching and teaching that resulted in great benefit to themselves and others. Jesus taught them many wonderful Kingdom truths that they were able to share with persons who would listen. Above all, he helped his disciples to appreciate their precious relationship as slaves of God and Christ. Like his Father, Jesus was a worker. He wanted his disciples to be workers, too, in making known the Kingdom message. So, for about three years, Jesus trained his disciples to be "fishers of men." (Matt. 4:19) Also, he forewarned them that they would be treated the same way that he was treated. They saw his example and his reaction to suffering, as he gave them a model to follow closely. Jesus taught them many things he had received from God, and they saw him fulfill numerous prophecies. W 12/15 7, 8

thing special or refrain from some activity in which he otherwise had the right to engage. In effect, a vow carried the force of an oath. A failure to follow through on the vow was a very serious matter, as can be seen from the following statement in the Law: "In case you vow a vow to Jehovah your God, you must not be slow about paying it, because Jehovah your God will without fail require it of you, and it would indeed become a sin on your part." (Deut. 23:21) This principle regarding vows would apply to whatever we would promise. W 5/1 11, 12a

Thursday, October 2

I will make mention of your name throughout all generations to come. That is why peoples themselves will laud you to time indefinite, even forever.—Ps. 45:17.

Like the heart of the inspired psalmist of old, are not our hearts stirred with such good prospects for the near future? Yes, and in glad response our tongues take up the closing words of the psalmist that he addressed to the charming King whose government is backed by God's own throne. The psalmist wanted to live long—"throughout all generations to come"—just to make mention of the king's name. He did not say the king's name. Really he did not, in fact, know the name of the king of whom he prophetically wrote under inspiration. But we today can identify the King of whom the psalmist prophetically wrote, and we know his name. It is Jesus Christ, the Son of Jehovah God. Is his name worthy of being mentioned "throughout all generations to come"? It certainly is. W 1/15 15, 16b

Friday, October 3

Lord, whom shall we go away to? You have sayings of everlasting life.—John 6:68.

Thus Peter responded when Jesus asked, "You do not want to go also, do you?" And so today, the course of wisdom is indeed to keep associating with the "faithful and discreet slave," for it helps us both to understand and to apply Jesus' sayings of everlasting life, to both our present and our eternal welfare. We can show our gratitude for having this "slave" in our midst by cooperating in preaching and in making disciples. We can also show our gratitude by eagerly feeding on the spiritual food that this "slave" provides, as well as by attending congregation meetings. Nor to be overlooked is our privilege of praying that Jehovah's spirit guide and strengthen that "slave" class for the work He has for it to do. And according to our means it is also our privilege to contribute in a material way to help defray the expenses incurred by that "slave's" worldwide activities. In all such ways we can show that ours is a living faith.—Jas. 2:17, 26. W 3/1 18, 19a

Saturday, October 4

Go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations, baptizing them . . . teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you.—Matt. 28:19, 20.

Fulfilled prophecy indicates that we are deep into the time of the "conclusion of the system of things." The judgment and separating of the people into faithful "sheep" and faithless "goats" is nearing its climax. Also, at the end of this system of things, there is the command conveyed in Jesus' prophecy that "this good news of the kingdom will

be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come." (Matt. 24:14) This grand witness, now reaching its climax on an earth-wide scale, has served to identify those who have conquered the world. Concerning all such integrity-keeping servants of God, the words at 1 John 5:4, 5 apply. This faith in Jesus as God's Son may be demonstrated today by actively obeying Jesus' post-resurrection command to his followers as stated above. Are you thus showing yourself to be a world conqueror? W 2/1 1a; 20

Sunday, October 5

He that exercises faith in me, that one also will do the works that I do; and he will do works greater than these.—John 14:12.

As Jesus' work on earth drew toward its end, he gathered his apostles for the Passover festival, and here, privately, he imparted to them much counsel and encouragement. After washing their feet and then dismissing the traitor Judas, Jesus instructed his 11 faithful apostles concerning the memorial of his death. He spoke very intimately with them, preparing them for the responsibility they were to shoulder after his departure. To show their faith in Christ, they would have to do works similar to his. So he encouraged them with the above words. Jesus had confined his work to the land of Palestine, but the Kingdom work must expand after his death and resurrection. His disciples must spearhead that future work. Finally, the good news of the Kingdom would be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations. Ours is the privilege to have a part therein. W 12/15 10, 11

Monday, October 6

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.—Rev. 14:13.

In modern times, the revived remnant who took up the witness work again in the spring of 1919 were those whom Paul spoke of as "we the living who survive to the presence of the Lord." (1 Thess. 4:15) They expect, after finishing the final Kingdom witness world wide, to die "in union with the Lord" and during his presence. Their death is during that "last day" during which, as Jesus said, he would raise up from the dead those disciples who are privileged to feed on his flesh and drink his blood. This signifies for them their being caught away to meet him, their Lord, in the air. This instantaneous resurrection of theirs to heavenly life is unseen by humans left behind on earth as if it were obscured by clouds. "Happy," indeed, they are because of not needing to sleep in death in expectation of the Lord's second coming.—John 6:53, 54. W 6/15 14b

Tuesday, October 7

The wise ones have become ashamed. They have become terrified and will be caught. Look! They have rejected the very word of Jehovah, and what wisdom do they have?—Jer. 8:9.

O yes, Christendom's clergy may quote a theme text from the Bible, but in their sermon that follows they will depart from what the Bible says. They will teach man-made traditions that invalidate God's written Word. They will discuss politics or a popular program of social reform.

They pose as being divinely "wise," but put Grecian philosophy and the "wisdom of this world" ahead of what the Bible says about the human soul, about the state of the dead, about God's personality, and so forth. (1 Cor. 3:19) However, they are walking into a trap. They will at last be "caught" by the failure of their own worldly-wise policies. They are put to shame and subjected to terrifying consequences. The clergy have encouraged their "flocks" in worldly pursuits that hold out promise of fame or material rewards. Surely we would not want to follow any such vain course of action. W 8/1 12, 13a

Wednesday, October 8

"He will instruct us about his ways, and we will walk in his paths." For out of Zion law will go forth, and the word of Jehovah out of Jerusalem.—Isa. 2:3.

By the end of the first century of our Common Era, Jehovah God not only had developed a new spiritual nation but he had finished the inspired written record that would later be used as the basis for determining the truth. (2 Tim. 3:16, 17) Included in the completed Scriptures were many prophecies, history written in advance. (2 Pet. 1:21) Those prophecies showed that after the death of the apostles a period of falling away from the truth would set in. (Acts 20:29) But they also showed that later, in the "final part of the days," just before this system's end, there would be a restoration of true worship. Jesus noted that people would be gathered into two groups: those who do good to Christ's brothers who walk in the truth would be rewarded with "everlasting life"; those not doing so would go into destruction.—Matt. 25:31-46; 2 John 4; 3 John 3, 4. W 7/1 11

Thursday, October 9

I shall fast likewise, and upon that I shall come in to the king, which is not according to the law; and in case I must perish, I must perish.
—Esther 4:16.

Mordecai had faith that Esther had been brought to royal dignity at this very time for a special purpose—the deliverance of God's people. Did she display unselfishness, courage and faith? Yes, for she was willing to jeopardize her very life in behalf of her people. So it was that Esther, Mordecai and the Jews at Shushan fasted and no doubt also offered prayers, looking to Jehovah God for their deliverance. In modern times, too, spirit-anointed followers of Jesus Christ, who are spiritual Jews, and their associates must bravely face trials and foes. (Rom. 2:28, 29) The ruling King, Jesus Christ, may allow the enemies of God's people to go to the limit in their efforts to destroy them. How vital it is, then, that anointed Christians and their dedicated associates act courageously, praying for divine wisdom and manifesting victorious faith! W 3/15 24-26

Friday, October 10

Most truly I say to you, Unless anyone is born from water and spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. What has been born from the flesh is flesh, and what has been born from the spirit is spirit.—John 3:5, 6.

Like "the key of David," mentioned at Revelation 3:7, the "keys of the kingdom of the heavens," mentioned at Matthew 16:19, were not literal, material keys of an earthly kind. They were spiritual keys, namely, the privilege, honor, assignment and authority to initiate or open up a program of information,

instruction and personal intervention with respect to the kingdom of the heavens. By means of this, those persons who chose to seek first God's kingdom could take advantage of the provision then made available through Christ, the Heir to the heavenly kingdom. Thus they entered into something not open to them before. To a Pharisee named Nicodemus, Jesus revealed certain basic conditions that a believer had to fulfill to gain entrance into the heavenly kingdom of Jehovah God, even as noted above. W 10/1 6, 7

Saturday, October 11

Do there exist among the vain idols of the nations any that can pour down rain . . . ? Are you not the One, O Jehovah our God?—Jer. 14:22.

The people of ancient Israel had God's own name called upon them, and so we should imagine that they would have had his divine presence with them. Why, then, had he become like one who could not be "the hope of Israel," like an alien resident who dwelt only temporarily among them, or like a traveler that was merely passing through their land, who was there today and gone tomorrow? (Jer. 14:8, 9) Why had he become like a man who is perplexed at the problem that faces him, he being in no position to cope with it? Or like a mighty man who is nevertheless unable to help people needing to be saved from the consequences of their own course of action? Jeremiah 13:23-27 indicates that God had a real case against Israel. And those words indicate that he also has a case against Christendom, which claims to be Jehovah God's true people. It is our privilege to expose that false claim. W 8/15 4-6a

Sunday, October 12

Take your stand against him, solid in the faith, knowing that the same things in the way of sufferings are being accomplished in the entire association of your brothers in the world.—1 Pet. 5:9.

How well do these words describe our integrity-keeping brothers around the earth! The tested quality of their faith has taken on a brilliant luster as they fight back with their weapons of spiritual warfare against the trials and sufferings with which the Devil assaults them. Reports indicate that the Devil is intensifying his opposition. Flames of persecution continue to spread in Africa. As a new government was preparing to take over a certain country, efforts were already being made to force the brothers to buy political party cards. But the report from there concluded on this confident note: "The faith and endurance of our brothers proves beyond a shadow of doubt the truthfulness of our text for the year [1978], 'They will not prevail against you, for 'I am with you,' is the utterance of Jehovah, 'to deliver you.'"—Jer. 1:19." W 1/1 6, 7a

Monday, October 13

For he must rule as king until God has put all enemies under his feet. But when all things will have been subjected to him, then the Son himself will also subject himself to the One who subjected all things to him, that God may be all things to everyone.
—1 Cor. 15:25, 28.

Will the members of the anointed remnant who survive the "great tribulation" witness the beginning of the resurrection of the earthly dead on their "last day"? (John 11:24) The Scriptures do not indi-

cate this with any certainty. Although the surviving "great crowd" will be needing no resurrection from the grave, they will be just like the resurrected dead, still needing further benefits from the propitiatory sacrifice of Jesus Christ. All effects of inherited death must be wiped out. Blessed, indeed, it will be by the end of Christ's 1,000-year reign, when, "as the last enemy, death is to be brought to nothing" for all redeemed and obedient mankind, including the "great crowd" of tribulation survivors. (1 Cor. 15:26) Then, deservedly, Jehovah God will "be all things to everyone." W 6/15 16, 17b

Tuesday, October 14

But Daniel, as soon as he knew that the writing had been signed, . . . was kneeling on his knees and praying and offering praise before his God, as he had been regularly doing prior to this.—Dan. 6:10.

In his trialsome experiences, Daniel relied heavily on Jehovah in prayer. (Dan. 2:17, 18) And it was in connection with prayer that Daniel was called upon to show unswerving courage. And what a glowing example Daniel left as to facing such issues, even as can be seen from the above words! He did not cease his customary worship of Jehovah. In similar fashion, faithful witnesses of modern times do not stop their worship of God because some dictator bans or restricts their Christian activity. They may need to feel their way discreetly, such as by the staggering of household activity, or by witnessing with the Bible alone, or even by placing the emphasis on informal preaching. But worship they must! They cannot stop speaking about the things they have seen and heard.—Acts 4:20. W 10/15 6, 8a

Wednesday, October 15

Even though a man takes some false step before he is aware of it, you who have spiritual qualifications try to readjust such a man in a spirit of mildness.—Gal. 6:1.

What can be done on occasions when Christians relax or engage in recreation? What is done should reflect that we are "children of light," and are under the influence of God's spirit, not the "spirit of the world." (1 Cor. 2:12; Eph. 5:8) With the pressure of the world increasing, vigilance is necessary to thwart its spirit in the congregation. The influence of the elders should promote the flow of God's spirit. At times this may require readjusting the thinking of some who become unbalanced. Concerned about the infiltration of worldliness into the congregation, one elder wrote: "As elders we must share the blame because some of us are proving weak when it comes to giving counsel when needed and not standing up for what is right." Such counsel could perhaps prevent one "false step" from becoming a continued wayward course, leading to disaster. W 6/1 16, 17a

Thursday, October 16

Whoever does not accept his torture stake and follow after me is not worthy of me.—Matt. 10:38.

The 12 whom Jesus chose to be apostles were to become foundation stones of the Christian congregation. They were willing, ready to serve and happy to be in association with Jesus in the Kingdom work. Jesus instructed them and gave them orders to go to the cities and villages, and visit the homes of the people. He told them: "As you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of the heavens

has drawn near.'" (Matt. 10:7) Jesus let them know that the work would not be easy and that many would refuse to listen to their words. However, they were to give the witness, even before rulers and people of the nations. They would need to be self-sacrificing and courageous. Not everyone accepted Jesus' invitation. Some preferred material possessions to the spiritual treasure they might have enjoyed while preaching the good news of the Kingdom. Others offered different excuses. (Luke 9:57-62) The same is true of the people we witness to today. W 12/15 4, 5

Friday, October 17

Continue showing mercy to some that have doubts; save them by snatching them out of the fire. But continue showing mercy to others, doing so with fear, while you hate even the inner garment that has been stained by the flesh.—Jude 22, 23.

James encourages us to be alert to aid, if possible, even those who are being "misled from the truth." (Jas. 5:19, 20) What a comforting conclusion! How like Jehovah's own description of himself, as found at Exodus 34:6, 7. Interestingly, Jude ends his letter in a similar vein and talks about "building up yourselves on your most holy faith, and praying with holy spirit." (Jude 20) He too stresses the need to be alert to help those in need in a kindly yet urgent way as noted above. So here again is exhortation to those who are mature. If you know of some who have doubts or who have stumbled into uncleanness, do not quickly cold-shoulder them, but snatch them from the fire, if possible, taking care to avoid getting burned yourself or in any way contaminated. W 5/15 14, 15b

Saturday, October 18

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.

Today there is a "great crowd" of dedicated, baptized Christians who actively collaborate with the small remnant of spiritual Israelites. Ever since the spring of 1938 they have been invited to attend the annual memorial celebration of Christ's death, not to partake of the memorial emblems, the unleavened bread and the red wine, but as respectful observers. They recognize Jesus Christ as their heavenly King since the Gentile Times ended in 1914. They zealously join the remnant of spiritual Israelites in preaching "this good news of the kingdom" in all the inhabited earth for a "witness to all the nations" before this system of things ends in the coming "great tribulation." While not in the new covenant they benefit from it, even as in ancient Israel the alien residents benefited from residing in among the Israelites who were in the Law covenant.—Matt. 24:14, 21. W 11/15 23, 24a

Sunday, October 19

In all the nations the good news has to be preached first.—Mark 13:10.

How different the prophetic message of true Christians from the formalistic ceremonies of Christendom! Even worldly historians noted this difference, as for example, H. G. Wells in his book *Outline of History*. For our prophetic teaching today, we have the precious good news of the established kingdom, which must be preached even as Jesus noted above. This modern-day preaching of the "good news" received added

impulse after announcement of the projected new magazine *The Golden Age* back in 1919. It is now called by the Scriptural title "Awake!" (Rom. 13:11) To this day, the house-to-house work with *Awake!*, and also with the *Watchtower* magazine, continues to be one of the most valuable methods of reaching the people regularly with the "good news." The house-to-house service of Jehovah's Witnesses gained further impetus from the second Cedar Point convention in 1922, where they were urged to "advertise, advertise, advertise, the King and his kingdom." W 7/15 8-10a

Monday, October 20

The prophet with whom there is a dream, let him relate the dream; but the one with whom my own word is, let him speak forth my word truthfully.—Jer. 23:28.

Had Christendom's clergy stood in Jehovah's "intimate group," there would not be the appalling Bible illiteracy that exists among churchgoers. (Jer. 23:22) The time has come for the people to decide whether to listen further to the "dreams" of Christendom's clergy or to listen to Jehovah's Word. The time has come also for those who claim to be ministers of God to act on the issue set out above. What does Jehovah's Word have to do with unfounded "dreams," the visions of mere human hearts? Nothing! There must be a cleavage between the two things, like a separation of grain from the straw. The Jeremiah class having God's Word within them have decided to speak it forth truthfully all the time. Out of respect for Jehovah a "great crowd" of listeners have decided to do likewise. For 60 years the Jeremiah class have done so. W 9/1 24-27a

Tuesday, October 21

He that feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has everlasting life, and I shall resurrect him at the last day.

—John 6:54.

For those privileged to eat of Jesus' flesh and blood the "last day" begins when they enter into the everlasting life in heaven by being resurrected in a spiritual body like that of Christ. Since this "last day" applies to the resurrection of the faithful spirit-begotten Christians with a heavenly hope, it differs from the "last day" that Martha of Bethany had in mind, for she then had no idea at all of a spiritual resurrection to heaven. The glorified Lord Jesus Christ descends also "with an archangel's voice." (1 Thess. 4:16) This is his own voice. He is the archangel. In his parable of the sheep and the goats Jesus referred to himself in this angelic capacity. (Matt. 25:31, 32) In his prehuman state in heaven his name was Michael. There is no question of doubt that he is the one meant in the prophecy of Daniel 12:1, 2. Also, Revelation 12:7 and Jude 9 speak of him as an archangel. W 6/15 12-14a

Wednesday, October 22

And 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.

In disciplining children let us remember that external force or discipline is not the complete answer. The apostle Paul speaks of the "mental-regulating of Jehovah." Literally, the original words mean putting the mind of Jehovah inside as a controlling or regulating influence. Work to aid your child to build a relationship with God so that he will

come to reject degrading forms of entertainment as well as all wrong conduct. As one youngster who developed such a relationship said: "It's not so much between me and my parents but between me and Jehovah." With all of us, it is between us and Jehovah. So let none of God's people forget who they are, namely, children of light. Continue to walk as illuminators now, enjoying a happy and satisfying life, and entertain the prospect of an eternity of happiness in a soon-to-be-realized new system of stimulating moral brilliance. W 6/1 21, 22a

Thursday, October 23

Through him let us always offer to God a sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of lips which make public declaration to his name. Moreover, do not forget the doing of good and the sharing of things with others, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.—Heb. 13:15, 16.

The Christian's presenting of his body as "a sacrifice living, holy," does not mean his committing suicide or his having a religious priest kill him and offer him on an altar. (Rom. 12:1, 2) Rather, it means the Christian's leading a self-sacrificing life in behalf of God's service, not his deliberately making a martyr of himself for show. By continuing to live in a way acceptable to Jehovah God, the true Christian can offer to God the sacrifices mentioned above. The sacrifices thus described do not admit of our blending Jehovah's worship with the offering of human or animal victims to the false gods of this world. (Isa. 42:8) The primary thing that Jehovah God wants of us is obedience, our obeying "the good and acceptable and perfect will of God." W 8/1 19-21

Friday, October 24

Our being adequately qualified issues from God, who has indeed adequately qualified us to be ministers of a new covenant, not of a written code, but of spirit.—2 Cor. 3:5, 6.

Whom does Paul include by the pronoun "us"? God first concluded the new covenant with the newly born Christian Israel, the spiritual Israel, it having its birth on the day of Pentecost when about 120 of Christ's baptized disciples received the gift of the holy spirit. Jesus Christ, then in the heavens, became the Mediator between God and the spiritual Israelites, while these were still in the flesh as men and women. The mediatorship of Jesus expanded when the holy spirit fell upon baptized believing Samaritans. (Acts 8:15-17) Two years now passed. Finally, in the autumn of 36 C.E., or three and a half years after Jesus' death and resurrection, he began to be the mediator to a third class of spiritual Israelites, those taken out from the uncircumcised Gentiles, beginning with Cornelius.—Acts 8:1-11:18. W 11/15 15, 11-13a

Saturday, October 25

You will receive power when the holy spirit arrives upon you, and you will be witnesses of me . . . to the most distant part of the earth.

—Acts 1:8.

Although death had separated Jesus from his disciples, they knew that they must keep speaking God's word among the people. But how would they proceed? They needed direction. To their great joy, the resurrected Jesus appeared to them on a number of occasions before he ascended to his Father. Thus he was able to give them further instructions concerning their future work. (Matt. 28:

19, 20) The Christian work of making disciples, baptizing and teaching them, must reach out to the people of all the nations. How encouraging it was to know that this resurrected Son of God would be with Christians in their Kingdom work daily until the conclusion of the system of things! Jesus had promised his disciples that the holy spirit would come. When it came, what did it move them to do? To speak, to make utterance. That holy spirit can also move us to speak about God's kingdom. W 12/15 1-3a

Sunday, October 26

In place of your forefathers there will come to be your sons, whom you will appoint as princes in all the earth.

—Ps. 45:16.

When on earth, Jesus Christ had illustrious forefathers. But his present and future glory does not depend upon any luster imparted by such forefathers. With him, the royal dynasty of King David remains fixed, for he is the Permanent Heir of King David and his kingdom will never be passed on to a successor. However, his marriage will be fruitful, just as marriage was meant to be. None of these "sons" will become the successor of the heavenly King. A princely station on earth is the highest station to which any of these "sons" could attain. For the appointment of "princes in all the earth" there will have to be many of them. The King will have sufficient "sons" for this purpose, for, in addition to his title "Mighty God," another of his titles will be "Eternal Father." (Isa. 9:6) His perfect human sacrifice for all mankind enabled him to become such. By that ransom sacrifice he bought them all. W 1/15 11, 12b

Monday, October 27

O you the hope of Israel, . . . why do you become like . . . a mighty man that is unable to do any saving? Yet you yourself are in the midst of us, O Jehovah, and upon us it is that your own name has been called.—Jer. 14:8, 9.

Who does not want a new order of things here on earth? Many persons would like to have a righteous, healthier order of things but they now have little hope of such a thing's being possible. Mankind's worsening moral condition furnishes them no basis for hoping in an improvement of things. They have practically lost hope because no true, reliable hope has been made known to them. Not yet have they learned that this desired new order has been promised by someone fully competent and that it is now about to be realized. The aforesaid competent one is our hope. He is the Hope of all those who sincerely yearn to enter into a righteous new order. Now, amid deepening worldwide gloom, is the advisable time for us to turn to this only Hope, just as Jeremiah did when things did not look bright for his nation. W 8/15 1, 2a

Tuesday, October 28

When that one arrives, the spirit of the truth, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak of his own impulse, but what things he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things coming.—John 16:13.

An issue that demonstrates how the understanding of God's truth is progressive, even as indicated by these words of Jesus, has to do with how the non-Jewish, or Gentile, converts from 36 C.E. onward were viewed by some Jewish converts to Christian-

ity. For instance, should they be circumcised, as the natural Jews were? Was the matter even raised in 33 C.E. when God's spirit was poured out at Pentecost? (Acts 2:1-4) No, for while that outpouring established that God was with those disciples and would henceforth guide them, it did not miraculously give them knowledge about every detail of God's truths. This can be seen from the fact that the issue of circumcision was not set forth in decrees decided upon by the apostles and older men who were in Jerusalem until 16 years after Pentecost, in the year 49 C.E. W 7/1 8a

Wednesday, October 29

When you catch sight of the disgusting thing that causes desolation, . . . then let those in Judea begin fleeing to the mountains.—Matt. 24:15, 16.

The Christianized Jews obeyed this instruction. They were not deserters of the Jewish cause. They were obedient to Jesus Christ, and so the course that they chose was "the way of life." With such examples before us, what are we going to do? We are living in "the conclusion of the system of things." (Matt. 24:3) The unmatched "great tribulation" that was prefigured by the destruction of Jerusalem now faces this generation. It is a case now of choosing "the way of life" or "the way of death." We of the Jeremiah class and their companions have chosen "the way of life," and it is our duty to help others to do the same. Without further delay, let each one of us aid all lovers of eternal life in a righteous new order take advantage of the God-given opportunity to choose "the way of life," helping them to flee to the side of Jehovah God. —Jer. 21:8. W 9/1 33, 34

Thursday, October 30

We shall not all fall asleep in death, but we shall all be changed.—1 Cor. 15:51.

Since the dead in Christ are raised up in spiritual bodies invisible to human eyes on the "last day," we humans must walk by faith, not by sight, as to the first resurrection actually taking place now. (John 11:24) We recall that for some decades quite a few thought that the glorification of all the surviving members of the Christian congregation would occur at the end of the Gentile Times around 1914. However, nothing like what is described above took place at that time. Rather, war broke out in heaven. (Rev. 12:7-13) Apparently something was wrong about the timing of the "last day" for the glorification of the spirit-begotten congregation. Nonetheless, the invisible presence of the glorified Jesus Christ began at the end of the Gentile Times in 1914. So from then on it is the time period when what is foretold in the above scripture should take place respecting the surviving spirit-begotten Christians, to correspond with the "last day."—1 Thess. 4:16, 17. W 6/15 1, 2b

Saturday, November 1

You loved righteousness, and you hated lawlessness. That is why God, your God, anointed you with the oil of exaltation more than your partners.—Heb. 1:9.

Before Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 C.E., the Christians in that city needed to have it proved to them from the inspired Hebrew Scriptures that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was higher than the heavenly angels. So, in writing to them, the apostle Paul called their attention to these prophetic words that ap-

Friday, October 31

I have many things yet to say to you, but you are not able to bear them at present. However, when that one arrives, the spirit of the truth, he will guide you into all the truth.—John 16:12, 13.

The apostles had been closely associated with Jesus. Whenever they wished to know something or if any problem arose, they could talk to Jesus about the matter. But now Jesus was going away to his Father. So he asked his Father to give them another helper, God's holy spirit, which would teach them and bring back to their minds all the things Jesus had spoken to them. That meant they would have much witnessing to do. (John 15:26, 27) Jesus was limited in what he could tell his disciples at that time. However, with the arrival of holy spirit, they would gain fuller understanding, equipping them for the work ahead. How encouraging! Those who follow Jesus as slaves of God today can always be confident of receiving help from above and guidance in the truth through holy spirit, which God freely gives to those asking him. W 12/15 13, 14

plied to the glorified Christ. The kingdom of such a lover of righteousness and hater of lawlessness would surely be most beneficial for all of us on earth. No wonder that Jehovah God serves as a "throne" for him, God being the only Source of his kingdom and the One upholding his kingship. All the nations of this world could no more overthrow his kingdom than they could overthrow Jehovah God as the Universal Sovereign and as "King of the nations." With his enthroned Son all nations must now reckon. W 1/15 1, 2a

Sunday, November 2

You ought to know positively the appearance of your flock. Set your heart to your droves.
—Prov. 27:23.

There can be no mistaking the seriousness and the importance of the work of our traveling overseers. These traveling undershepherds must take to heart this counsel by closely observing the spiritual condition of the flock, in order to protect it from danger. They should endeavor also to minister to its needs, taking an interest in each individual "sheep." Being concerned about benefiting their brothers, they will want to put forth earnest effort in teaching them and encouraging them in the evangelizing work. (1 Tim. 5:17; 2 Tim. 4:5) In thus expending themselves they should be like Epaphras, who put himself to great effort in behalf of the congregation. (Col. 4:12, 13) By taking full advantage of these visits, each of us can gain great benefits from the counsel, encouragement and assistance of these older men. To gain such blessings, however, requires cooperation and a diligent effort on the part of each one of us. W 2/15 3, 4a

Monday, November 3

The city [Zion] will actually be rebuilt upon her mound . . . And from them there will certainly go forth thanksgiving, and the sound of those who are laughing.—Jer. 30:18, 19.

Jehovah is a "happy God," and he wants those in a relationship with him to be happy also. His promise of future laughing for the exiled Jewish people proved that he had not broken off the Law covenant that had been mediated by the prophet Moses between Him and the nation of Israel. But O how the Israelites had broken the terms of that cov-

enant! (Jer. 32:35) For such reasons the Israelites deserved to have trouble like an onward pressing tempest come upon Judah and its capital, Jerusalem. But despite their past unsavory history, God would deal with them according to what they now proved to be. He would seek their welfare and would set before them the opportunity to continue in a happy relationship with him indefinitely. There is a lesson in all of this for us. Jehovah God is not only righteous and just, but also loving and forgiving. W 11/15 7-9

Tuesday, November 4

After the three and a half days spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet.
—Rev. 11:11.

The end of the Gentile Times was marked by World War I. Babylon the Great saw its opportunity. Using Christendom and its "man of lawlessness" class as her instruments, she succeeded in bringing the unworldly organization of God's true servants into captivity. The preaching of the good news of the Kingdom was subdued almost to a whisper. The end of the Kingdom-preaching organization seemed to have been brought about. But had it? Had Babylon the Great gained a lasting victory? Was all hope for the reestablishment of true theocratic organization stifled forever? More than two million theocratically minded Christians in all parts of the world today will answer with a No! in more than 190 languages. And well they might do so, for they would not be in their present relationship with Jehovah God if the visible theocratic organization had not been revived and infused with more strength than ever before. W 3/1 17

Wednesday, November 5

God wills . . . that you abstain from fornication; that each one of you should know how to get possession of his own vessel in sanctification and honor.—1 Thess. 4:3, 4.

Some may argue in defense of dating: 'We are Christians. We know that fornication is wrong, so we won't get involved in such practices.' True, you may not intend to get involved. But when alone in the company of one to whom you are attracted, the sexual drive can lead you into wrongdoing. Consider King David, who was an outstanding servant of Jehovah, a man 'agreeable to God's own heart.' He knew God's law. He knew that it was wrong to have sex relations with Bath-sheba, another man's wife. Yet he did it. Why? Because he permitted himself to get into a position where he was exposed to temptations. (1 Sam. 13:14; 2 Sam. 11:1-4) Surely, then, there is need for caution when it comes to dating. It is fine when young people can get together and enjoy one another's company, but this is best done in groups. Doing so will make it easier to heed the fine counsel of Paul. W 4/1 15, 16a

Thursday, November 6

He will hide me in his covert in the day of calamity; he will conceal me in the secret place of his tent.—Ps. 27:5.

Because of our stand for Bible principles, opposition and even persecution may come. This happened to David, who was hunted as an animal by King Saul, betrayed by a close friend and conspired against by his own sons when he was sick. Yet, from personal experience, he wrote the above. Among the greatest present advantages of an intimate relationship with God are peace

of mind and freedom from fear of the things coming on the world and on one's own self. The Christian, having experienced God's loving care and his protection for those intimate with him, has the assured hope of better things to come. He looks for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness is to dwell. He has the hope that, even if he should die, he will experience a resurrection into that righteous system of things. Daily he has the proof of what the apostle Paul said from his personal experience as recorded at Philippians 4:7. W 4/15 14, 16a

Friday, November 7

Because you are no part of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, on this account the world hates you.
—John 15:19.

In order to succeed in our work, we must maintain close union with Jesus and prove ourselves his disciples. Jesus illustrated this by the vine and its branches, stressing the need for us to remain in the vine and to bear fruit so that his Father may be glorified. We are to produce fruitage by Kingdom witnessing and by displaying a Christlike personality. Men would see that we are his disciples because of our genuine love among ourselves. (John 13:34, 35; 15:1-12) Yes, as Christians we must show strong love, one toward another. However, because we are followers of Jesus Christ, we are not loved by the world, for he was no part of it, even as he told his intimate disciples. These words of Jesus should be helpful to all true Christians in keeping integrity under trial—even as Jesus kept integrity. Since we are "no part of the world," we must keep a neutral position toward the world. W 12/15 15-17

Saturday, November 8

Nevertheless, when the Son of man arrives, will he really find the faith on the earth?
—Luke 18:8.

In personal problems, we can be assured that any seeming delay in the answer to our petitions is not due to inability or unwillingness on God's part. If, like the widow, we are suffering injustice or persecution, how do we manifest faith that justice will be done? We must not only keep on praying, but also maintain a faithful course of action. If we compromise in order to avoid persecution, then, of course, there would be no need to keep on praying. This would not only indicate a lack of faith, but would also result in our losing the evidence of being one of God's Christian servants. It might seem strange that Jesus would conclude his comments with the above question. He left it an open question. While this would seem to imply that the faith would not be plentiful at that time, we cannot conclude that no true faith at all would be found anywhere on earth. Rather, we can take it as a personal challenge. W 5/15 15, 16a

Sunday, November 9

By faith Abraham, when he was tested, as good as offered up Isaac . . . But he reckoned that God was able to raise him up even from the dead; and from there he did receive him also in an illustrative way.
—Heb. 11:17-19.

By saying, "I know he will rise in the resurrection on the last day," Martha was thinking of a resurrection of all the human dead back to life here on earth under the kingdom of God by means of his Messiah. (John 11:24) She believed this Messiah to be Jesus himself. Her faith in the

resurrection was like that of Abraham, who had come to be called "Jehovah's friend." (Jas. 2:21-23) Martha's brother Lazarus was already dead and buried, but in Abraham's case his son Isaac was yet alive, about to be offered up as a human sacrifice. Isaac was as good as dead, for Abraham was determined to obey God's command to sacrifice him. Concerning Abraham's faith on this trialsome occasion, Paul wrote the above. So Abraham had faith in the coming resurrection of the human dead under the kingdom of the Christ. W 6/15 2, 3, 5

Monday, November 10

[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. 5:19.

This is the way the early Christians gained their "refreshment." How boring this all looked to those of the nations! But those early children of light were glad, because they really had a different spirit. They acted as one warm family, "the household of God," with each one using his "gift" for the building up of the congregational family. (Eph. 2:19; 4:7) So today where such a warm family spirit exists in a congregation, there will be a natural desire to get together for meetings, as well as socially, for mutual upbuilding. Genuine love will prompt a spontaneous concern for all, young and old, and especially for those who are widows and orphans. (Jas. 1:27) However, social gatherings should not be allowed to deteriorate, as, sad to relate, has on occasion happened at wedding receptions, thus spoiling a happy theocratic wedding by bringing in the world. W 6/1 15, 16a

Tuesday, November 11

When that one arrives, the spirit of the truth, he will guide you into all the truth.
—John 16:13.

When we look at what has been published by Jehovah's organization in various publications for the past century, we find wholesome spiritual food in abundance. Early in this period, basic Bible truths were made clear, and they remain clear until this day. Our viewpoint on hell, Trinity, purgatory, the soul, where the dead are, the ransom, the resurrection, earth's destiny, the Kingdom and other key doctrines has undergone very little change during 100 years. The truth has always been truth, though, at times, our understanding of it has required adjustment. Jehovah has continued to guide his people step by step to a fuller appreciation of his truths, and this in his own time and way. Because of this, from earliest times in the past century we have understood that we must be willing to modify and correct our views on doctrine, practice and organizational procedure when it became apparent that Jehovah's spirit was directing us toward such adjustments. W 7/1 14, 15a

Wednesday, November 12

Correct me, O Jehovah, however with judgment; not in your anger, that you may not reduce me to nothing. Pour out your rage upon the nations who have ignored you.
—Jer. 10:24, 25a.

Correction from Jehovah God is something that we all need. So we will want to pray as Jeremiah did, in a desire to avoid being reduced to nothing along with mankind. He prayed that God might correct him, measured by his need, and not during the great

tribulation, reducing him to nothing. Rather, that Jehovah should pour his rage upon the Babylonians and their allies because "they have eaten up Jacob. Yes, they have eaten him up, and they keep at exterminating him; and his abiding place they have desolated." (Jer. 10:25) That prayer is directed to the "King of the nations." To him we can leave the matter of executing righteous judgment upon those who ignore him and vengefully try to exterminate all who acknowledge and loyally uphold his universal sovereignty. We raise our cries for aid to him who is our only help. W 8/15 20, 21

Thursday, November 13

The day of Jehovah . . . will not come unless the apostasy comes first and the man of lawlessness gets revealed, the son of destruction. True, the mystery of this lawlessness is already at work.
—2 Thess. 2:2, 3, 7.

Ever since the first century the identity of the "son of destruction" had puzzled Christians. But in Jehovah's due time "the mystery of this lawlessness" was unraveled. This was in 1951 when the Jeremiah class published the book *What Has Religion Done for Mankind?* It set out boldly that the apostate "man of lawlessness" will undergo the foretold destruction in the approaching "great tribulation," along with all other Babylonish false religions. When Christendom's "man of lawlessness" goes, Christendom itself will go also. Christendom's course is "the way of death." (Jer. 21:8) Let lovers of truth go no farther in it. Time still allows for these to escape from being executed with her. It is our privilege to help such persons choose the way of life. W 9/1 20-22

Friday, November 14

The Father himself has affection for you, because you have had affection for me and have believed that I came out as the Father's representative.

—John 16:27.

As Jehovah's servants we can count on Him because of his great love, even as Jesus assures us. We do not work alone. It is God's work that we are doing as his stewards, and the way is always open for us to seek the help of Jehovah in prayer. Jesus said: "If you ask the Father for anything he will give it to you in my name." (John 16:23) With the arrest of Jesus, a difficult time would come for his apostles, even as he forewarned them at John 16:32, 33. How vital it is to remember that we are not alone, just as Jesus was not alone when he was arrested! And how essential it is to rely on Jehovah in prayer, especially in times of tribulation or difficulty! Jesus prayed fervently and often in his hour of trial. (Matt. 26:36-46; 27:46) Likewise, we should never neglect or hold back from seeking Jehovah's help, but pray with confidence and faith.—Matt. 7:7, 8. W 12/15 18, 19

Saturday, November 15

Its appearance is like the appearance of horses, and like steeds is the way they keep running.—Joel 2:4.

Thus the prophet Joel envisioned Jehovah's modern witnesses as running like horses prepared for battle, making a sound like that of many chariots. A great army indeed are these worldwide proclaimers of the Kingdom, as they carry on spiritual warfare, preaching from house to house! And John's vision proceeds to describe mounted horses making up "armies of cavalry" to the number of 200,000,000! (Rev.

9:16-19) Powerful instrumentalities these "horses" have been for helping with the proclamation of Jehovah's judgments! How well they compare to the millions upon millions of Bibles, books and magazines that the 'locust' band has distributed during these years in their house-to-house activity! In the year 1978 alone, they, accompanied by the "great crowd" of Revelation 7:9-17, distributed to the homes 216,709,937 copies of the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines. The 'locust' army's house-to-house preaching certainly gives a grand witness. W 7/15 13a

Sunday, November 16

I will make mention of your name throughout all generations to come. That is why peoples themselves will laud you to time indefinite, even forever.—Ps. 45:17.

Today there is set before all of Jehovah's people the opportunity of being preserved alive through the coming day of reckoning for all the nations and of entering into the blessings of God's kingdom that will supplant them all. Even now by faith we can exult with His anointed King, for this King's victory at Har-Magedon is certain and his reign over a cleansed earth for 1,000 years is sure. Ah, then, now—today—is the time favorable for us to put ourselves among those who will laud our victorious King. This will redound to the glory of Jehovah God, his heavenly Father, who himself is the supreme "King of eternity" as well as the "King of the nations." Our doing this will mean for us a life of lauding and praising His anointed King "even forever." (1 Tim. 1:17; Jer. 10:7) It will set before us a lofty purpose for our living to all eternity. W 1/15 17b

Monday, November 17

Be courageous and strong. Do not be afraid or suffer a shock before them, because Jehovah your God is the one marching with you.—Deut. 31:6.

Today, God's people stand at the very portals of the millennium. The situation resembles that of Israel when they were encamped at the brink of the Jordan River, ready to go into the Promised Land. The goal was in sight. But trials and difficulties still lay ahead. Courage was needed. Therefore, Jehovah's prophet Moses spoke these words to Israel. Indeed, all the people would need to be very courageous; and, hence, Moses instructed the priests, the Levites and the older men of Israel in connection with what was to take place every seven years at the festival of booths that all would be required to keep, even as recorded at Deuteronomy 31:9-12. Listening to, learning and obeying the law of Jehovah was essential to the success of that nation, and this is also necessary today if Jehovah God's people are to be supplied with courage that will enable them to survive the world's end. W 10/15 15, 16a

Tuesday, November 18

In case you vow a vow to Jehovah your God, you must not be slow about paying it, because Jehovah your God will without fail require it of you, and it would indeed become a sin on your part.—Deut. 23:21.

The principle that we can learn from this is that our heavenly Father, Jehovah God, expects us to be honest and upright in all aspects of life. Like that of the psalmist David, our desire should be: "Let the sayings of my mouth and the meditation of my heart become pleasurable before you, O Jehovah my Rock

and my Redeemer." (Ps. 19:14) When this is the case, we will be heeding the fine admonition of the disciple James: "Let your Yes mean Yes, and your No, No, so that you do not fall under judgment." (Jas. 5:12) Yes, our word should be as good as a signed document. Others should have confidence that our word is reliable, trustworthy. Since Jehovah God expects his servants to 'speak truth each one with his neighbor,' a person lacking in truthfulness or honesty could hardly expect the Most High to view his gifts favorably.—Eph. 4:25. W 5/1 13a

Wednesday, November 19

There is no salvation in anyone else, for there is not another name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must get saved.—Acts 4:12.

There was a gathering of the rulers and these questioned Peter and John about their activity, including their healing of a crippled man. Here was a fine opportunity for a public witness. As Jesus had indicated would happen, holy spirit now empowered Peter to give a bold witness including the above words. (Acts 4:8-11) These vital truths had to be proclaimed! So the apostles were outspoken. They did not hold back. Peter and John were plain fishermen, but they had been trained by Jesus to speak with confidence and conviction. As witnesses of Jehovah, they spoke because they wanted to be declaring God's word. How grateful we today should be to Jehovah for the record of Acts chapter 4! For not only does this show clearly how genuine Christians must speak with boldness, but also it reveals the twisted thinking of worldly rulers who oppose God's work. W 12/15 6, 7a

Thursday, November 20

The road the righteous travel is like the sunrise, getting brighter and brighter until daylight has come.

—Prov. 4:18, Good News Bible.

Jesus told his apostles that later God's holy spirit would guide them into all the truth. (John 16:12, 13) And because previously established truths would be clarified step by step, there would be the corresponding need for God's servants to correct and adjust their viewpoint on various matters as time went on. In guiding the first-century Christians, Jehovah did not make clear to them at one time all the truths related to his purposes. As an example, consider the Bible's central doctrine, God's kingdom. Jesus taught his followers to pray: "Let your kingdom come." (Matt. 6:10) He urged: "Keep on, then, seeking first the kingdom and his righteousness." (Matt. 6:33) But during those years that he was on earth, did his followers understand all the details about Kingdom rule? Who will rule in it, and how many rulers will there be? What it will do for the earth and for humans? Obviously not.—Acts 1:6. W 7/1 4-6a

Friday, November 21

With a love to time indefinite I have loved you. That is why I have drawn you with loving-kindness. Yet shall I rebuild you.—Jer. 31:3, 4.

Jehovah purposed to make a surpassing demonstration of his loving-kindness to his covenant people. That is why he did not let the sword of their conquerors kill them off completely. There were to be survivors. These would find living in exile in an enemy land like tenting in a wilderness in which they found no repose. By repentantly turning

to Him, they would find favor in his sight, because he had not broken off his covenant with them. The happy results from this he foretold by the above words of Jeremiah. Yes, all the southern and northern tribes of Israel would be regathered and would reunite in worshiping Jehovah in Zion! That meant that, because of God's indefinitely lasting love, Jacob would be saved out of his time of distress which came upon him in 607 B.C.E. Yet, even before that distress occurred, Jehovah God foretold his making a new covenant with them.—Jer. 31:31-34. W 11/15 13, 15, 16

Saturday, November 22

Do go along with me and look upon my toleration of no rivalry toward Jehovah.
—2 Ki. 10:16.

You dedicated, baptized Christians who were typified by the ancient Rechabites, keep away from overindulgence, from false worship and from getting mixed up with this world. (Jer. 35:1-19; Jas. 4:4; 1 John 2:15-17) Keep imitating Jonadab in displaying zeal for Jehovah and opposition to modern Baal worship. With Rechabite-like faithfulness, carry out your dedication to Jehovah and take your part in furthering the interests of his glorious kingdom. This will aid you to hold on to the liberation from this doomed world that you have gained, until it is no more. Using your blessed freedom according to God's will, you will not be "cut off" when he expresses his vengeance against this wicked world and all its friends, but you will stand approved before him and be rewarded with life on a paradise earth under Christ's kingdom. Great will be the joy with which the remnant will elatedly rejoice over you! W 12/1 25a

Sunday, November 23

And now, Jehovah, . . . grant your slaves to keep speaking your word with all boldness.
—Acts 4:29.

Jesus has been true to his promise: "I am with you all the days until the conclusion of the system of things." (Matt. 28:20) Now that we have arrived at that time, how thankful we are that more than 2,000,000 Witnesses are 'speaking Jehovah's word with boldness!' And our God has so blessed their work that "this good news of the kingdom" has become known in all continents, even as far as Antarctica. (Matt. 24:14) It has penetrated into remote mountain areas and to small islands scattered about in the seven seas. Yes, the witness work has reached into every nation "to the most distant part of the earth," and all of this has been accomplished by Jehovah's spirit. (Acts 1:8; Zech. 4:6) The Devil is angry, for he knows his time is short. He continues to oppose the work of witnessing. But the work has proved to be of God. Men have not been able to overthrow it, as true slaves of God keep speaking his word with boldness. W 12/15 19, 20a

Monday, November 24

At the half of the week he will cause sacrifice and gift offering to cease.—Dan. 9:27.

Toward a Scriptural calculation of the time when the glorification of the surviving members of the anointed Christian congregation would take place, we can compare events that run parallel or that correspond in their nature. So we ask, When was Jesus Christ himself resurrected to become "Christ the firstfruits"? This was on Sunday, Nisan 16, of the year 33 C.E. Two days earlier, on Passover, Nisan 14, he had been hung

on a stake till dead. That day was marked off in the schedule of events drawn up by Jehovah God and recorded at Daniel 9:24-27. It marked the middle of that last week of a series of "seventy weeks," weeks of years, not of days. Daniel's prophecy foretold that during this last or 70th week of years "Messiah will be cut off, with nothing for himself." But at what time during this last week of years, which began in autumn of the year 29 C.E.? Daniel 9:27 answers as above. Hence, animal sacrifices were valueless after Jesus died. W 6/15 4b

Tuesday, November 25

Jehovah is in truth God. He is the living God and the King to time indefinite. Because of his indignation the earth will rock, and no nations will hold up under his denunciation.
—Jer. 10:10.

Yes, Jehovah the Great Potter is still supreme, and he is about to show to all mankind that he is still the "King of the nations." Today, more than ever before, the above words of Jeremiah hold true. Is there real reason for Jehovah God the Creator to have indignation today? Well, let us just think of the widespread disregard for his laws, the contempt for his name, the crime, the love of pleasures rather than the love of God, the immorality, the religious hypocrisy, the persecution upon those who form the modern-day Jeremiah class and upon their companions, the refusal of the nations to submit to Jehovah's kingdom by Christ. Certainly, in the face of all these things, there is every good reason for Jehovah God the Great Potter to have indignation. Soon he will express it, just as he did in Jeremiah's day, for he does not change.—Jer. 18:1-20. W 8/15 14, 15

Wednesday, November 26

I will give you the keys of the kingdom of the heavens.
—Matt. 16:19.

A person who was not himself already "born from water and spirit," not already a baptized, spirit-begotten Christian, could not possess and use the "keys" to open up to others the entryway into God's heavenly kingdom. (John 3:5) Peter was spirit-begotten when Jesus Christ gave him the first of the "keys" to use. On Pentecost of 33 C.E., God used the glorified Jesus to baptize with holy spirit about 120 disciples, including Peter. First after Peter had thus been begotten by God's spirit, he rose up to speak to more than 3,000 Jews and circumcised proselytes who gathered to witness how Joel 2:28, 29 had begun to be fulfilled. Peter forthrightly told those thousands of observers that they had committed a crime as a religious community by impaling Jesus Christ. Thus the spirit-begotten Peter used the first of the "keys." Did any of those natural Jews go in through the now open entryway? Yes, about 3,000 of them, as we read at Acts 2:41, 42. *W 10/1 8-11*

Thursday, November 27

Be courageous and strong . . . for Jehovah your God is with you wherever you go.
—Josh. 1:9.

It was necessary for the older man Joshua to show exemplary courage, even as this is needful for Christian elders today. Hence, Jehovah's words spoken directly to Joshua should have our close attention. At Joshua 1:8 Jehovah told Joshua what would be required to be courageous and strong and to act wisely in every situation. What finally resulted from the wise action of Joshua, together

with the courageous obedience of the people? After all obstacles had been surmounted, Joshua was able to say: "Not one word out of all the good words that Jehovah your God has spoken to you has failed." (Josh. 23:14) When Jehovah's courageous people of modern times have at last entered the millennium of Christ's peaceful reign, they will experience the fulfillment of Jehovah's promises on a far grander, yes, on a permanent, scale. May we all be courageous and very strong to survive into that millennium now at hand! *W 10/15 17-20a*

Friday, November 28

[Treat] younger women as sisters with all chasteness.
—1 Tim. 5:2.

Rather than for couples to go off alone together on dates, perhaps parents and other older ones in the congregation can, from time to time, plan picnics or other wholesome get-togethers. On such occasions, however, it is vital that Christians be careful that their conduct at all times reflects well on the God they worship. If you are considering marriage and are regularly dating a prospective mate, it is understandable that you would want to spend some time alone together to discuss personal matters. But you should exercise care that you do not become involved in necking and petting, which can lead to fornication. It is wise to avoid places of isolated privacy that are conducive to lovemaking. The entertainment enjoyed by many youths today is listening and dancing to disco music. What, then, about going to discotheques? Are these appropriate places for Christians to go for entertainment? From reports, discotheques hardly are conducive to a person's heeding Paul's counsel. *W 4/1 16-18a*

Saturday, November 29

Really, woe is me if I did not declare the good news!
—1 Cor. 9:16.

Today the Kingdom witness work continues to move forward, in spite of mounting opposition. And Jehovah's blessing keeps being manifested upon it. In the last service year alone, we rejoiced to see 113,672 new persons baptized. How happy these are to share in speaking Jehovah's word! This is God's work for us today, and it should be in the hearts of all those dedicated to Jehovah to keep busy in it, for it is their assignment. Does your heart move you to speak Jehovah's word with boldness? As world conditions keep on worsening, our determination should be to continue telling out the good news of the Kingdom until the work is finished. When opposition arises, we are not dismayed. We remember that Jesus not only started but also finished the work Jehovah gave him to do. May we ever be like him, and like the apostle Paul and other Christians of the first century, as, in full faith, we seek Jehovah's help in accomplishing his will concerning us. *W 12/15 21a*

Monday, December 1

We are pressed in every way, but not cramped beyond movement.—2 Cor. 4:8.

Even as Jesus forewarned at John 15:19, 20, we can expect trouble, and particularly at this time of the conclusion of the system of things. We may be tested by persecutions, but, as needed, God will provide us "the power beyond what is normal" to endure. Yes, "we are persecuted, but not left in the lurch; we are thrown down, but not destroyed." (2 Cor. 4:7-9) How

Sunday, November 30

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.

Those of the Jeremiah class and their companions continue to declare all that God commands them to declare against the modern counterpart of Judah and Jerusalem, as well as against all other political parts of this system of things. They resist all pressure to make them compromise with this or that political party. They refuse to abandon their Christian neutrality. Thus they keep themselves no part of the world. They well know that Jehovah can take care of himself! The war is his! It is not theirs to fight! They stand firm in Christian integrity, confident that Armageddon has approached. (Rev. 16:13-16) So Jehovah's people rejoice that their unflinching Christian neutrality is in support of Jehovah's universal sovereignty. What a grand place our earth will be for the Jeremiah class and their fellow Christian neutrals after they witness the triumph of Jehovah's sovereignty at Armageddon! *W 11/1 13, 14*

often has that been the experience of Jehovah's Witnesses in modern times! And persecutions, when endured, can have a most beneficial result. They add to our faith a resilience, a power, a confidence, a poise that shine through one's entire personality, declaring as it were, 'Here is a tried, proved and faithful servant of Jehovah God.' Jesus tells us to rejoice over persecutions, even as we read at Matthew 5:10-12. And the apostle Peter looked at it the same way.—1 Pet. 1:5-7. *W 1/1 1-3a*

Tuesday, December 2

God is your throne to time indefinite, even forever; the scepter of your kingship is a scepter of uprightness. You have loved righteousness and you hate wickedness. That is why God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of exaltation more than your partners.—Ps. 45:6, 7.

As a man on earth, Jesus had kings as forefathers. The psalmist mentions that he would have earthly forefathers. Many of these, from King Jehoiachin back to King David, had been his "partners" in sharing the kingdom set up by God and in sitting on "Jehovah's throne." (1 Chron. 29:23; 2 Chron. 13:5, 8) Those royal forefathers doubtless exulted in their kingship over God's chosen people. But none of those royal "partners" could feel exaltation to the extent that the glorified Jesus Christ feels it. His kingship is far superior to theirs, it being heavenly, yes, superangelic. Jehovah, the God of Jesus Christ, anointed him more abundantly with the "oil of exaltation" because of his perfect, incorruptible devotion to God's righteousness. W 1/15 3b

Wednesday, December 3

Only behave in a manner worthy of the good news about the Christ, . . . standing firm in one spirit, with one soul striving side by side for the faith of the good news.—Phil. 1:27.

Very soon we can expect to see the "ten horns" of the "wild beast" turn against world religion, devastating even the religious realm of Christendom. Seeing the critical situation in the earth, what must we do? We must make sure that our flight to the protective "mountain" of Jehovah's kingdom is com-

plete. We must be unwavering in pursuing the conquest by our faith. We must be determined to be conquerors through our God who loves us. While there is time for it, we must continue to participate zealously in preaching this good news of the Kingdom in all the earth and in making disciples. Will you, with all of Jehovah's Witnesses world wide, continue doing as Paul says to do? Will you thus magnify the name of Jehovah and the kingdom of his Son, Jesus Christ? So doing, you too may succeed gloriously as world conquerors by faith. W 2/1 22, 23a

Thursday, December 4

Continue in the faith, established on the foundation and steadfast.—Col. 1:23.

In a world where people are tossed about by confusing winds of religious doctrine, Jehovah's people need to be stable, full-grown Christians. (Eph. 4:13, 14) Their position must be steadfast, not shifting quickly because of independent thinking or emotional pressures. Rightly, then, traveling overseers should emphasize the need for all Christians to grow constantly in accurate knowledge of Jehovah God. (Phil. 1:9, 10; Col. 1:9-11) They encourage personal, family and congregational study so that Christians will feed, not just on "the milk of the word," but on "solid food," in order to appreciate fully "the word of righteousness," and to "have their perceptive powers trained to distinguish both right and wrong." (Heb. 5:12-14) When they inspect a congregation's spiritual condition, traveling overseers will counsel Scripturally on such points. These older men may also make visits on the sick, aged and others, as opportunity affords. W 2/15 18, 19

Friday, December 5

Only fear Jehovah, and you must serve him in truth with all your heart; for see what great things he has done for you.—1 Sam. 12:24.

If we continue to serve Jehovah God in truth with all our heart, he will never desert us. We have a warning example in the case of the ten tribes of Israel under kings of their own choice who flagrantly did bad things. Jehovah did desert them and their visible king. This meant disaster nationally for them. Into exile in the land of Assyria they were carried off, and never again was their ten-tribe kingdom established. Similar disaster befell the kingdom of the two other tribes of Israel. Its capital was at Jerusalem, where their king of David's royal family sat on what was called "Jehovah's throne." (1 Chron. 29:23) In 607 B.C.E., they were deported to Babylon, and during the 70-year captivity that visible theocratic organization seemed to be out of existence. But there was a faithful remnant that longed for it to emerge, and emerge it did, even as foretold at Psalm 102:12-17. W 3/1 5, 6

Saturday, December 6

Ten men . . . will actually take hold of the skirt of a man who is a Jew, saying: "We will go with you people, for we have heard that God is with you people."—Zech. 8:23.

Certainly Mordecai had reason to be happy because of the turn of events. (Esther 8:15-17) In fact, there was rejoicing for the Jews throughout the empire. Furthermore, many had become proselytes. Reflection on what happened back there provides encouragement for present-day servants of Jehovah. As Haman plotted to annihilate the natural

Jews, so the religious leaders of Christendom have sought to exterminate today's spiritual Jews, Christ's spiritual brothers. Jesus, exercising regal power over the earth, as Ahasuerus did over the Persian Empire, has permitted such attempts, but has also made it possible for his anointed followers to stand for their lives as Jehovah's Witnesses. Moreover, thousands of honest-hearted people, like the Persian proselytes of Esther's day, have taken their stand with these spiritual Jews by embracing true worship. W 3/15 18, 19a

Sunday, December 7

Those who had been scattered went through the land declaring the good news of the word.—Acts 8:4.

The disciples fully appreciated that they must continue to be faithful witnesses of God and of Christ, even as can be seen by the foregoing. Philip went to the city of Samaria, where he kept speaking the word with boldness, bringing much joy to the people. Soon, he had other believers associated with him, and a message was sent to Jerusalem informing the apostles that Samaria had accepted the word of God. Peter and John went there, holy spirit fell upon the Samaritans, and the Christian congregation became established there. Those Christians of the first century had the right point of view. They prayed that Jehovah would keep them speaking the word of God with boldness. That is what they did, with the help of his spirit, and he blessed them. We read: "The hand of Jehovah was with them, and a great number that became believers turned to the Lord." (Acts 11:21) Jehovah blesses like fearless service today. W 12/15 17, 18a

Monday, December 8

Take note of my bearing reproach on account of your own self. Your words were found, and I proceeded to eat them; and your word becomes to me the exultation and the rejoicing of my heart.

—Jer. 15:15, 16.

The persecution and reproach that the Jeremiah class and their companions continue to endure has become like something chronic with them, like an unhealable infection of them by Jehovah's permission, as if he were denouncing them. Jehovah is the only One to whom to present their case, and in his provision they rejoice, even as Jeremiah said. The persecution that cleaves to the Jeremiah class and their companions like a chronic ailment is not pleasant in itself. (Jer. 15:18) But the persecuted ones can exult in Jehovah's Word that has been preserved for our comfort. (Rom. 15:4) We can rejoice because of finding in those Scriptures the prophetic words that explain our difficult times and that give us a bright hope for a new order after Har-Magedon. For this we can boast in Jehovah.—Jer. 9:23, 24. W 8/15 17, 19a

Tuesday, December 9

Let us keep the festival, . . . with unfermented cakes of sincerity and truth.—1 Cor. 5:8.

Every male Israelite was required to attend the three annual festivals. (Deut. 16:16) For many, this meant considerable travel. Today we may attend two or three assemblies annually, and our attendance may involve a measure of sacrifice. Do we put forth the needed effort to attend conventions because of wanting to enjoy association with our brothers and the generous provision of spiritual food? We

should. Of course, more is involved than our appreciating assemblies of God's people, even as can be seen by the apostle Paul's words above. Jesus Christ, as the reality of the Passover lamb, was sacrificed only once. Hence, our entire life course as Christians is comparable to the festival of unfermented cakes. Are we willing to remove what is sinful to maintain personal and congregational purity? Day-to-day observance of Jehovah God's righteous requirements is absolutely essential for our service to be acceptable to him. W 5/1 14, 15a

Wednesday, December 10

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. 5:15.

At the conclusion of his letter, James further develops the subject of prayer in connection with faith. (Jas. 1:5) Whatever the situation, whether "suffering evil" or "in good spirits," we should come to God in prayer or in praise. He then talks about praying for those in need. The one who is sick, evidently suffering spiritually and being affected mentally and emotionally, is told to "call the older men of the congregation to him, and let them pray over him." (Jas. 5:13, 14) This is itself an indication of faith on his part and that he knows where to go for help. A person does not call in a doctor unless he has a degree of faith in that doctor. Above we see the fine results for taking such a course. This surely gives a good lead and direction both to those in need and to the overseers who should be ready and willing to be instrumental in getting those spiritual needs supplied. W 5/15 12b

Thursday, December 11

Do not be irritating your children, but go on bringing them up in the discipline and mental-regulating of Jehovah.

—Eph. 6:4.

When it comes to entertainment all should realize that tastes vary in the choice of it. Rather than being extremely critical, let us encourage what is desirable, using the standards set in the Bible. Let the force of God's Word touch the hearts of any who may be taking false steps. (Gal. 6:1) Parents especially are in a fine position to help their children, even as Paul shows above. The Greek word translated "bringing up" contains the thought of warmth for the child, for the root word can be applied to a nursing mother who cherishes her children. (1 Thess. 2:7) Such concern would prevent parents from being indifferent to their child's choice of entertainment. Deep love for the child would cause the parent to be firm at times, bringing up the child with discipline, even though peer pressure may cause a child to object to the parent's restrictions in the field of entertainment. W 6/1 18-20a

Friday, December 12

When Michael the archangel had a difference with the Devil and was disputing about Moses' body, he did not dare to bring a judgment against him in abusive terms, but said: "May Jehovah rebuke you."—Jude 9.

The Devil did not get the body. All along in the age-old contest Satan the Devil has lost. In the war in heaven he was defeated and he and his demon angels were hurled down to the neighborhood of our earth, whereas the archangel Michael, namely, the Lord Jesus Christ, and his

angels remained victorious in the heavens. Since the victorious Jesus Christ uses the "archangel's voice" when he commands those who died in union with the Christ to come forth, his "commanding call" has more authority and stronger effect. Furthermore, the defeated Satan will not have power enough to prevent the spiritual resurrection of those dead in union with Christ and will not be able to prevent their entrance into the spirit realm nor their ascent to heaven to be with Christ. Nor will he be able to prevent the resurrection of mankind in general. W 6/15 14, 15a

Saturday, December 13

Like powerful men they run. Like men of war they go up a wall.—Joel 2:7.

In many lands nationalistic rulers have banned our work. They have tried to erect a wall against our Kingdom preaching. But the 'locust' army climbs such walls "like men of war." In some towns where the work is under ban, local interested persons have joined with the Witnesses, guiding them to friendly people. At times they will witness to one or two homes in one block and then move over to do the same in another block of houses. Often they witness with the Bible only. In other lands the Witnesses carry on an effective work informally, while they yearn for the day when restrictive shackles will be broken, so that they may freely go from house to house again. In the United States they have won many victories in the Supreme Court, establishing the legality of their house-to-house preaching. Truly, the 'locust' army and their companions have been successful in climbing over legal walls that enemies have tried to raise. W 7/15 14, 15a

Sunday, December 14

I make request, not concerning these only, but also concerning those putting faith in me through their word.

—John 17:20.

After Jesus had instructed his faithful disciples on the last night of his earthly life, he raised his eyes to heaven and offered to Jehovah a wonderful prayer on their behalf. He mentioned that he had finished his own work on earth, but his followers were still in the world. These would continue to proclaim the good news of the Kingdom, making known Jehovah's name, just as Jesus had done. Therefore he prayed as recorded at John 17:11, 14-18. Jesus' prayer extended far beyond those 11 faithful apostles. He was looking ahead to a congregation that would encircle the globe, with many more persons putting their faith in Jesus through the word proclaimed by his followers, even as noted above. During his earthly ministry, what a marvelous pattern he provided for his followers! Truly, we are encouraged to imitate him as Jehovah's Witnesses in our grand work as "fishers of men"!—Matt. 4:19. W 12/15 20-22

Monday, December 15

Here there is the sound of the cry for help of the daughter of my people from a land far away: "Is Jehovah not in Zion? Or is her king not in her?"—Jer. 8:19.

At Babylon the Jewish exiles would not be able to bring themselves to think that Jehovah would leave Jerusalem (Zion) so abased with no temple as the house of their God and with no royal throne on which a descendant of King David sat as Jehovah's anointed king. What a reproach to His name, for the

time being! Strange as that was back there, Christendom's impending destruction will seem even stranger. Why it comes Jehovah shows in his answer to the cry of the Jewish exiles for help: "Why is it that they have offended me with their graven images, with their vain foreign gods?" Christendom's hopes for salvation are unscriptural; they must perish! The time is due to come when the adherents of Christendom must say: "The harvest has passed, the summer has come to an end; but as for us, we have not been saved!" Let us not be among those saying this!—Jer. 8:19b, 20. W 8/1 22, 23a

Tuesday, December 16

Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of persons ought you to be in holy acts of conduct and deeds of godly devotion, awaiting and keeping close in mind the presence of the day of Jehovah.—2 Pet. 3:11, 12.

Although his disciples held incorrect views, Jesus did not condemn them. He knew that their gaining understanding of God's truths would be gradual, and that holy spirit would progressively guide them so that they would get clearer understanding in due time. Ultimately, complete knowledge concerning the Kingdom rule would be theirs. But, in the meantime, Jesus inculcated in those early followers a profound interest and zeal for seeking the Kingdom first, and a willingness to make adjustments in their views about it. So although limited in accurate knowledge about Kingdom truths, what they did know enabled them, as they waited, to heed the words of Peter above. Today, our knowledge of God's Kingdom rule, what it is and what it will accomplish, is far more advanced. W 7/1 7a

Wednesday, December 17

If, when we were enemies, we became reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more, now that we have become reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.—Rom. 5:10.

Feeling the need of a redeemer, the right-minded person will look in sincerity and earnestness into the Bible and learn of God's way through Christ. When he comes to realize his total lack of relationship with God, he also is convinced of the real badness of sin and what it has done to him. He sees that he is actually an enemy of Jehovah God. Then he wants to change. Accordingly, he repents and asks for forgiveness. All along he must recognize that it is not his own superior insight or goodness, but Jehovah God who is drawing him. The person has found that he can get this forgiveness on the basis of Christ's atonement sacrifice. Having come to know and appreciate God's purpose, he expresses the desire and decision to become a fully dedicated servant of Jehovah God, and demonstrates this faith and decision before others by requesting water immersion. W 4/15 14

Thursday, December 18

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.

It was as if the "faithful and discreet slave" had used a "key of knowledge" (Matt. 24:45-47; Luke 11:52) and had unlocked the door for prospective members of the "great crowd" to enter into wonderful privileges. Taking hold of these would work for them to "come out of the great tribulation" and enter into the cleansed earth under

its new world government by Christ. Their attention was directed to that government by a public address on the subject "Government." It gave early warning of the destruction impending over all the earthly governments of worldly men in God's war of Armageddon. Furthermore, the address magnified Jehovah's theocratic government by Christ as being the only hope for all mankind. This was the divine government for the "great crowd" to acclaim as their glorious hope! Are you doing all you can to make known your glorious hope? W 10/1 22a

Friday, December 19

Do not be afraid, O very desirable man. May you have peace. Be strong, yes, be strong.—Dan. 10:19.

During the reign of King Cyrus, an angel appeared to Daniel in a vision and strengthened him with these words. It required courage on Daniel's part to receive and record the powerful prophecy that was next given him by the angel, and which we find in chapters 11 and 12. And it has taken courage for Jehovah's people to remain no part of the world during the fulfillment of the final part of this prophecy, as it describes the confrontation between the Communistic "king of the north" and the capitalistic "king of the south" in this nuclear age. May we be very courageous to do all that Daniel's God requires of us, until that time of distress sweeps away Satan's wicked world. For then, the glorious day of Jesus' millennial reign will dawn. Then many of those asleep in death will wake up with the prospect of everlasting life on earth. Daniel, too, will "stand up for [his] lot at the end of the days."—Dan. 12:13. W 10/15 13, 14a

Saturday, December 20

While Peter was yet speaking about these matters the holy spirit fell upon all those hearing the word.—Acts 10:44.

Thus "God for the first time turned his attention to the nations to take out of them a people for his name." (Acts 15:14) On this occasion, in the house of the uncircumcised centurion Cornelius, Peter used another of the "keys of the kingdom of the heavens," the third key. (Matt. 16:19) From then on, the spirit-anointed disciples of Jesus could be witnesses of him "to the most distant part of the earth." (Acts 1:8) What God had opened by means of the key-holder Peter remained open for an earth-wide witness. In agreement with this, God's holy spirit fell upon three distinct classes of believers, (1) on the baptized 120 disciples and, afterward, about 3,000 converted Jews, all at Jerusalem on Pentecost of 33 C.E.; (2) on the baptized Samaritans, but only after the services of the apostles Peter and John; and (3) on the believing Gentiles gathered in the house of Cornelius in Caesarea, in 36 C.E. *W 10/1 11a*

Sunday, December 21

You will actually seek me and find me, for you will search for me with all your heart. And I will let myself be found by you.—Jer. 29:13, 14.

Our attainment of lasting salvation lies in patiently and trustfully waiting upon Jehovah for deliverance by the "servant" greater than Cyrus, namely, Jesus Christ. Our trying to run ahead of Jehovah will never bring the deliverance that we ardently desire. We do well to imitate those who saw the salvation by Jehovah and were restored to their homeland in his own

chosen time. That their course is worthy of our imitation God foretold in the above words. We are now at the end of "the year of goodwill on the part of Jehovah." (Isa. 61:2) So the future that Jehovah has thought out for us is the most desirable one, if we now submit to his universal sovereignty, that of everlasting life with peace, prosperity and happiness through his King-Servant, Jesus Christ. (Jer. 29:11) This is the hope that God sets before us. With appreciation, let us act in harmony with it. *W 11/1 20-22a*

Monday, December 22

But know this, that in the last days critical times hard to deal with will be here.

—2 Tim. 3:1.

The tested quality of the faith of our brothers who have had to endure severe persecution has worked out endurance in them, and as integrity-keepers they have proved the Devil to be a liar. (Job 1:9-12; 2:9, 10) But there is a different kind of tide—a more subtle one—creeping through other parts of the earth, and especially in the more prosperous lands. It is a worldly tide, with its emphasis on material gain, on pleasure and recreation, on immorality and on 'doing your own thing.' Sad to say, this Satanic tide appears to have engulfed more of God's people than has outright persecution! We must keep awake to the urgency of these "critical times," to the fact that we are indeed living through the "last days" of this wicked system. As you read these very lines, hundreds of our brothers around the earth are suffering imprisonment. Their only recreation, if any, is a walk in a bleak prison yard. Should this not make us careful how we use our time? *W 1/1 16, 17a*

Tuesday, December 23

Do not be loving either the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him; because everything in the world . . . does not originate with the Father, but originates with the world.

—1 John 2:15, 16.

In two of his letters, John warns of the "antichrist" that appears in the "last hour," and identifies him as "the one that denies the Father and the Son." Then John ties this "antichrist" in with the "many false prophets [that] have gone forth into the world." (1 John 2:18, 22; 4:1-3) That antichrist no doubt disputed the urgency of the "good news" and tried to turn Christians to the materialistic, pleasure-seeking ways of the world. Integrity-keeping Christians had "conquered the wicked one," but now, even at a late date, their faith was endangered from another direction, even as seen from above. (1 John 2:13) Truly, it has never been the will of God for Christians to get mixed up in the immoral, materialistic ways of Satan's world. Rather, we must persevere in conquering by faith. *W 2/1 16, 17*

Wednesday, December 24

I left you in Crete, that you might correct the things that were defective.—Titus 1:5.

Commonly, older men who were sent to a particular area stayed there for an extended period of time to strengthen the brothers. There was a pressing need for Titus to assist in resolving problems in Crete. Also, in view of the unruliness, profitless talk and misleading ideas that some were teaching, Titus was to keep on reproving disorderly ones with severity, that they might be "healthy in the

faith." (Titus 1:6-14) He was to counsel and exhort aged men and women, along with younger men and women, as well as slaves, so that their way of life might "adorn the teaching of our Savior, God, in all things." (Titus 2:1-10) It is evident that well-qualified visiting overseers conveyed needed instruction to the congregations in the first century. All of them had years of experience in the preaching work, in handling responsibility as elders and in enduring hardship. The same is true of our traveling elders today, for which we are very thankful. *W 2/15 6, 7*

Thursday, December 25

Wives . . . let your adornment be . . . the secret person of the heart in the incorruptible apparel of the quiet and mild spirit, which is of great value in the eyes of God.—1 Pet. 3:1, 3, 4.

King Ahasuerus was so pleased with Esther that he loved her more than all the other women and made her queen instead of Vashti, his former queen. For all his princes and servants the happy king then held a great feast, "the banquet of Esther," and in connection with it gave presents that only a monarch's wealth could make possible. What a time of joy that was! A truly submissive woman had gained favor. Although Esther now sat as Persian queen, she continued to comply with her cousin Mordecai's instructions. (Esther 2:18-20) Looking back, we may well visualize Esther as a beautiful woman in royal attire. But her principal adornment was that described by the apostle Peter above. Christian women today have good reason to shun the selfishness of deposed Vashti and imitate the submissive, unselfish qualities of Esther. *W 3/15 12, 13*

Friday, December 26

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.

The Israelites of old received similar counsel. (Deut. 7:3) So, then, if we are exhorted not to marry persons of another faith, would it not be inappropriate to go out on dates with them? A date is "an appointment between two persons of the opposite sex for the mutual enjoyment of some form of social activity." But should true worshippers of God seek "mutual enjoyment . . . of social activity" with persons who do not worship Jehovah? Remember those 24,000 Israelites who did. Besides, the usual purpose of a date is for a person to become better acquainted with a prospective marriage mate. So, in view of the Scriptural counsel that a worshiper of Jehovah not marry a person of another faith, it would be unwise either to *accept* or *propose* a date with such a person. There is plenty of pressure on young Christians to date. But they should consider the grave and sobering facts of dating, such as the possibility of unwanted pregnancies. W 4/1 11-14a

Saturday, December 27

Whether it is righteous in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, judge for yourselves. But as for us, we cannot stop speaking about the things we have seen and heard.—Acts 4:19, 20.

After the apostles had given the rulers a bold witness, they were sent outside the Sanhedrin hall while the rulers consulted together. What was their objective? They could not deny that a noteworthy sign had occurred in the name of Jesus Christ. But they rea-

sioned that by threats they could frighten the apostles and so bring a halt to their speaking in Jesus' name. However, would mere threats stop those Christian witnesses of Jehovah? Let true Christians today take note of their fearless example. Fearful of public opinion, the rulers released the apostles, after threatening them. After their release, the apostles went back to the congregation. They reported to the brothers what had occurred, and then the congregation did what Christians should always do under such circumstances. They spoke to Jehovah in prayer.—Acts 4:24-30. W 12/15 7-9a

Sunday, December 28

For all the things that were written aforetime were written for our instruction, that through our endurance and through the comfort from the Scriptures we might have hope.—Rom. 15:4.

God's dealings with his people in the past provide patterns, or examples, for us. From these we learn how God actually deals with those who walk in the truth and those who do not. One pattern that we can learn from is that of ancient Israel. That nation was favored by being given God's laws. As long as the Israelites walked in his truths, they were richly blessed. For example, they did not fall prey to enemy nations. (Deut. 28:7) Their crops and flocks were abundant. (Deut. 11:8-15) Their social system was so orderly and highly developed that there was no need for prisons. (Ex. 22:1-15) Disease epidemics that struck ungodly nations did not come on them. (Deut. 7:15) And if they continued to walk in the truth—"the most blessed of all the peoples you will become," Jehovah promised them.—Deut. 7:14. W 7/1 8

Monday, December 29

Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of the judgment by him has arrived, and so worship the One who made the heaven and the earth and sea.—Rev. 14:7.

As "the hour of the judgment" by God hastens nearer, so must this house-to-house activity by those of you who are home and foreign missionaries hasten on to its conclusion. Though many persons today may show a "goat-like" disposition, there are still "sheep" waiting in your territories. As you courageously continue your house-to-house activity, heavenly angels will see that you are guided to these "sheep." Jesus Christ is the Judge. We are simply humble servants privileged to play a role in connection with his judgment work, and we may do so by 'thoroughly bearing witness and teaching publicly and from house to house.' (Acts 20:20, 21) Very soon the lawless cities of Christendom and of the entire earth will "actually crash in ruins, to be without an inhabitant." Then, happy will be those who answered the call to Jehovah's service, saying: "Here I am! Send me."—Isa. 6:8-11. W 7/15 18a

Tuesday, December 30

Your name will no longer be called Jacob but Israel, for you have contended with God and with men so that you at last prevailed.—Gen. 32:28.

We have an extraordinary Scriptural example of persistence and how it was richly rewarded in the case of Jacob who found himself grappling all night with an angel who had materialized. Even though the socket of Jacob's thigh joint was put out of place by the angel, Jacob would not let him go until, as he said: "You first bless me." The

angel then said something that would have lasting significance, namely, the words above. He also finally blessed Jacob. Jacob surely went far beyond pursuing a certain course steadily. He literally had to grapple and keep at it in a crippled state until he got what he sought. He was wonderfully blessed, as he said: "I have seen God face to face and yet my soul was delivered." What a fine example of persistence in prayer! This matter of persistence in prayer, linked with faith, is highlighted at Luke 11:5-8. W 5/15 17, 16

Wednesday, December 31

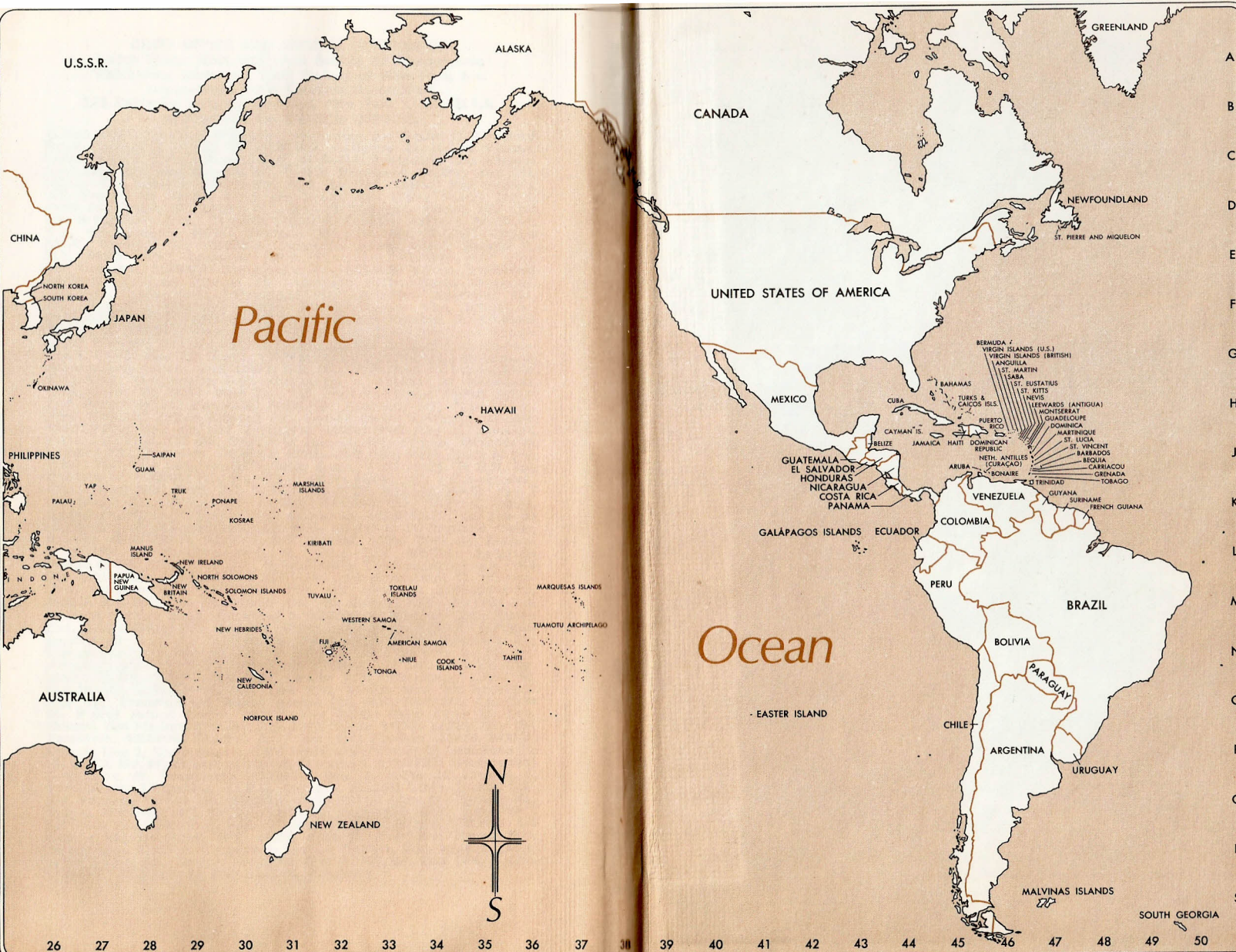
When they had made supplication, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken; and they were one and all filled with the holy spirit and were speaking the word of God with boldness.—Acts 4:31.

The disciples did not ask to be taken out of the work or away from the threats of the enemies of truth. They knew their commission from Jehovah—to be his witnesses. Their heart's desire was to keep speaking God's word with all boldness, and they requested his help in this. They would never succumb to fear. That Jehovah was pleased with this attitude the record shows. Those witnesses of the Kingdom continued their work with renewed vigor, and God was with them. "Believers in the Lord kept on being added, multitudes both of men and of women." (Acts 5:14) As a result, the religious leaders became angry again and put the apostles in prison. However, it was Jehovah's will for their witnessing to continue in Jerusalem. So he sent his angel to release them and to tell them to 'keep on speaking the sayings of life.'—Acts 5:20. W 12/15 10, 11a

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