

# The WATCHTOWER

JULY 15, 1956

Semimonthly

THE DIVINE INTERESTS

INDIVIDUAL HUMAN INTERESTS

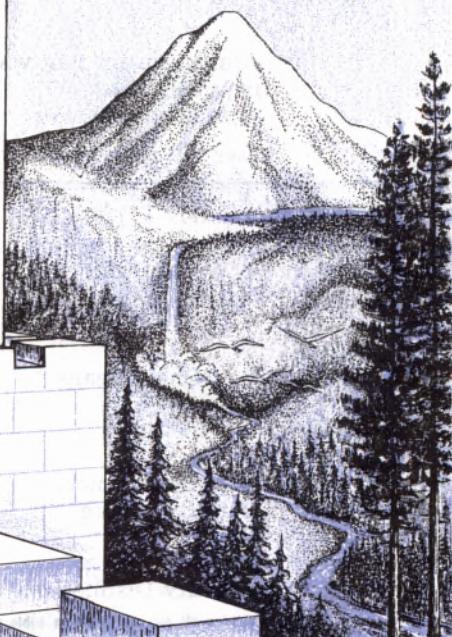
COMMUNITY OR CONGREGATIONAL  
INTERESTS

THE THREE WORLDS

STOP EVIL, START GOOD

©WTB&TS

*Announcing*  
**JEHOVAH'S  
KINGDOM**



"YOU ARE MY WITNESSES," SAYS JEHOVAH.—Isa. 43:12

## THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER"

Literal towers in Bible times were elevated vantage points from which watchmen could observe happenings, warn of danger, or announce good news. Our magazine figuratively occupies such a vantage point, for it is founded on the very pinnacle of wisdom, God's Word. That elevates it above racial, national and political propagandas and prejudices, frees it from selfish bias. It is not bound by any traditional creed, but its message advances as the light on God's purposes and works increases.—Habakkuk 2:1-3.

It sees things Scripturally. When it observes this generation afflicted with greed, delinquency, hypocrisy, atheism, war, famine, pestilence, perplexity and fear, and persecution of unpopular minorities, it does not parrot the old fable about history repeating itself. Informed by Bible prophecy, it sees in these things the sign of the world's time of the end. But with bright hope it also sees opening up for us just beyond these woes the portals of a new world.

Thus viewed, "The Watchtower" stands as a watchman atop a tower, alert to what is going on, awake to note signs of danger, faithful to point out the way of escape. It announces Jehovah's kingdom established by Christ's enthronement in heaven, feeds his kingdom joint-heirs with spiritual food, cheers men of good will with glorious prospects of eternal life in a paradise earth, comforts us with the resurrection promise for the dead.

It is not dogmatic, but has a confident ring in its voice, because it is based on God's Word. It does not privately interpret prophecy, but calls attention to physical facts, sets them alongside prophecy, and you see for yourself how well the two match, how accurately Jehovah interprets his own prophecy. In the interests of our salvation, it keeps sharp and faithful focus on Bible truth, and views religious news generally.

'Be watchful in these perilous times,' God admonishes. So keep on the watch by regularly reading "The Watchtower".



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"They will all be taught by Jehovah."—John 6:45, NW; Isaiah 54:13

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Abbreviations used in "The Watchtower" for the following Bible versions

AS — American Standard Version	LXX — The Septuagint Version
AT — An American Translation	Mo — James Moffatt's version
Da — J. N. Darby's version	NW — New World Translation
Dy — Catholic Douay version	Ro — J. B. Rotherham's version
ED — The Emphatic Diaglott	RS — Revised Standard Version
Le — Isaac Leeser's version	Yg — Robert Young's version

Unless otherwise indicated, the Bible used is the King James Version

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# The WATCHTOWER

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Announcing  
JEHOVAH'S  
KINGDOM

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July 15, 1956

Number 14



**T**HE way to stop a vicious cycle of evil is to break through it with good. As long as evil is met with evil and hate calls forth hate and violence stirs violence in return, the whirlpool of wickedness will spin faster and those in it will be sucked under. Just as it takes a physically powerful man to swim against a whirlpool, it takes a spiritually strong one to go against a cycle of evil by doing good. It is more than a measure of manliness; it is a measure of godliness.

Jesus said so: "You heard that it was said: 'You must love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' However, I say to you: Continue to love your enemies and to pray for those persecuting you; that you may prove yourselves sons of your Father who is in the heavens, since he makes his sunrise upon wicked people and good and makes it rain upon righteous people and unrighteous. For if you love those loving you, what reward do you have? are not also the tax collectors doing the same thing? And if you greet your brothers only, what extraordinary thing are you doing? Are not also the people of the nations doing the same thing? You must accordingly be complete, as your heavenly Father is complete."—Matt. 5:43-48, NW.

The apostle Paul told the Christians at Rome: "Return evil for evil to no one."

He gave similar counsel to those at Thessalonica: "See that no one renders injury for injury to anyone else." This is easy to preach but hard to practice, but Paul both preached it and practiced it: "When being reviled, we bless; when being persecuted, we bear up; when being defamed, we entreat."—Rom. 12:17; 1 Thess. 5:15; 1 Cor. 4:12, 13, NW.

Jesus had this high degree of godliness, and we are told to take him as a model to follow: "When he was being reviled, he did not go to reviling in return. When he was suffering, he did not go to threatening, but kept on committing himself to the one who judges righteously. In fact, to this course you were called, because even Christ suffered for you, leaving you a model for you to follow his steps closely."—1 Pet. 2:23, 21, NW.

The usual practice among men is to be decent to those decent to you, to respect those respecting you, to be angry with those angry with you, to strike those striking you. To do this is to let others shape you, determine your conduct, make you what you are. Actually, they make you what they are, making you take on their own sinful image. If you have high standards of conduct, why forsake them for the low standards of others? Why let the evil of others be stronger than your own good-

ness? To let this happen is to deny yourself, what you stand for, the principles you hold dear. Copy Jesus, who holds true to what he is, unchanged by the weaknesses of those around him: "If we are unfaithful, he remains faithful, for he cannot deny himself."—2 Tim. 2:13, NW.

If you are strong enough to stop a cycle of evil with good, you may start a cycle of good. "A soft answer turns away wrath." This soft answer does not come from your weakness but springs from your strength, and the wrathful one senses this truth. Since so many persons return like for like, your breakthrough with goodness switches the cycle from evil to good. "A liberal man will be enriched, and one who waters will himself be watered." "Cast your bread upon the waters, for you will find it after many days." It may take some time for your goodness to bring in a harvest of good from others. You cannot sow seed one day and reap wheat the next. Nevertheless, "whatever a man is sowing, this he will also reap; so let us not give up in doing what is right, for in due season we shall reap by not giving out."—Prov. 15:1; 11:25; Eccl. 11:1, RS; Gal. 6:7, 9, NW.

Jehovah God sowed love toward mankind, and he reaps love from those not insensible to his goodness. God created the earth we live on, the air we breathe, the plants and animals we eat, and the water we drink. Many take all this for granted, never thanking him. They work, they

make money, they buy their food, so why thank God for it? So they reason. The farmer can plant seed and water and cultivate it, but he cannot make it grow: "Neither is he that plants anything nor is he that waters, but God who makes it grow." Tracing the source of your blessings soon ends up at God. This is inescapably true, for both good persons and bad.—1 Cor. 3:7, NW.

But bad persons refuse to acknowledge their indebtedness to God. The love God sows toward them falls on sterile soil and all that results is indifference or unbelief. But it is different with grateful persons, with Christians. The outpouring of God's love calls forth a loving response: "As for us, we love, because he first loved us." The most vital feature of God's love is his provision of Jesus the Ransom: "The love is in this respect, not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent forth his Son as a propitiatory sacrifice for our sins." Few indeed show proper response to this loving provision by actively loving God: "This is what the love of God means, that we observe his commandments."—1 John 4:19, 10; 5:3, NW.

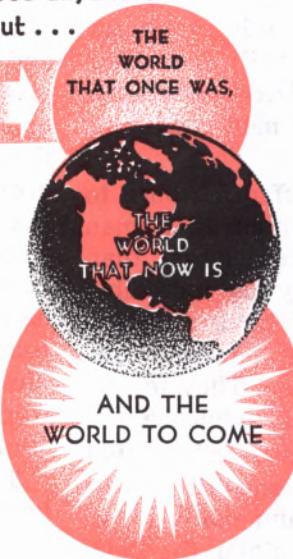
So break up a cycle of evil by doing good. "Do not let yourself be conquered by the evil, but keep conquering the evil with the good." And be responsive to goodness from others. Especially respond, with loving obedience, to the love God showers on us.—Rom. 12:21, NW.

### *Concentrating on the Wrong Kind of Poverty*

Time magazine, January 9, 1956, told that many a Bible Belt (southern part of the United States) church found itself in a strange position during the Christmas season of 1955; it was running out of poor to whom to give Christmas baskets of food, clothing and toys. However, judging by the results of polls conducted in the United States as to the people's religious literacy and especially as to their familiarity with the Bible, can it be that the churches are concentrating on the wrong kind of poverty? There certainly are many spiritually poor, and Jesus said that those who were conscious of their spiritual poverty were happy. Were the churches to concentrate on ending spiritual poverty they would not be running out of opportunities for doing good.

# The Three Worlds

The Bible speaks of three worlds.  
No longer need anyone be  
confused about . . .



**A**LMOST everyone knows of Jesus' words at John 3:16 (NW) when he said: "God loved the world so much that he gave his only-begotten Son, in order that everyone exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life." Yet the very same Bible writer, the apostle John, wrote in his epistle these words: "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." (1 John 2:15, NW) Would God tell us not to love that which he loves? Contradiction in the Bible? No; if there is contradiction, it is only in the minds of those who know nothing of the three worlds.

Where do we learn about the three worlds? In the Bible, at 2 Peter chapter three. Here the apostle speaks of (1) "the world of that time" or the "heavens in ancient times and an earth" that suffered destruction in Noah's day; (2) "the heavens and the earth that are now" and (3) the "new heavens and a new earth."—2 Pet. 3:5-13, NW.

Striking it is that all three worlds are associated with a heavens and an earth. Does this mean that there have been or will be other earthly planets? No. In the Bible the word "earth," as with the word "heavens," is not always used in its literal sense. At Psalm 96:1 (AS), for example, the Bible says: "Sing unto Jehovah, all the earth." Here "earth" is used symbol-

ically to refer to God's servants on the earth.

When the Bible speaks of an earth's perishing, then, it does not refer to the literal earth. For God's Word says of the earthly globe: "The earth which he hath established for ever." (Ps. 78:69, AS) So when the Bible says that an earth was destroyed or is to be destroyed, it means the symbolic "earth," that is, the visible human part of a world, the human society under its social arrangement.

Likewise the term "heavens" is often used symbolically to refer to the invisible rulers of a world—spirit creatures, whether wicked or righteous.

## THE "ANCIENT WORLD"

When Adam joined Eve in rebellion against their God and Creator, a corrupt world began. Under the unseen influence of a powerful spirit creature who became known as Satan the Devil, wickedness increased on the earth. Telling of the increased evil, the Bible record says: "The earth came to be ruined in the sight of the God and the earth became filled with violence."—Gen. 6:11, NW.

Why had violence gripped the earth? One reason was that an undisclosed number of holy angels in heaven disobeyed God. How? By leaving their proper heavenly dwelling place to live on the earth. "It came about that when men started to grow in numbers on the surface of the ground and daughters were born to them,

then the sons of God began to notice the daughters of men, that they were good-looking, and they went to taking wives for themselves." (Gen. 6:1-3, NW) Soon after the sons of God materialized as men and married the daughters of men conditions grew worse.

This was because the offspring born to the unholy unions were hybrids, human freaks, monsters. They were larger than the average man, and they had incredibly great vitality because of having angelic fathers. These freakishly powerful offspring were called Nephilim. They terrorized the earth, filling it with violence.

Who made up the "heavens" of that ancient world? Since the sons of God or the fathers of the Nephilim really dominated the earth, they with Satan the Devil formed a heavenly control body, a symbolic "heavens" over mankind. There was also a symbolic "earth" of that ancient world. This was the morally corrupt human society. Thus there was a "heavens in ancient times and an earth."—2 Pet. 3:5, NW.

That ancient heavens and earth were wicked. God determined that they had to go: "I am going to wipe men whom I have created off the surface of the ground." (Gen. 6:7, NW) God disclosed this fact to Noah, a man who detested the wicked conditions of that world and who loved righteousness. God instructed Noah to build a big three-story ark. Noah did as God commanded. Noah also was active as a preacher of righteousness. But the people of that time, except for Noah's wife, three sons and their wives, were not interested in righteous conditions. As to God's purpose to wipe out men by a flood, the wicked world did not believe it would happen. The world scoffed at Noah and ridiculed him for his ark-building.

But one day in November, 2370 B.C., the time came for the end of the "ancient

world." Says the Bible: "The floodgates of the heavens were opened. And the downpour upon the earth went on for forty days and forty nights. And the waters became overwhelming and kept increasing greatly upon the earth, but the ark kept going on the surface of the waters. And the waters overwhelmed the earth so greatly that all the tall mountains that were under the whole heavens came to be covered. Thus he wiped out every existing thing that was on the surface of the ground, from man to beast." The scoffers, who scoffed at the idea that God would destroy a wicked world, scoffed no more.—Gen. 7:11, 12, 18, 19, 23, NW.

The end of that ancient world took in both heavens and earth. The symbolic "earth," the visible human part of that corrupt ancient world, perished but the planet earth remained. The symbolic "heavens" was likewise destroyed, since the spirit sons of God were forced to dematerialize and go back to the spirit realm.

Concerning the Bringer of that world-destroying flood, the Bible says: "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, NW.

#### "THIS PRESENT EVIL WORLD"

Some time after the flood of Noah's day the world in which we live began. Noah gave the earth a clean start. But not long after the flood wickedness cropped up again. What happened? Under the influence of the Devil men fell away from the righteous example set by Noah.

The global flood had not destroyed the Devil or the disobedient sons of God. Because of their disobedience the spirit sons of God were not allowed to go back to God's holy organization. Left in darkness by being debarred from God's enlighten-

ing counsels, the disobedient sons of God were now "spirits in prison." (1 Pet. 3:19, NW) The Devil made himself ruler of the "spirits in prison" and became the ruler of the demons. The Devil and his demons thus constitute the "heavens" of this wicked world.

Aptly, an apostle of Christ Jesus called this world "this present evil world." (Gal. 1:4) So this present world does not originate with God. It is controlled by the Devil, of whom the Scripture says: "The whole world is lying in the power of the wicked one."—1 John 5:19, NW.

Is this "present evil world" destined to continue indefinitely? No, God has set a date for its end. According to the sign of the last days, that end will come during this generation. The means by which God will wipe out this present world is a war in heaven and earth. The Bible calls this invisible and visible war by the symbolic name "Armageddon."—Rev. 16:16.

God's Word contains numerous references to this heaven-fought war that will end this evil world. For example, it is referred to as "the war of the great day of God the Almighty," that is, "the great and terrible day of Jehovah," "the day of Jehovah's anger," "the day of vengeance of our God," "the day of wrath and of the revealing of God's righteous judgment," "the day of judgment and of destruction of the ungodly men." It means "the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with his powerful angels in a flaming fire," "sudden destruction," and "great tribulation such as has not occurred since the world's beginning until now, no, nor will occur again."—Rev. 16:14, NW; Mal. 4:5; Zeph. 2:2; Isa. 61:2, AS; Rom. 2:5; 2 Pet. 3:7; 2 Thess. 1:7, 8; 1 Thess. 5:3; Matt. 24:21, NW.

As it was in Noah's day during that world's time of the end, so it will be today. The great Prophet Christ Jesus said: "As people were in those days before the flood,

eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark; and they took no note until the flood came and swept them all away, so the presence of the Son of man will be." (Matt. 24:38, 39, NW) Engrossed in the pursuits of life, people today do not want to hear the warning of this present world's end; they, like the people of the "ancient world," scoff at the idea that a wicked world will be destroyed. So today most people "take no note" of the warning of this world's end now being sounded by the New World society of Jehovah's witnesses. Some people scoff and laugh at the idea that God will step in and end this world.

It is not unusual that people should ridicule the "last days" sign of Christ's second presence. It was certain to be this way. "In the last days," said the apostle Peter, "there will come ridiculers with their ridicule, proceeding according to their own desires and saying: 'Where is this promised presence of his? Why, from the day our forefathers fell asleep in death, all things are continuing exactly as from creation's beginning.'"—2 Pet. 3:3, 4, NW.

But why are the scoffers scoffing? Should not the destruction of the "ancient world" serve as a warning that God can do it again? Yes, it should! But men do not wish to be reminded of the end of this world; on purpose they avoid thinking about it; they want to believe that all things will continue "exactly as from creation's beginning." For selfish reasons they try to erase all memory of the "ancient world" and its watery end.

But it will do them no good to ignore the truth, as the apostle explains: "According to their wish, this fact escapes their notice, that there were heavens in ancient times and an earth standing compactly out of water and in the midst of water by the word of God, and by those

means the world of that time suffered destruction when it was deluged with water. But by the same word the heavens and the earth that are now are stored up for fire and are being reserved to the day of judgment and of destruction of the ungodly men." (2 Pet. 3:5-7, NW) Yes, God will do it again! He has promised it in his Word.

#### "NEW HEAVENS AND A NEW EARTH"

The destruction of this world's symbolic heavens and earth will not leave a void. No, but it will make way for a whole new world: "But there are new heavens and a new earth that we are awaiting according to his promise, and in these righteousness is to dwell."—2 Pet. 3:13, NW.

The new world will never be corrupted; it will ever remain a righteous world. The Devil and the demons, who make up the heavens of this world, will never become the heavens of the new world. At Armageddon the Devil and his demons will be abyssed for a thousand years; then, at the end of the thousand-year reign of Christ, they will be hurled into the lake of fire, a symbol of everlasting destruction.

The new heavens, made up of Christ Jesus and 144,000 faithful Christians ransomed from among men, will never turn corrupt. And the new earth will remain forever righteous. You can be an inhabitant of that righteous new earth and enjoy its everlasting blessings. Of the new earth God's Word says: "Death will be no more,

neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be any more. The former things have passed away."—Rev. 21:4, NW.

Never, never throughout all eternity will the new world end or its blessings cease flowing to all the perfect men and women living on the earth. This Jehovah guarantees: "For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith Jehovah, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith Jehovah. And they shall go forth, and look upon the dead bodies of the men that have transgressed against me."—Isa. 66:22-24, AS.

After Armageddon the survivors will go forth and look upon the dead bodies of those Jehovah has slain. Over two billion dead! The carcasses of those who refused to love the new world that God loved so much that he gave his only begotten Son! The carcasses of those who loved this present evil world, which we are commanded not to love. Their dead bodies will be unburied, food for worms, birds and beasts. They will be objects of abhorrence to all righteous surviving flesh. Then throughout endless time, throughout all seasons of the year, from month to month, from week to week, all human flesh will come to worship Jehovah and to give glory to the God of the righteous new world.

#### Hungary: Education in Church

From Budapest, American newspaper publisher Eugene Pulliam sent his papers a report on religion in Hungary: "In keeping with the new Soviet line of 'sweetness and light,' the Communist high command in Hungary revised its policy of persecution of priests and pastors. A program of so-called co-operation between state and church was inaugurated. Instead of being scolded and threatened for believing in God and attending church, people are now urged to go to Mass and to church."

. . . Never has Hungary witnessed such a revival of church attendance. . . . Of course, there always is a catch: a requirement that priests and pastors should read each Sunday a short 'sermon' extolling the Communist philosophy."—*Time*, October 17, 1955.

**IS  
THIS  
GOOD**

## ADVICE?

"Is

IT wrong to refuse to argue with Jehovah's witnesses?" That is the question answered in the Catholic magazine *Messenger of the Sacred Heart*, February, 1956. The questioner explained: "Once all the members of my family were Catholics, but now some of them have become Jehovah's witnesses, and they are causing all of us great trouble with their persistent arguments on points that we don't know enough about to discuss intelligently."

The magazine advised the Catholic to refuse to discuss these Bible questions with Jehovah's witnesses, and added: "It is a mistake for a Catholic to search in book after book for precise answers to every question they can think of." Further concerning the witness it advised: "If merely listening to his questions is deeply disturbing, and if he persists in forcing his questions on his victim, then it would be justifiable to refuse to see such a person."

But in case you do talk with one of Jehovah's witnesses, here is the advice offered: "Listen to the question with an assumed air of empty-headed politeness. Do not seem to be offended, but only uninterested. Or you might say: 'I don't see how that argument, by itself, proves the point you are driving at. Have you any other proofs to



offer on the same point?' He may have more to say; or he may begin to have a feeling of inadequacy and frustration. If he has more to say, you can reply, 'I still don't see how that . . .' and so on. You will be right in what you say, and you will be making him carry the whole burden until he is exhausted. Then you can offer him a cup of tea and a piece of cake."

Is this good advice? Is it Christian advice? Will the Bible confirm it or condemn it?

No surprise is caused by a religious split in a family. Jesus said this would happen: "For I came to cause division, with a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a young wife against her mother-in-law. Indeed, a man's enemies will be persons of his own household. He that has greater affection for father or mother than for me is not worthy of me; and he that has greater affection for son or daughter than for me is not worthy of me."

—Matt. 10:35-37, NW.

But when this split occurs because of conflict between Jesus' true teachings and false religion, who would you think could discuss the matter intelligently and who would you think could not do so because of lack of knowledge? Is it not reasonable to expect Jesus' true followers to be able to answer, and those in false religion to confess inadequate knowledge? And would true Christians be advised not to search for precise answers to the questions raised?

## WHAT THE BIBLE ADVISES

To the contrary, the apostle Peter himself advised Christians to be "always ready to make a defense before everyone that demands of you a reason for the hope in you." The Bible advises a very diligent search be made to acquire knowledge: "If thou cry after discernment, and lift up thy voice for understanding; if thou seek her as silver, and search for her as for hid treasures: then shalt thou understand the fear of Jehovah, and find the knowledge of God. Then shalt thou understand righteousness and justice, and equity, yea, every good path. Discretion shall watch over thee; understanding shall keep thee: to deliver thee from the way of evil, from the men that speak perverse things."—1 Pet. 3:15, NW; Prov. 2:3-5, 9, 11, 12, AS.

"The mind of the righteous ponders how to answer," says the Bible. And if this pondering mind has searched out the answers and has the knowledge of God it will not be confounded by men who speak perverse things. Listening to questions will not be so "deeply disturbing" to it that its possessor will have to refuse to talk to the questioner. Jesus is the model for Christians, and he did not fear to discuss religion nor was he deeply disturbed by such discussions. He had the truth; his opponents did not. So they were the ones deeply disturbed and refusing to talk further: "And nobody was able to say a word in reply to him, nor did anyone dare from that day on to question him any further."—Prov. 15:28, RS; Matt. 22:46, NW.

Does the Bible advise "an assumed air of empty-headed politeness" when reasoning with others? It does not advise assuming airs of any kind, for that is hypocritical. And it specifically condemned the empty-headed reasonings of some who claimed to know God but who used images in worship: "Although they knew God, they

did not glorify him as God nor did they thank him, but they became empty-headed in their reasonings and their unintelligent heart became darkened. Although asserting they were wise, they became foolish and turned the glory of the incorruptible God into something like the image of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed creatures and creeping things."—Rom. 1:21-23, NW.

Well, surely there can be no objection to the advice to offer the witness "a cup of tea and a piece of cake," can there? Ordinarily that would be a commendable thing, a response to a generous impulse from the heart. But is that the spirit behind this advice? Is it not a planned and premeditated rebuke, a pose of saintliness toward an opposer, a part of the assumed air of empty politeness? There is a Bible objection to such sham hospitality: "Eat thou not the bread of him that hath an evil eye, neither desire thou his dainties: for as he thinketh within himself, so is he: eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee. The morsel which thou hast eaten shalt thou vomit up."—Prov. 23:6-8, AS.

## APPEAL TO FAIRNESS

When met by empty-headed politeness and a parroted request for more proof, the witness of Jehovah could give additional proof, read from the Catholic's own Bible, and a spark of interest might be kindled. But if no such spark is struck the experienced witness will soon sense the insincerity in the requests for more proof and will do well to meet the problem with a frank appeal. The witness of Jehovah might say:

"Yes, I do have more proof, but I have a feeling you don't really want it. You listen, but your mind seems closed. Many times persons have closed their minds to us, and usually it is because of what a

friend or relative or clergyman has said about us. Sometimes they will tell what has been said, sometimes they just shut up. I don't know whether that is the case here or not, but if it is, just let me say this. Be fair and let me hear the charges. The Bible says you should. God's law said that if one man was accused by another they should be brought face to face and both sides heard by judges. It is at Deuteronomy 19:17, 18 (NW): 'The two men who have the dispute must stand before Jehovah, before the priests and the judges who will be acting in those days. And the judges must search thoroughly.' You must decide in this case, but before you do, search thoroughly. Hear my side. The Bible says it's a shame if you don't: 'If one gives answer before he hears, it is his folly and shame.'—Prov. 18:13, RS.

"It's only fair. But more than that, it's only Christian to do so. If I am wrong and you are right, as a Christian you should show me my error. The Bible says at Proverbs 3:27 (RS): 'Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to do it.' If you have the truth, please don't withhold it from me. If God has comforted you with the truth, it is so you can comfort others with it: 'The God of all comfort, who comforts us in all

our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those in any kind of tribulation through the comfort with which we ourselves are being comforted by God.' (2 Cor. 1:3, 4, NW) If you have God's truth and I don't, comfort me with it. Isaiah 1:18 (AS) says: 'Come now, and let us reason together, saith Jehovah: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.' If my sins are as scarlet, reason with me and show me my errors so I can clean up and become like snow in God's sight.

"The Bible says to do unto others as you would have others do unto you. If you didn't have the truth and others did, you'd want them to tell it to you. If you do have it and I don't, please tell me. Do unto me as you would be done by. I think I have the truth; I came here to tell it to you. If I don't have it, I want it. Peter changed his religion to become a Christian. I'll change mine to become one, if need be. Now I've been frank with you. Will you please, in a spirit of fairness and Christian love, be frank with me and tell me your objections so I can either answer them or be helped?"

It is believed that such a Scriptural appeal will reach the heart of sheeplike persons and will dissolve any ill-advised, hypocritically assumed airs of empty-headed politeness.

### 'The Showy Display of One's Means of Life'

To keep up with one's neighbor in the material things of life is a popular practice. Observing this, Benjamin Franklin once said: "Of what use is this pride of appearance for which so much is risked, so much is suffered? It cannot promote health, or ease pain; it makes no increase of merit in the person, it creates envy, it hastens misfortune." True it is. Misfortune and disaster will devour those who plunge into the snare of trying to keep up with their neighbors, just as surely as this demon-controlled world will pass out of existence at Armageddon: "Everything in the world—the desire of the flesh and the desire of the eyes and the showy display of one's means of life—does not originate with the Father, but originates with the world. Furthermore, the world is passing away and so is its desire, but he that does the will of God remains forever."—1 John 2:16, 17, New World Trans.

# THE DIVINE INTERESTS

*"Attending to all the interests of the Eternal [Jehovah]."*—1 Chron. 26:30, Mo.

J EHOVAH God made man to be curious to search out new things. From the beginning the whole story of curious mankind has been one of continually developing newer interests as a result of his searchings into Jehovah's rich treasure house of the earth. Such fascinating new interests required laws to be maintained for orderly civilization to expand. Thus for Jehovah's witnesses, who are seeking greater knowledge of theocratic government and divine legal principles, the subject of *interest* is a basic one and needs considerable fundamental attention. Furthermore, if man has come to acquire interests the question arises, Does God have any interests, and if so what are they? Then of what concern are such possible divine interests to us as Christians?

<sup>2</sup> The subject of interest is closely associated with the subject of law. Indeed before laws are made governing human conduct, interests in certain fields of action must exist, become apparent or be anticipated. For example, no laws were required in connection with the operation of motor-cars before motorcars were invented. As long as there were two or three motorcars in existence no laws would be necessary. But as soon as many people began to manifest interest in operating automobiles, then

for the general safety gradually more and more rules on how to drive and the control of motor traffic had to be made by the government. And so it has been with almost all inventions of mankind; new interests have been created among men with the result that many people have desired to concern themselves with such new interests. In consequence laws or rules of action have become necessary to maintain order among all having such interests.

<sup>3</sup> What, then, is an interest? An interest is a concern, an advantage.<sup>a</sup> It is a use of power in a certain direction for a satisfaction. It is a field of effort to do something. Also it is the carrying out of a given purpose. Likewise it is the exertion of the will to participate in a thing. Both singly and collectively, all intelligent creatures, also the Creator himself, are parties with wide ranges of ever-increasing interests. The going from one performance of interest to another execution of interest is the very zest of existence. The carrying out of interests in a set pattern is an enjoying of life itself.

<sup>4</sup> It must be observed at this point that not all fields of interest become the subject of governmental supervision. But when a government takes notice of a new interest that it feels requires supervision for the common good, it proceeds to describe and define the interest and then arranges for the control of it by a government agency.<sup>b</sup> By so doing the government makes a new law or a series of laws that set out rules creating rights and duties with respect to that new field of interest. A right is defined as a legal advantage. For every new right brought into existence there must be an equal and opposite duty. For example,

<sup>a</sup> *Bouvier's Law Dictionary*, p. 576.

<sup>b</sup> *Handbook of Elementary Law*, by W. D. Smith, p. 97.

3. What are interests? Who have them, and how are they related to living?

4. How are legal rights and duties created? Give examples.

1. What subject is to receive attention, and how do such matters arise?

2. Before laws are made what must come to view, and why? Give examples.

motorcar drivers have the right to operate their cars under license on an unobstructed highway within the lawful speed limit. All others have the duty to grant the driver the clearance of way to drive his car along the highway at the legal speed. No one should get in his way to hinder his movement, otherwise he would be denying him his right of way to drive along safely.

#### USE OF INTERESTS

<sup>5</sup> Interests may be used in a bad way or may be used in a good way. If they are used in a harmful, bad way they produce evil, sorrow and, truly, unhappiness. But if they are used in a wholesome, good way they produce joy, contentment and, above all, happiness. Where the interest is used in a course of badness the results will build up a record of fault. Such a record of fault will then bring punishment. On the contrary, if the interest is used in a course of goodness the results will build up a record of merit. Such a record of merit will then bring reward.

<sup>6</sup> For example, Adam was selfishly interested in retaining Eve as his wife. In pursuing this interest it was necessary for him, undeceived, to join Eve in the bad way of rebellion against his sovereign God.

5. How may interests be used, and what is the outcome?

6. Contrast the way Adam pursued an interest and its outcome with that of Jesus' course.



This course of badness built for Adam a record of fault (or sin). In turn this record of fault brought him the punishment of death. In contrast, note the interest of Jesus to become man's redeemer. Jesus carried out this interest in a good way, keeping God's every law and will even to the point of giving his life on the torture stake. (Phil. 2:8) This course of goodness resulted in a record of merit. This merit then brought him the reward of a resurrection to endless life. Adam's "one trespass" produced a fault, which has passed condemnation upon all men as sinners, whereas the "one act" of Jesus produced a merit through his lifeblood that makes possible "a declaring of [men] righteous for life." —Rom. 5:18, NW.

#### JEHOVAH'S INTERESTS

<sup>7</sup> Of all persons in the universe the great God Jehovah himself has the widest range of vital interests. The pursuing of his multitudinous interests brings him immense delight. These divine interests are made clear in the expressions of his divine will and are evident in the purposes he sets out. Jehovah is a dynamic God, a God of action who does things and accomplishes amazing achievements. His every expression of will is perfect and his every purpose is flawless. "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me; declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done; saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure; . . . yea, I have spoken, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed, I will also do it." —Isa. 46:9-11, AS.

<sup>8</sup> All God's interests are executed in a good way, never carried out in a course of

7. How is it that Jehovah has interests? What scripture proves this?

8. How are the divine interests always carried out? Why so?

badness. Upon the completion of his gigantic interests of creation the record reads: "After that God saw everything he had made and, look! it was very good." (Gen. 1:31, NW) Of his absolute goodness Jesus testified: "Nobody is good, except one, God." (Mark 10:18, NW) For this reason God's goodness always brings him a record of merit that in turn yields the reward of happiness and exhilarating refreshment. It is because of this that he is called "the happy God."—1 Tim. 1:11, NW.

<sup>9</sup> It might be asked, What are some of God's interests today affecting the earth and mankind in general? One of his major interests or purposes is to have this richly endowed earth robed in paradisaic beauty and populated with righteous inhabitants who are in harmony with the Living God by becoming his loving subjects. "For thus saith Jehovah that created the heavens, the God that formed the earth and made it, that established it and created it not a waste, that formed it to be inhabited." (Isa. 45:18, AS) Another interest is his announced program to rid this earth of wickedness through his chosen Seed, his King Christ Jesus. (Gen. 3:15) It is also his will by means of a Kingdom-Seed organization, Christ Jesus the King and 144,000 chosen ones as his bride, to permit all good-will peoples of the nations to "bless themselves." (Gen. 22:18, NW) Again, according to his majestic will he has taken keen interest in establishing a New World system, including a new heavens planted in 1914 and a new earth founded in 1919, reflected on earth now in a New World society. (Isa. 51:16) Today that society of Jehovah's witnesses is vigorously preaching the message of the established Kingdom to aid all righteously inclined ones to forsake Satan's old-world system, which is doomed under community

condemnation, and to take their stand now on God's side of the issue of universal sovereignty. (Matt. 24:14; Rev. 18:4) Finally, in this generation it is God's great will to prove his sovereign rulership by vindicating his name at Armageddon in destroying every vestige of Satan's organization visible and invisible.—Rev. 16:16.

<sup>10</sup> Since Jehovah God is the Sovereign Ruler he legally recognizes all his own interests. As we have noted earlier, when interests are recognized by a government rights are created. This means, then, that the highest legal rights in the universe, inherent rights, belong to God in his carrying out of his sovereign pleasure or concerns, interests. Thus divine interests have a priority.—Matt. 6:33.

<sup>11</sup> How should these divine interests concern us? Very vitally! Jesus set the pattern when he dedicated his life to the doing of Jehovah's will and by continuing in harmony with God's every divine interest. Of Jesus it is written: "Look! I am come . . . to do your will, O God." (Heb. 10:7, NW) We too must be in full accord with the divine will and always be in line with His divine interests. This we do by each one of us dedicating his life to the doing of Jehovah's will and then symbolizing this by water baptism. We cannot be passive as to the divine interests. We cannot sit on the fence and be indecisive about these universal interests. We must become active by being conscious of these divine interests and of our relation to them. (1 Chron. 26:30, Mo) Indeed our present and future salvation lies in being identified with God's every interest in connection with this earth. God's goodness ever being manifested in his divine interests, happiness supreme will be our lot by maintaining the divine interests in favorable balance with our other interests.

9. What are some of the divine interests today affecting earth's inhabitants?

10, 11. (a) Why do the divine interests have priority?  
(b) How should these divine interests concern us?



# Individual Human Interests



*"Keeping an eye, not in personal interest upon just your own matters, but also in personal interest upon those of the others."*

—Phil. 2:4, NW.

INTERESTS of feeding, mating, building of nests and raising offspring have been granted by God to the lower creation of land creatures, flying creatures and sea creatures. By instinct they fulfill these interests over a limited but satisfying life span. They feed on the provisions God has given them the right to partake of. "Observe intently the birds of heaven, because they do not sow seed or reap or gather into storehouses; still your heavenly Father feeds them." (Matt. 6:26, NW) But, unlike these of the lower creation, which are guided by involuntary laws of instinct, man has been created with a high degree of intelligence. He has been entrusted with the amazing gift of a free will. Using these faculties, man was originally made to undertake, develop and appreciate a wide range of interests or concerns in an unending life span of happiness to the praise of his Creator.

<sup>2</sup> The seeds of certain basic interests have been implanted in every man and woman by reason of their human nature as designed by their Creator. According to man's free will these seeds can be developed wisely or unwisely. No matter where man is located on this globe, the same basic interests are found in natural man because all have descended from the same

1. How does man differ from the lower creation as to undertaking interests?

2. Why do man's basic interests not vary from one part of the earth to the other?

common ancestor, Adam. Such interests set there by God in a fundamental form carry with them divine legal recognition as rights delegated by God. Rights delegated to man are less than God's own inherent rights, which fact, therefore, gives pre-eminence to the divine interests and their execution.

<sup>3</sup> For this reason some law authorities refer to these natural rights in man as the law of nature. "As man depends absolutely upon his Maker for every thing, it is necessary that he should, in all points, conform to his Maker's will. This will of his Maker is called the law of nature. For as God when he created man, and endowed him with freewill to conduct himself in all parts of life, he laid down certain immutable laws of human nature, whereby that freewill is in some degree regulated and restrained, and gave him also the faculty of reason to discover the purport of those laws."<sup>a</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Another law authority defines the law of nature as: "That law which God, the sovereign of the universe, has prescribed to all men, not by any formal promulgation, but by the internal dictate of reason alone. . . . The primitive laws of nature may be reduced to six, namely: (1) com-

<sup>a</sup> *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, by Wm. Blackstone, Vol. I, p. 26.

3, 4. What do law authorities describe as the "law of nature"?

parative sagacity, or reason; (2) self-love; (3) the attraction of the sexes to each other; (4) the tenderness of parents towards their children; (5) the religious sentiment; (6) sociability."<sup>b</sup>

<sup>5</sup> What human interests are disclosed to view by the first of the above laws of nature? Unlike the animals, man is a highly sagacious or intelligent creature. He can reason things out. He is able to distinguish moral good from moral bad. He also may be held accountable for his actions and how he uses his interests. Man is affected by happiness and unhappiness. Hence natural man has inborn interests to be informed, to gain knowledge, to dig out the facts, to reason upon the evidence and to make decisions. When unperverted, man has a natural tendency to use these interests in a good way, thus building up a record of merit that brings him rewards of happiness.

<sup>6</sup> Jehovah God started man with a wholesome natural interest in knowing the truth. This natural urge has been deflected to some extent, whereby the cleverness of man has been turned in the way of badness. Such badness produces a record of fault that brings unhappiness. However dull these interests have become under Satan's long misrule, there still remain today natural interests of considerable degree together with their attendant natural rights.

<sup>7</sup> For this reason Jehovah's witnesses try continually to stimulate these natural interests. First, with respect to themselves they try to keep theocratically in-



formed and built up intellectually in the truth of God's Word. Secondly, as friendly neighbors they try to visit personally as many men and women as possible to lay before them intelligently for their fair consideration the truth concerning Jehovah's revealed purposes in this time of the end. Jehovah's witnesses follow the pattern set by Jesus and his apostles, who made house-to-house calls in harmony with this natural field of human interests.

<sup>8</sup> The second law in nature involves the matter of self-love. The Bible confirms the existence of this basic principle in human nature put there by God. It is written: "You must love your fellow as yourself. I am Jehovah." (Lev. 19:18, NW) These strong rights of self-love impel each one of mankind toward his own preservation, to defend his life and body from injuries, to avoid what may be hurtful and to provide all things needful to continue his existence. These self-interests cover a wide field and spark many other fields of human interests.

<sup>9</sup> Wholesome self-love or self-interest developed to a moderate degree is a good and proper thing and leads to a course of merit that produces rewards of happiness. But where the degree of self-love or self-interests develops to the exclusion of one's neighbor or fellow man, then a course of badness has been embarked upon. In such cases self-love turns into extreme selfishness. This leads to troubles or faults for which one has to be responsible. He must pay in the form of adversity, a punishment that brings unhappiness.—2 Tim. 3:2-5, NW.

<sup>b</sup> *Bouvier's Law Dictionary*, 1934, p. 671.

5. Man by nature being made sagacious and reasoning, what individual interests result?  
6, 7. What do Jehovah's witnesses do about man's natural interests to know the truth?

8. What individual interests arise from "self-love"?  
9, 10. Are self-interests wrong? To what extent may they be developed?

<sup>10</sup> There is nothing wrong for a human to be interested in his own physical and spiritual welfare. False religious doctrines such as "self-naughting" or character development to the extent where one becomes self-effacing by deadening all desire as taught by Buddhism and some false Christian sects are things advocating error. Such are teachings contrary to human nature, doctrines that stand in conflict with this basic trait of self-love that God originally and rightly planted within perfect man. It is the wise balance of love for God and love for self that prompts one to seek righteousness, that impels one to serve Jehovah with all one's heart so that he may ultimately receive Jehovah's smile of approval for everlasting life. "Keep working out your own salvation with fear and trembling."—Phil. 2:12, NW.

<sup>11</sup> Another basic principle in human nature is the attraction of the sexes to each other. God created man that way, male and female. They exist as counterparts to each other. (Gen. 1:27; 2:20-22, NW) This has been provided to carry out God's divine interest to populate the earth. (Gen. 1:28; Isa. 45:18) The attraction of the sexes gives rise to a wide variety of individual human interests. Some of such basic interests and their attendant delegated rights are to marry, to have a family of children, to have a home, and to earn a livelihood. This also means that husband and wife have a mutual and exclusive right over each other. (1 Cor. 7:2-5, NW) Where these individual human interests are pursued in a way of goodness a record of merit is established and a reward of genuine happiness is achieved.

11. What individual interests arise from the natural principle of the attraction of the sexes to each other?

If a contrary course is followed, unhappiness is the end thereof. No outsiders may invade the field of man's private interests in connection with his proper marriage. However, according to Jesus' counsel man must confine his sex interests to the one mate.—Matt. 19:4-9.

<sup>12</sup> The tenderness of parents toward their children is likewise a basic principle in human nature. Children from their birth are wholly unable to provide for the least of their necessities. But the paternal and maternal love of the parents supplies for this weakness. This parental interest and care of the young is one of the most powerful laws in nature. This field of interest requires the parents to supply protection, food, clothing, education and discipline and to use coercive means for the child's good when the situation so requires.<sup>c</sup> Particularly mothers, in discharging this field of interest wisely in the way of goodness, are heavily occupied and find it almost a full-time undertaking. But it yields its blessings and joys too.—Prov. 17:6.



#### RELIGIOUS SENTIMENT AND SOCIABILITY

<sup>13</sup> The desire to venerate, praise, look up to or seek counsel for problems from a true or fancied higher power sparks another set of natural interests put in man by his Creator. "The religious sentiment which leads us naturally towards the Supreme Being is one of the attributes which belong to humanity alone; and its importance gives it the rank of the moral law of nature."<sup>c</sup> Hence it is this very principle in man's

<sup>c</sup> *Bouvier's Law Dictionary*, 1934, p. 671.

12. What interests arise from the principle of tenderness of parents toward their children?  
13. What is the "religious sentiment," and how has Satan sought to exploit this?

nature that Satan sought to exploit from the beginning in causing Adam and Eve to embrace false religion and thus rebel against their God. Ever since then Satan has produced religions of many different varieties to capture these religious interests and fancies of most men. In this way he has kept their minds and devotion away from the true God.—1 Cor. 8:5, 6, NW.

<sup>14</sup> But in all ages there have been the minority of men who have used this basic "religious sentiment" to lead them toward the true God and to maintain their active faithful worship of him. Today Jehovah's witnesses are of that unperverted minority who visit the people in their homes not only to give them accurate knowledge from the Bible but also to make a direct appeal to the peoples' natural desire to venerate a higher power by urging them to accept the true religion and thus come into active worship of Jehovah, their true God and Creator. (John 4:23, 24, NW) No matter where man lives on this earth he has a fundamental right from his Creator granting him religious freedom to serve the true God Jehovah and gain happiness and life, or serve any false religious delusions of his choosing that lead their devotees to unhappiness and death. Like Joshua of old Jehovah's witnesses say to the people today: 'Choose for yourselves today whom you will serve, whether the pagan gods of your forefathers or Jehovah. But as for ourselves, we shall serve Jehovah.'—Josh. 24:15, NW.

<sup>15</sup> The last of the six natural principles in man that affect his individual human interests is that of "sociability." "The need which man feels to live in society is one of the primitive laws of nature whence flow our duties and rights; and the existence of society depends upon the condition

that the rights of all shall be respected."<sup>d</sup> No normal human creature desires to live a life of a hermit, alone by himself in a secluded spot. Rather, the warm friendship and the active association of our like-minded fellow men are keenly desired. Where developed in a wholesome way, such social interests bring joy and contentment. Only criminals and those not mentally responsible are put away from social contact.

<sup>16</sup> In harmony with these natural interests of sociability Jehovah's witnesses today are being gathered together into ever-wider circles of congregations taking a personal interest in their brothers as they form a remarkable New World society today in 160 different lands. "Keeping an eye, not in personal interest upon just your own matters, but also in personal interest upon those of the others." (Phil. 2:4, NW) All righteously disposed sheeplike persons are being aided to see that it is to their best individual interests of present safety and future life to flee now to Jehovah God's New World society, the one true fold of sheep under Christ Jesus' shepherdship.—John 10:14-16, NW.

<sup>17</sup> In addition to these basic individual human interests revealed by the law in nature, numerous others exist, such as sports, recreation, the cinema and theater, photography, motoring, travel, music, nature study, watching the TV, games, the many sciences, the numerous other arts and a host of additional ones as knowledge and inventions of man uncover new fields of interests. But time is too short for any one person to share individually in all these interests now. There are not enough hours in a day to do everything. So the individual must be selective in choosing his interests aside from those nature imposes upon him as heretofore examined.

14. How have a minority of men used this basic "religious sentiment"?

15, 16. (a) What interests come from man's natural desire of "sociability"? (b) How do these interests affect Jehovah's witnesses?

<sup>d</sup> *Bouvier's Law Dictionary*, 1934, p. 671.

17, 18. (a) What other individual interests exist? (b) What should be done with them and why? (c) How should we look upon another's interests?

<sup>18</sup> The dedicated Christian must sacrifice many worldly interests, so called, in order to balance his individual interests with the divine interests and his newly acquired community (congregational) interests discussed in the next article. The Christian can wisely retain only those individual interests that keep building him merit with Jehovah God that he may reach the happy goal of everlasting life in the new world. Each Christian minds his own business as to his individual interests and lives quietly with his fellow Christians by not criticizing others as to their individual affairs. They follow the apostle Paul's advice as to private matters: "Make it your aim to live quietly and to mind your own business."—1 Thess. 4:11, NW.

<sup>19</sup> We have come to the point of time where Satan's old-world society lies wholly condemned to destruction. No amount of merit built up by single righteous persons or by a group of religious reformers can save it. The present situation is exactly like the days of Sodom and Gomorrah. Jehovah said to Abraham that if He could find fifty righteous inhabitants of Sodom the merit of such would be of value sufficient in God's sight for the cities of the plain with their wicked to be spared from divine destruction. Abraham, having doubts that such a large number as fifty righteous persons could be found with a meritorious record, finally pleaded with Jehovah to settle eventually for just ten righteous persons. But even ten persons of merit could not be found.—Gen. 18:22-33.

<sup>20</sup> So angels were sent to warn righteous Lot, his wife and their two daughters,

19. Can any amount of merit be built to save this old world? What Bible example illustrates this?

20. How is the sort of individual action now important illustrated? Why take such action?

four persons in all, to flee together as a family for safety. These four were put on individual notice and it was to their individual interest to take action. They did take action, but Lot's wife turned back and lost her life because of weakening in faith. Thus only three under individual merit received the reward of being saved from fiery destruction. (Gen. 19:15-26) Today God puts on notice all righteously inclined individuals to exercise individual interest so as to obtain accurate Bible knowledge showing them how to flee from the Babylonish old-world society now doomed to extinction. "Get out of her, my people, if you do not want to share with her in her sins, and if you do not want to receive part of her plagues."—Rev. 18:4, NW.

<sup>21</sup> Each of us individually now can make the right decisions that will build for us a record of merit with Jehovah God as righteous ones. If we make wrong decisions that bring us disability, fault or sin, our standing will become that of a wicked one before God. Note the individual responsibility or accountability described in the Scriptures: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die: the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son; the righteousness [merit] of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness [fault] of the wicked shall be upon him. But if the wicked turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die."—Ezek. 18:20, 21, AS. See also Deuteronomy 24:16; Jeremiah 31:29, 30.

21. How do the Scriptures describe individual accountability today?

*Prove yourself faithful even with the danger of death, and I will give you the crown of life.*—Rev. 2:10, NW.



# COMMUNITY

OR

# CONGREGATIONAL INTERESTS

*"For the body, indeed, is not one member, but is many."*

—1 Cor. 12:14, NW.

SOCIABILITY being one of the basic principles in human nature, man has always desired to live in social groups. Such has enabled him to enjoy fellowship and to share in joint enterprises where combined interests are undertaken for the common advancement. This has meant that each individual man has had to give up some of his time spent for individual interests to undertake joint or collective interests for the larger group with which he associates. In sacrificing some of his own freedom of action in exchange for community responsibilities, the individual receives collective benefits that lead to greater happiness than if he operated by himself. The Bible supports this principle of working together for the greater good. "Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor. . . . and a threefold cord is not quickly broken." (Eccl. 4:9, 12, AS) The greater man's association becomes with a community the more he surrenders of his individual interests and the greater are his

community interests. Carrying this to the extreme would become communism, where the community interests outweigh the individual interests almost to the latter's exclusion.

<sup>2</sup> The taking on of greater community interest proved to be the experience of the Israelites when their countrified national community during the period of the judges was changed to that of a national community organized under a human

king. Before the organization of the kingdom under Saul and then David, when their theocratic community responsibilities were not very large in number, the Israelites had much time to develop "what was right in their own eyes" as to their individual interests of personal pursuits. "In those days there was no king in Israel. What was right in his own eyes was what each one was accustomed to do." (Judg. 21:25, NW) The prophet Samuel foretold what increased interests or burdens of taxation and services to the king personally would be involved in such a kingdom government under an imperfect human king. (See 1 Samuel 8:10-18.) But in spite of Samuel's objection the Israelites pleaded for a kingdom government. And it came to be that increased organization under imperfect kingship was their lot for a period of 510 years.

<sup>3</sup> What is here demonstrated and proved by Israel's long experience with kings is that "ruler interests," good or bad, become

1. Why are persons desirous of living and working together in communities? Is this communism?

2. What was Israel's experience in becoming a kingdom?  
3. Explain Proverbs 29:2 as to "ruler interests" and "community interests."

part of the community's interests, bringing accountability to the community for good or bad. When local or national rulers use their ruling interests for the good of the people, community merit is built up and the community prospers in reward. But when the rulers use their powers for selfishness and badness, then community fault is quickly produced, resulting in much sorrow and oppression of the people. It is written: "When the righteous are in power, the people rejoice; but when the wicked bear rule, the people groan." (Prov. 29:2, AT) For King David's fault in having a census taken of Israel that was against God's will, Jehovah brought punishment of a pestilence upon the entire nation so that seventy thousand persons died. (2 Sam. 24:1, 10, 15) Later, of a king of the northern kingdom of Israel it was written: "And Omri kept doing what was bad in the eyes of Jehovah and came to do worse than all who were prior to him." (1 Ki. 16:25, NW) For a record of a good king we read: "In his days the land had no disturbance for ten years. And Asa proceeded to do what was good and right in the eyes of Jehovah his God." (2 Chron. 14:1, 2, NW) The reflection upon the entire community of good and bad rulership has been man's experience from ancient times to this very present hour, regardless of the level of ruling power on which the rulers have exercised their authorities.

<sup>4</sup> By a community is meant a social group of human creatures residing together in a general area and sharing a similar heritage. As to the old-world society the smallest form of the community is the family unit and from there the size rises in order to include the village, town or city, then the county, next the state or province, and finally the entire country or nation. The father would be considered

4. What and who are considered "communities" and "rulers" in the old-world society?

the ruler of the smallest community, the family unit, and from him rising up the scale to larger communities the rulers of these respective levels are the ones who considerably affect the community's goodness or badness. Where a member of a family commits a terrible crime, such a one brings disgrace upon the entire family and indeed upon the whole local village or town community. Where a national ruler like Hitler became bad, the entire country was punished and reproached.

<sup>5</sup> Old-world-society communities today have many different interests, some of which are as follows: providing for the general education of the children, postal service, police protection of persons and property, fire protection, building of roads, removal of sewage and refuse, promoting general health, operating of parks, preservation of natural resources, election of rulers, payment of taxes, taking general security measures (war), and many other governmental matters. Jehovah's witnesses still in the midst of the old-world society have certain obligations to perform in connection with those communities wherein they reside. (John 17:15) For example, they are fully law-abiding to local and national rules consistent with the Bible, obediently pay their taxes and publicly maintain the peace. They endeavor, however, to reduce their old-world community interests to a bare minimum. Why so?

<sup>6</sup> Because a New World society has come on the scene, of which Jehovah's witnesses are the members. They heed Jesus' counsel to "pay back, therefore, Caesar's things [governmental requirements] to Caesar, but God's things [divine requirements] to God." (Matt. 22:21, NW) God's things are based on his divine interests, which we ac-

5. Give examples of some of these old-world society interests. Do they bring obligations to Jehovah's witnesses?

6. Why do Jehovah's witnesses seek to reduce their old-world community interests to a minimum?

knowledge as being of supreme importance and higher than those of the local communities. From our study of the sacred Scriptures and from physical facts we see that the divine interests indicate the forming of such a New World society made up of Christian congregations. For this reason we are more concerned with congregational interests. These we shall now proceed to examine in some detail.

#### CONGREGATIONS OF NEW WORLD SOCIETY

<sup>7</sup> Up to the beginning of the year 1956 there were 16,044 congregations of Jehovah's witnesses established in 160 different lands. All together these thousands of congregations are brought into one worldwide community known as the New World society of Jehovah's witnesses. The central governing body is located in Brooklyn, New York, where the legal corporation known as the Watch Tower Bible & Tract Society of Pennsylvania is used to direct the global interests. From the headquarters the administration is directed through seventy-eight branch offices, which in turn supervise the individual congregations in their assigned territory.

<sup>8</sup> Each individual congregation forms a local community of Christian ministerial associates residing in the local area and having the same Christian training and background. Today as in Paul's time each congregation is made up of many individual members but working together as one entire body, each member making a highly necessary contribution to the organizational whole. (1 Cor. 12:14-25, NW) These congregations are organized according to the same pattern as the congregations of Christians in the first century. They have a theocratic form of government where all

the local servants are appointed for their good qualifications by the governing body of the New World society through the branch office. None of these servants (corresponding to rulers) are democratically elected to office. When appointed, they serve in their respective positions until others are assigned to take on the responsibilities. In fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy, "I will also make thy officers peace," the general leadership has been one of goodness, which has built up merit for the congregations and brought the reward of Jehovah's blessing. (Isa. 60:17, AS) The few servants who turn to a course of badness are quickly removed to prevent bringing in congregational contamination. However, when some of the congregation have followed the bad leader then those of the congregations have been disfellowshiped too by the New World society to avoid the spreading of community fault, or to keep the leaven of badness from affecting other congregational groups. The congregation must be kept clean, the servants and their associates. Now, then, what are some of the various congregational interests today and are they the same as those of the Christian congregations in the days of the apostles?

<sup>9</sup> A chief interest of these congregations is to assemble for joint worship of the living God Jehovah through Jesus Christ. Those assembling have been called out by Jehovah into a knowledge of the truth and to recognize Jesus Christ as their savior and King. Not any one can become an associate of these congregations. Rather only those who are morally and spiritually clean and who have dedicated themselves as Jehovah's witnesses. This is in harmony with Jesus' words: "No man can come to me unless the Father, who sent me, draws him, . . . It is written in the Prophets, 'And they will all be taught by Jehovah.' Every-

7. Describe the greater community of Jehovah's witnesses today.

8. How does Paul describe the local congregation? What kind of government do these congregations have today, and how does Isaiah 60:17 apply thereto?

9. Describe a chief interest of a congregation today.

one that has heard the Father's teaching and has learned comes to me." (John 6:44, 45, NW) Each week meetings are held where congregational prayers are offered and songs of praise to the living God are sung. (Acts 4:24) Sectional, regional, national and international assemblies are periodically held in worship of the true God in spirit and in truth.

<sup>10</sup> Another interest of the congregation is to take in life-giving knowledge of Jehovah God and Jesus Christ. (John 17:3, NW) At their weekly meetings the congregations make a study of the Scriptures and of the Bible study publications prepared by the Watch Tower Bible & Tract Society of Pennsylvania. A uniform spiritual feeding program is maintained to keep all the congregations advancing together world-wide in the course of Christian maturity. Their unitedly feeding together on God's Word, the Bible, enables Jehovah's holy spirit to serve as an organizational force to stimulate the minds of all present. For individual Christians to receive the guidance of God's holy spirit they must come together congregationally under community interests.—Matt. 18:20; John 14:26, NW.

<sup>11</sup> Additionally it is the purpose of each congregation to conduct a theocratic ministry school for the training of all its associates to improve their ministry, or, as Paul said, "with a view to the training of the holy ones for ministerial work." (Eph. 4:12, NW) The local congregations have also the outstanding interest of carrying out their commission to preach the good news of the established Kingdom. (Matt. 24:14) To accomplish this interest the congregation is organized for field-preaching service, having received an appointed territory in which to preach to the public from house to house. The preaching work is done in an orderly and systematic way.

10-12. Describe additional congregational interests.

All local associates co-operate toward carrying out this preaching service as a united congregation.

<sup>12</sup> The local congregation of Jehovah's witnesses is an object of attention and a spectacle to those on the outside. For this reason they have as their interest to "let your light shine before mankind, that they may see your right works and give glory to your Father who is in the heavens." (Matt. 5:16, NW) In this respect they fulfill Peter's words: "That you should declare abroad the excellencies of the one that called you out of darkness into his wonderful light." (1 Pet. 2:9, NW) It is in connection with this congregational interest that they delight to proclaim the greatness and excellencies of Jehovah's name. For this reason the congregation has a jealous interest to keep itself morally and spiritually clean beyond reproach to bear the name of the living God Jehovah properly.

<sup>13</sup> The congregations cannot take on any of the defiling interests, immoral practices or pagan customs of the old-world society. These are utterly rejected as unclean. Any who are guilty of misconduct as to sex relations, loose conduct in general, drunkenness, thievery, lying and defrauding are summarily cut off from the congregation by disfellowshiping to avoid community contamination. (Jude 4-10) No true Christian may have sex relations with any other than his marriage mate. Any other sex relations with the opposite sex naturally or with those of the same sex unnaturally are considered wicked, shocking and revolting. Such base practices are not a matter of private individual interest as some perverted ones try to claim, but since always two or more are involved in such acts these deeds are at once a violation of the congregational interests of moral cleanliness, requiring immediate disfellow-

13. What bad actions are against the congregation's interest to keep clean, and why? What Biblical examples are recalled?

shiping. (Rom. 1:26, 27, NW) Jehovah's witnesses remember the Biblical example where the tribe of Benjamin failed to cut away from their midst the sex criminals of Gibeah and thus brought community accountability or responsibility upon the entire tribe. The entire tribe was punished almost to the point of extermination, 25,000 men being put to death. (Judg. 19:1, 25, 27-30; 20:39-48) They also recall the case of the fornicator found in the Corinthian congregation, which brought divine displeasure for their failure to disfellowship until the apostle Paul urged such proper action immediately to save the entire congregation from total rejection. —1 Cor. 5:1-4.

<sup>14</sup> When one violates the community interest or pursues a course of badness with respect to the congregational interests he commits a fault by which, if it is not properly dealt with, the whole congregation will become contaminated and accountable for God's displeasure. The Bible illustration that a little leaven or yeast of badness will spoil the whole loaf or congregation is a true one; just as one bad apple in a basket, if not removed, will spoil all the apples in the basket. This requires the alert righteous-minded servants or rulers of the congregation to be quick to preserve the cleanliness of the congregation. Following are some more Biblical examples of where bad individuals brought congregational responsibility or accountability threatening punishment upon the entire group when the guilty ones were not removed at once.

—See Leviticus 20:1-5; Numbers 16:19-35; Deuteronomy 21:1-9; Joshua 7:1, 11-26.

#### BUILDING UP MERIT

<sup>15</sup> On the other hand, where faithful

members of the congregation uphold and advance the congregational interests in the course of goodness, then these are contributing toward the congregational merit that brings rewards of blessings, prosperity, expansion and happiness to all associated. Consider some interesting examples of congregational merit contributed by those who pursued a way of theocratic goodness. Isaiah prophesied that the righteousness of the faithful Jewish remnant established sufficient merit to warrant Jehovah's restoring Israel to the land of Judah for theocratic worship in 537 B.C. and not permitting Judah to lay destroyed forever like Sodom and Gomorrah. (Isa. 1:9; 10:22) Demonstrating the possibility of a meritorious righteous servant's saving an entire city Jeremiah records: "Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that doeth justly, that seeketh truth; and I will pardon her." (Jer. 5:1, AS) A similar illustration is recorded at Ezekiel 22:30.

<sup>16</sup> In the Greek Scriptures we have further discussions of community merit being established by servants of Jehovah. The righteousness of the apostle Paul produced sufficient merit for God to save the 276 passengers who were aboard the same ship Paul was on during his shipwreck experience. "Have no fear, Paul. You must stand before Caesar and, look! God has saved all your fellow voyagers for your sake." (Acts 27:24, 37, NW) Concerning the last days where we now are Jesus said: "Unless those days were cut short, no flesh would be saved; but on account of the chosen ones [the merit of the anointed remnant of Jehovah's witnesses who repented for their shortcomings in 1919] those days will be cut short."—Matt. 24:22, NW.

14. When one violates the community interest how is this viewed? What should be done about it, and why?  
 15, 16. (a) When one upholds the congregational interests, what happens? (b) Give Biblical examples of merit established.

<sup>17</sup> This study of congregational interests shows that it behooves all the associates of Jehovah's witnesses to follow a course that contributes goodness toward one's local congregation. When one becomes a member of the local congregation by association, he obtains delegated rights and duties as a minister of Jehovah. Therefore, you who are such faithful ministers, seek the local congregation's advancement, share in its preaching campaign, enlarge its reputation as being the local official representative of God's holy organization, keep the organization clean, live up to the exalted name of Jehovah that rests upon his witnesses and walk orderly as an example to all the new ones being brought into the local congregation. The congregation being united in love, Paul fittingly describes the organizational bearing of opposition and sharing of joys when he writes: "If one member suffers, all the other members suffer with it; or if a member is glorified, all the other members rejoice with it."—1 Cor. 12:26, NW.

<sup>18</sup> As a congregational minister of Jehovah, be determined individually never to contribute any badness to the congregation's theocratic record by any faulty course on your part. When one enters fellowship of a congregation of God's people he must answer for any failures to bear wisely any congregational interests. The congregation through its leaders or servants has the duty to reprimand any who step out of line from sharing the common interests in the right way. Otherwise, if no reproofs were made, the entire congregation would become contaminated by your evil. The servants themselves must be righteous and discharge their duty to safeguard the congregational interests with justice and mercy.

17, 18. (a) How should ministers of Jehovah's witnesses work together, and why? (b) What responsibilities have the servants as to congregational interests?

<sup>19</sup> By your consistent course of right doing demonstrate to the new ones how it is advisable to lower their degree of individual self-interests that they may have time to embrace the highly desirable congregational interests. Show how necessary it is to balance our own individual interests properly with the divine interests that must be brought into the picture as well as the congregational interests. Show them why it is that, when there is a disfellowshipping, it is for the congregational good and for maintaining its record of cleanliness with Jehovah God. Reason with them that it is the Biblical principle found at Deuteronomy 19:13 (NW) that is followed: "Your eye should not feel sorry for him, and you must clear away the guilt of innocent blood out of Israel, that you may have good." All evildoers must be ejected from the congregation as advised by Paul: "You hand such a man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, in order that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord."—1 Cor. 5:5, NW.

<sup>20</sup> Regardless of how upright and wholesome one may be in pursuing a full program of private individual interests he will not make the new world of righteousness. Jehovah God is not dealing with individuals as such. He has provided an organization on earth that is being trained to accept increased congregational interests. As the divine Kingdom government of heaven increases its influence on earth, more and more community interests will come to the New World society until after Armageddon all community interests on earth will come into its hands. (Isa. 9:7) As in the days of Noah and in the days of Moses, God is dealing with a congregational society of people. It is as a vast unified flock

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19. What can be demonstrated to newly interested ones, and how?
20. How is Jehovah dealing with people on earth today and in the future? What adjustments should be made in harmony with Matthew 11:29, 30?

of sheeplike ones that we are being led by the Right Shepherd Christ Jesus. We hear his voice, accept his kingly leadership and come into his foldlike organization. (Ezek. 37:24) So adjust your business and personal affairs, reduce your unnecessary individual interests, take on a balanced program of divine and congregational inter-

ests that will lead you on the way of life. Become yoked in harness with Christ Jesus, who lovingly said: "Take my yoke upon you and become my disciples, for I am mild-tempered and lowly in heart, and you will find refreshment for your souls. For my yoke is kindly and my load is light."—Matt. 11:29, 30, NW.

## the PRESIDENT'S VISIT to SINGAPORE and THAILAND

**B**IG things have taken place in the British colony of Singapore. War's scars are healed. All the streets are alive with business. Fine broad roads have been built, leading from the new modern airport; and in just ten minutes the two visitors from the Watch Tower Society's headquarters were in the branch office and missionary home at 33 Poole Road. During their stay many things needed to be checked in connection with the branch and how to expand the preaching work. One big problem considered was how to hold the interest of those who had studied with the missionaries and associated with the New World society. In past years many had dedicated their lives to Jehovah but then drifted back into the old world. It may be that some good-will persons, after coming to the point of making their dedication, were left too soon to stand on their own feet. The mature witnesses may have believed that since the newly interested ones had come to know the fundamentals of Bible teaching they now would continue to make progress without any assistance. Often publishers would quit studying with those who were now dedicated,

in order to look after other interested persons. However, those still in an immature state were not able to stand up under pressures and temptations of the old world. So the president of the Society gave good counsel to the missionaries and others, that they should keep on studying with the immature ones until they had finished the books "*Let God Be True*" and "*This Means Everlasting Life*", even though the person had dedicated himself to Jehovah and the doing of his will. Such helpful studies will enable those new in the truth to grow to full maturity and stand firm.

No one having dedicated himself to Jehovah God can ever let up in studying.

The time never comes when one knows it all. He must keep on preparing himself with the aid of the stronger brothers, to bear his own load of responsibility in due time. A number of those previously associated with the Society, whom the president had met there five years before, had drifted back to old-world living. To the missionaries this was disappointing, and they were very much concerned. However, the organization is still strong because many new ones have come in. But now it is the responsibility of those taking the lead to strengthen those within the organization so they will stand firm and endure even to the end of this system of things.

Arrangements had been made for an interview over Radio Malaya, and this was taken care of on Wednesday evening, March 28.

### NORTH INTO MALAYA

Crowded into the busy schedule was a trip by Brother Knorr and Brother Yaremchuk, the branch servant, to Kuala Lumpur. This is the capital of the Federation of Malaya, a dependency of the British Commonwealth of Nations. Since 1951 the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines have been banned in this country. By ad-

vance arrangement the Society's president now was to see the Minister of Home Affairs, Inche Bahaman bin Samsuddin, about having the restrictions lifted. When the plane in which the branch servant and the president were traveling arrived at Kuala Lumpur airport another plane had just come in, carrying the Chief Minister of the Federation. Consequently the airport was crowded with officials, movie cameramen and many of the public, all present to greet the Chief Minister. A royal welcome was given him on his return from Bangkok. And it was at this busy place that the two brothers met the government official they had come to see—the Minister of Home Affairs, and also Mr. Tan, secretary of the party in power, who had arranged for the interview. The four then got into a limousine and headed for town. On the way they found themselves in the midst of the Chief Minister's entourage, and it was impressive to see police and soldiers in line along the way, saluting the men in the cars as they passed.

Before long they reached the Home Affairs Minister's office and proceeded to get right down to business. The old file concerning banning of the Society's publications (which file had been built up during many years by the former British Colonial government) was brought out, and the Minister read aloud some of the accusations it contains against the Watch Tower Society and Jehovah's witnesses. One of the principal points raised was that Jehovah's witnesses would not obey all the laws of the land, but if those laws conflicted they would instead obey God's law, thus they would constitute a danger to the security of the country. The charge was made, too, that the witnesses attack other religions and creeds, and particularly that *The Watchtower* attacks the Islamic religion.

A very friendly discussion ensued between Brother Knorr and the two government officials. The Society's president had the opportunity to explain in detail the position of Jehovah's witnesses and the work of the Society. Stressed was the fact that the government never had found occasion to accuse Jehovah's witnesses of violating any of its laws, even though they do put God's law ahead of man's law. Also it was pointed out that anyone who lives by God's high principles of truth and righteousness would certainly never be found interfering with any government action or violating its laws of moral decency and conduct.

Furthermore, it was shown that Jehovah's witnesses never have been promoters or starters of any disturbances or riots anywhere. During the discussion the case was mentioned of the girl who was brought up as a Moslem but had been seized by the Catholics and taken to a Catholic institution. The child was of Catholic parents. But taking her into a Catholic institution caused a riot in the land. The riot was a result of different religious beliefs, and some were killed and many injured; yet the government never took occasion to ban the Catholic Church because of this incident.

Nevertheless, the Minister argued that such a disturbance might happen because we do not agree with other religious creeds. (This is the same argument that the British Colonial office has used all over the world. Jehovah's witnesses never have caused any disturbances or riots, but because they "might some day" they are banned or their publications are banned.) In reply it was shown that in the early days of Christianity the apostles went about preaching the resurrection of Christ Jesus and that 'there is no salvation in anyone else'—though government officials then insisted they had to stop teaching this doctrine. "And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." (Acts 4:12, 18-20) How strange it is that with only about fifteen of Jehovah's witnesses in all the Federation of Malaya they are considered a danger to the security of the country and are not allowed to distribute a few *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines to bring comfort and help to the people!

Brother Knorr explained that the expression of different ideas brings progress to the people of any nation. If there were never disagreement there would never be improvement of old ideas. If every religion had to stand still and no one were permitted to discuss doctrine or prove error, no progress would ever be made in understanding the true God. The Bible is a forward-looking book and stimulates progressive thinking. That is why Europe and America are the way they are today, because they broke away from the stagnated Roman Catholic system of things. They wanted to make progress and get away from the traditions of false worship they had been in for ages.

The Minister agreed that this was all right for educated people, but not for the people of Malaya, many of whom lack education.

Brother Knorr insisted this is the time for enlightenment and that truth should be allowed free circulation, not to cause disturbance but to help men seek the way of real life.

All in all it was a friendly discussion, and the facts were clearly set before the Minister as to the Society's position. It was shown that Jehovah's witnesses never have caused riots or disturbances anywhere in the world. They are not the instigators of trouble but have love for the people they serve in every land. It is the truth that makes one free and any people who want to be free love to allow the truth to enter in.

What the final outcome will be is not known. When Brother Knorr returned to Singapore he sent a letter to the Minister, having put into writing some of the things previously discussed and making a formal request for the lifting of the ban on the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines. It may take considerable letter writing and further discussion, we believe, to have the ban lifted. Malaya is a Moslem land and they do not like Christian beliefs to be spread freely.

#### SINGAPORE ASSEMBLY

The branch servant and Brother Knorr returned after dark that evening to Singapore. From the air, on that clear night, Singapore was a beautiful sight, with multicolored, sparkling lights of the city like a huge treasure chest full of precious jewels.

Friday, March 30, dawned with a clear blue sky over Jalan Besar Stadium where Jehovah's witnesses began their assembly. The temperature was about 90 degrees, but the slight breeze across the spacious football field helped to keep the speakers and audience relatively comfortable. At 4 p.m. the public meeting was to be held, with the discourse "Making All Mankind One Under Their Creator" to be delivered by Brother Knorr. There were 491 in attendance. It was an international audience with Chinese, Tamils, Sikhs, Eurasians, Indonesians and others, many in their colorful national dress. Some day soon all of these persons of good will will be made one under their Creator.

After this big first day the assembly moved

to the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's witnesses. Fine experiences were given at the convention as well as interesting talks. One Ceylonese brother recounted how he was born of Buddhist parents and ran away from home at thirteen to join a Hindu monastery in the Himalayas, where he lived with monks and learned the art of yoga. Not being satisfied after years of this training, he migrated to Malaya, where he met with different "Christian" sects, but still dressed with his long hair and the beard of the Sadhu (Hindu priest). After reading a single tract this brother's eyes were opened. He soon shaved his beard, cut his long hair and removed his flowing robes and quit using his "miraculous" powers. He is now dedicated to the service of the living God, Jehovah, and preaches the good news of Jehovah's established kingdom.

The Triumphant Kingdom assembly at Singapore brought abundant rich blessings to all those in attendance. Eleven persons of good will symbolized their dedication to Jehovah by water immersion. Among them were three young sisters from Penang in Malaya, who came into the truth on their own just by reading a book. They have made wonderful progress and during their one hour off at school each day they have gone out witnessing from house to house. It was a joy to have them at the assembly and to see their youthful zeal, as they ranged in age from fifteen to seventeen. The Singapore convention was a real success, and Jehovah's blessing was upon it.

Brothers Knorr and Adams were scheduled to leave Singapore for Bangkok Saturday, March 31, at 9:35 a.m. The president gave his final remarks to the conventioners at eight o'clock that morning and then learned that the flight was delayed. In fact, it was postponed several times during the day. Finally he spoke a second time, which meant that he had spoken four times in all to the assembly in addition to the public talk. Further delays kept the two brothers there all night and they did not get away until Sunday for the next stop, Bangkok, Thailand.

#### SIAMESE CONVENTION

Meantime the branch servant at Bangkok was very much excited. Already the travelers were a day late. The president of the Society



BANGKOK

was scheduled to speak at Chiengmai at four o'clock Sunday afternoon, but because the airplane was a day late it appeared impossible for him to get to Chiengmai in time for the public meeting. Early Sunday morning the branch servant sent a telegram to Chiengmai telling the brothers to put on a substitute speaker. When Brothers Adams and Knorr arrived at Bangkok at 1 p.m. they found that Brother Babinski had persuaded the Thai Airlines to hold up the 1 p.m. plane until they could clear customs and immigration and go through the regular formalities to get aboard. So at 1:20 the plane rolled down the runway and headed for Chiengmai. The three had much to say and, of course, there still was a little hope that should the plane make no stops en route to Chiengmai they might reach there by four o'clock. It proved to be a through plane and the group arrived at 3:40 in the afternoon. A car was at the airport to pick up the passengers and they reached the convention hall at ten minutes to four.

There were 348 in attendance to hear the talk "Making All Mankind One Under Their Creator" as it was interpreted into the Thai language. It was a thrilling day and Jehovah's witnesses and the missionaries in their midst were overjoyed that the brothers arrived on time for the public talk at least. The convention continued the next day with great enthusiasm and eighteen were baptized. There was an average of 173 of Jehovah's witnesses in attendance at this convention in the northern part of Thailand.

The day after the convention, while Brother Knorr was having a discussion with all the missionaries on their work and problems that afternoon, the telegram came, saying that Brothers Knorr and Adams would not reach Chiengmai in time for the public talk. It was just as well that the telegram had not gotten through, as everything went according to schedule.

In this country the Buddhist religion predominates, and it is not uncommon to find Buddhist priests in the meetings of Jehovah's witnesses. The Buddhists are in high hopes that things will take a big change for the better, as they believe that Buddha's prophecy of 2500 years comes to its fulfillment in 1957. Just what improvements will be made in the world in 1957 is not entirely clear, as there are different ideas put forth by the various priests, but 1957 appears to be their great year. So the mission-

aries have quite a difficult time convincing the people that the new world of righteousness of which Jehovah's witnesses speak is different from what the Buddhist priests talk about. But many persons are willing to listen and hear what the witnesses have to say about the kingdom of Jehovah God.

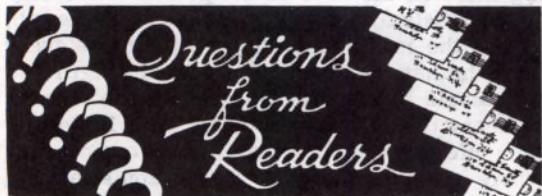
It is a pleasure to witness among these people. Approaching a typical little wooden or bamboo home built up on stilts, one climbs the stairs and then takes his shoes off before joining them on the floor of the porch, where they sit and listen as he talks to them at length, giving the message of hope. At almost every home he has opportunity to talk at length and the people listen with interest as the witness presents the sermon from the Thai Bible and then offers the publications. This is one country where it is possible to use the sermon at almost every home, even though in the next room one may see their Buddhist shrine with flowers and food set out on the altar. Some of the most zealous pioneers in the country have come from such a background to join with the New World society in announcing a real hope to the people.

During the stay in Chiengmai there was a big festival at the Buddhist temple and thousands turned out to enjoy it, with a carnival spirit. Vendors of many different foods appeased the appetites of the crowds while games of skill, music and dancing interested others. Finally in came a long, slow-moving procession from one of the neighborhood wats, bearing gifts for the temple. First came the priests bearing standards to lead the throng, followed by several men beating drums and metal pieces to attract attention; then the gracefully dancing temple girls moving to the rhythm of the drums, with a slow dance step. Prominent in the procession was the money tree with leaves of money—the contribution of the people to their temple. This was followed by a float illustrating an event in Buddha's life as it was recounted in chanted verse by the singer who followed in a little cart. The float was pulled along by a number of the people who took a place on the rope in front of it while a crowd of others from the wat brought up the rear of this typical religious procession. It would take a long time to convert all these people to Christian belief. It could never be done; for only those with a sheeplike disposition actually will pull away and avoid being slain at Armageddon.

At the next stop, Bangkok, time was spent

to check the branch office of Thailand and see what could be done to help advance the work of Jehovah's witnesses throughout the country. On Wednesday evening Brother Knorr spoke to fifty-seven of the local congregation. Wonderful improvements have been made in the city of Bangkok since Brother Knorr's last visit there. It is good to see the advancement made by the country in hygiene and liv-

ing conditions in this short period of time. But it was especially good to see the new peak of publishers in Thailand and to observe that the missionaries were working diligently on learning the language and were able to speak in the tongue of the people. Arrangements were made to open up new territory, sending missionaries in to take care of the interest and establish congregations.



- A person I was preaching to insisted that such things as airplanes were here long ago, and as proof she quoted Ecclesiastes 1:9 about there being no new thing under the sun. What is the correct understanding of this text? —D. M., United States.

After years of observation and profound meditation King Solomon wrote under inspiration by God concerning the repetition of natural events: "Vanity of vanities! All is vanity. What does man gain by all the toil at which he toils under the sun? A generation goes, and a generation comes, but the earth remains for ever. The sun rises and the sun goes down, and hastens to the place where it rises. The wind blows to the south, and goes round to the north; round and round goes the wind, and on its circuits the wind returns. All streams run to the sea, but the sea is not full; to the place where the streams flow, there they flow again. All things are full of weariness; a man cannot utter it; the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing. What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done; and there is nothing new under the sun."—Eccl. 1:2-9, RS.

In the above the inspired writer describes the viewpoint, not of exuberant youth or of appreciative servants of Jehovah, but of the aging person alienated from God. It is the outlook that gradually comes over persons of this old system of things as time overtakes them, weakens them, wears them down. They see their generation going out of existence and a new one coming in to take their place on the earth

that remains forever. When they were young with their life span ahead of them it looked long, but now that it is nearly spent and they look back on it in their old age it seems to have been no more than a breath. The literal meaning of the Hebrew word translated "vanity" is "breath," and it is used to proclaim that this life is as fleeting and transitory as a breath and that the toil of the man alienated from God is futile, lacking in any abiding gain for him. His generation is just one of many, preceded by undetermined ones and to be followed by more, just one of a long repetition of generations coming and going on an earth that endures.

As analogies to this repetition the inspired writer points to the sun that rises, sets, and hurries around to where it will rise again; to the winds that blow and circle and return to repeat their circuits again and again; to the streams that run to the sea without filling it because water is evaporated from it and carried inland by wind and condensed as clouds that shed rain to replenish the rivers and keep them running to the sea. Throughout their life persons see this repetition of natural events, and as they become old and energies wane, eyes dim, ears dull, joints stiffen and the other senses fade, they lose the zest for living they had in youth, and the repeating days and nights, worries and toils, fill them with an unutterable weariness, a sense of frustration and futility. Their eye is not satisfied with seeing this endless repetition, nor is their ear satisfactorily filled with hearing it over and over again. It is in this setting of natural events, within the scope of these narrated cycles in nature, that the statement occurs that there is nothing new under the sun. We cannot properly take the statement out of its setting and apply it to everything. There are new things invented and made but they follow the principles which God has already established

and applied in nature and there is nothing new in the cycles in nature Solomon outlined.

And at the time of writing Solomon was inspired and he did not have this pessimistic, futile outlook himself, as some scholars claim. He did not consider godly works a vanity, but summed up his writing thus: "The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil." (Eccl. 12:13, 14, RS) Work done in obedience to the commands of Jehovah would bring a judgment of approval from God. But toil for material things rather than spiritual treasure is vain, and this is realized by weary old persons who have so spent their lives alienated from Jehovah God. Even living becomes a chore to them, the natural cycle of events becomes wearisome to them.

However, in the new world the repetition of the natural cycle of events will not be vain or wearying. Exhausted old persons will not exist then, for all the obedient will return to the days of their youth and each new day will be viewed with the zest of the young. Persons will have the spring of youth and the knowledge of the old, the wisdom of gray hair with-

out the gray hair, the experience of the aged without their aches. No more will youthfulness be limited to the young, but it will be lavished on those with the maturity and wisdom to use it perfectly. No feelings of frustration and futility will mar the recurring days and nights and seasons, the natural cycles of wind and rain and sun.

There need be none even now. If we appreciate Jehovah, his goodness as Creator, and see in natural phenomena his glory and power, we delight in each new day and night. Our view even now is like the psalmist's, and not that of an old person alienated from God: "The heavens proclaim God's splendour, the sky speaks of his handiwork; day after day takes up the tale, night after night makes him known; their speech has never a word, not a sound for the ear, and yet their message spreads the wide world over, their meaning carries to earth's end. See, there is the sun's pavilion pitched! He glows like a bridegroom leaving his chamber, exults like a hero to run his course; he sets out from one end of heaven, and round he passes to the other, missing nothing with his heat!" Jehovah's wonderful invisible qualities are clearly seen reflected in his visible creations.—Ps. 19:1-6, Mo; Rom. 1:20.

### *'Originally No Clergy-Laity Distinction'*

Each year many Protestant churches in the United States have what is called "Laymen's Sunday," on which a layman shares the pulpit with the clergyman. Commenting on this clergy-laity distinction on such a Sunday, Dr. Sockman, one of America's foremost Protestant clergymen, pointed out that "originally there was no distinction between clergy and laity." Dr. Sockman had previously observed that the activities of the laymen were needed to supplement "the declining effectiveness of clerical preaching." He urged laymen to have a part by preaching to their friends, because "there is something disintegrating about hearing without doing," to have our emotions moved "without acting" tends to make those emotions "flabby." All very true, Dr. Sockman, but so long as the clergy-laity distinction remains, and the laity pay the clergy to do the preaching in spite of its ineffectiveness, there will be little preaching by the laity. Since originally there was no clergy-laity distinction,

why not drop it and go back to the apostolic custom of having all preach and that without remuneration?

#### *"Abolish the Laity"?*

That it is possible for a Labor leader to give good advice to clergymen is seen from the following: Albert Whitehouse, an official of the United Steelworkers of America (CIO), was a guest speaker at the American Baptist Convention held at Atlantic City, New Jersey. Expressing his concern over the fact that so many of those who join a church do not remain with it, he suggested: "Perhaps we should abolish the laity and all become preachers of our faith. We should move out of the church building and into the community." Could it be that Mr. Whitehouse has learned that Jehovah's witnesses have been doing that very thing for many years, which in part accounts for their remarkable increase?

“WATCHTOWER” STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

## "WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

**August 19: The Divine Interests, and Individual Human Interests. ¶ 1-18. Page 428.**

**August 26: Individual Human Interests, ¶ 19-21, and Community or Congregational Interests. Page 435.**

vv CHECK YOUR MEMORY vv

**After reading this issue of "The Watchtower", do you remember—**

- ✓ How to stop a vicious cycle of evil? P. 419, ¶1.
  - ✓ What the Bible means when it speaks of the earth's being destroyed? P. 421, ¶4.
  - ✓ What marvelous event will follow the present world's end? P. 424, ¶1.
  - ✓ Why we should search for precise answers to religious questions? P. 426, ¶1.
  - ✓ Why it is wrong to refuse to discuss religion? P. 427, ¶1.
  - ✓ Which of God's interests really affect men today? P. 430, ¶9.
  - ✓ Whether it is wrong to love oneself? P. 432, ¶9.
  - ✓ Why the real Christian must sacrifice many worldly interests? P. 435, ¶18.
  - ✓ Why Jehovah's witnesses reduce their old-world community interests to a bare minimum? P. 437, ¶6.
  - ✓ What a chief interest of the Christian congregation today is? P. 438, ¶9.
  - ✓ How newly dedicated people can be helped to hold onto their marvelous privileges? P. 442, ¶1.
  - ✓ Why religious discussion is a good thing? P. 443, ¶4.
  - ✓ What can prevent your life from becoming vain and wearisome? P. 447, ¶1.