

October 1, 1986



The Watchtower

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom



Daniel's Prophecy

- Dreams That
Affect You





The Watchtower®

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October 1, 1986
Vol. 107, No. 19

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THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER" is to exalt Jehovah God as the Sovereign of the universe. It keeps watch on world events as they fulfill Bible prophecy. It comforts all peoples with the good news that God's Kingdom will soon destroy those who oppress their fellowmen and that it will turn the earth into a paradise. It encourages faith in the now-reigning King, Jesus Christ, whose shed blood opens the way for mankind to gain eternal life. "The Watchtower," published by Jehovah's Witnesses continuously since 1879, is nonpolitical. It adheres to the Bible as its authority.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

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Songs to Be Used: 4, 195.

Average Printing Each Issue: 11,630,000

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20 cents (U.S.) a copy

The Bible translation used is the "New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures," unless otherwise indicated.

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Printed in U.S.A.

The Watchtower (ISSN 0043-1087) is published semimonthly for \$4.00 (U.S.) per year by Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania, 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201. Second-class postage paid at Brooklyn, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices.

Postmaster: Send address changes to Watchtower, Wallkill, N.Y. 12589.

Published by

**Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society
of Pennsylvania**

25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201, U.S.A.

Frederick W. Franz, President

Daniel's Prophecy *Dreams That Affect You*

"You know, I turn back to your ancient prophets in the Old Testament and the signs foretelling Armageddon, and I find myself wondering if—if we're the generation that's going to see that come about. I don't know if you've noted any of those prophecies lately, but believe me, they certainly describe the times we're going through."—U.S. President Ronald Reagan.

PRESIDENT Reagan is not the only person who has wondered whether the times in which we are living are the ones foretold in Bible prophecies. Millions of others have also been struck by the way present world conditions correspond with Scriptural prophecies. These prophecies, however, foretell not only an unprecedented time of distress but a righteous new system of things that will follow immediately.

This article opens a series, spanning four successive issues of *The Watchtower*, designed to familiarize you with one such ancient prophet, whose name was Daniel. You may know of him. He was a Jew of noble birth. While still a youth, Daniel was transported to Babylon, where he was educated in the court of Nebuchadnezzar, the second king of the Neo-Babylonian Empire. This was at the end of the seventh century B.C.E., before the destruction of Jerusalem. Daniel remained in captivity until Babylon's fall in 539 B.C.E., after which he served in the court of the early Medo-Persian rulers. During his exile he interpreted dreams and had inspired visions that affect our day. Yes, you and your family are involved in what Daniel foretold.

Prophetic Dreams and Visions

The dreams and visions of the book of Daniel are, in fact, short-range and long-

range prophecies. They are world history written in advance. They give forevisions of the power struggle of men, dynasties, and political empires from Daniel's time down through history until "the time of the end."—Daniel 8:17, 19.

The fulfillment of the short-term prophecies should inspire our confidence in the long-range prophecies that reach down to our time. What are some of these short-range predictions?

One was a dream about a great tree that was cut down and banded for "seven times," or years, before being allowed to sprout again. (Daniel 4:10-17) In its short-term fulfillment this prophecy applied to King Nebuchadnezzar, who had the dream. Just one year later, this ruler was 'cut down,' apparently by mental illness. For seven years he conducted himself like a beast of the field. Then, "at the end of the days" predicted, Nebuchadnezzar recovered his reason and his throne. (Daniel 4:28-37) According to *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, ancient sources indicate that Nebuchadnezzar did become sick toward the end of his reign. But this dream also had a long-range fulfillment, as a later article in this series will show.

Another short-range prophecy in the book of Daniel is provided by the miraculous handwriting on the wall of the

banquet hall where Nebuchadnezzar's grandson Belshazzar and his princes were feasting. (Daniel, chapter 5) They were profaning the sacred vessels taken from the temple of Jehovah in Jerusalem. Under inspiration, Daniel interpreted that message of divine judgment. And in fulfillment, "that very night" Babylon fell and "Belshazzar the Chaldean king was killed," as confirmed by Greek historian Xenophon. (Daniel 5:30) But today there is handwriting on the wall for the present wicked system of things. This, also, will be explained in an article of this series.

Unsealed at "the Time of the End"

Toward the end of his prophetic book, Daniel recorded this message that he received from an angel: "As for you, O Daniel, make secret the words and seal up the book, until the time of the end. Many will

rove about, and the true knowledge will become abundant."—Daniel 12:4.

Today "the true knowledge" of the fulfillment of Bible prophecy has indeed become abundant. This increased understanding has convinced millions of serious Bible students that we are truly living at "the time of the end" and that God's Kingdom of righteousness is near. (Daniel 2:44) Showing the relevance of the book of Daniel in this respect, the *Soncino Books of the Bible* states: "The ultimate triumph of righteousness, with its sequel in the establishment of the Kingdom of God, is fundamental in *Daniel*."

Do you hope for "the ultimate triumph of righteousness"? If so, the prophetic dreams and visions of Daniel are of vital concern to you. The following article will acquaint you with some of these and will present evidence proving that Daniel is an authentic book of prophecy.

Daniel

An Authentic Book of Prophecy

THE Bible record tells us: "In the first year of Belshazzar the king of Babylon, Daniel himself beheld a dream and visions of his head upon his bed. At that time he wrote down the dream itself. The complete account of the matters he told."—Daniel 7:1.

It was in the second half of the sixth century B.C.E. that Daniel wrote down this and other dreams and visions that affect us today. We have "the complete account" of such visions in the prophetic book of Daniel.

An Authentic Prophet

Christ himself bore witness that Daniel was a prophet. Interestingly, Jesus did so in his own prophecy on the sign of his "presence and of the conclusion of the system of things." He thus projected the complete fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy down to our day, when we are witnessing the various elements of the sign, such as international wars, food shortages, earthquakes, and worldwide pangs of distress.—Matthew 24:3-8, 15.

Jesus stated: "Many false prophets will

arise and mislead many; . . . this good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come. Therefore, when you catch sight of the disgusting thing that causes desolation, as spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in a holy place, (let the reader use discernment,) then let those in Judea begin fleeing to the mountains. . . . Truly I say to you that this generation will by no means pass away until all these things occur.”—Matthew 24:11-34.

The fact that Jesus warned that there would be false prophets just before he referred his disciples to “Daniel the prophet” proves that he held Daniel to be a true prophet of God. We have noted in the previous article that some of Daniel’s inspired prophetic utterances, such as those foretelling Nebuchadnezzar’s temporary insanity and the fall of Babylon, were fulfilled during Daniel’s lifetime. But Daniel also foretold things that would occur centuries later. What are some of the long-range prophecies written in the book of Daniel?

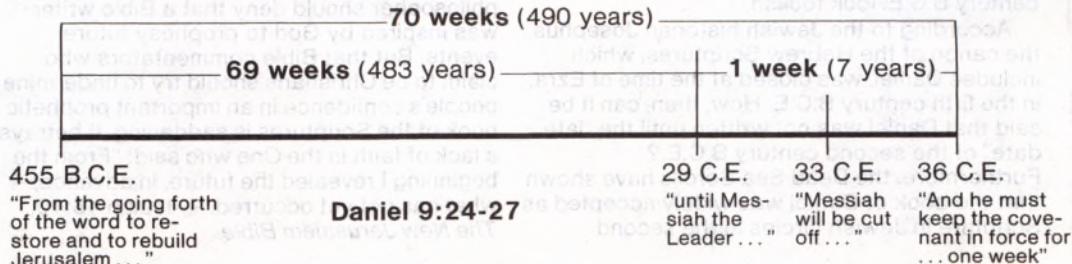
Messiah’s Coming and Death

A prophecy that definitely shows Daniel to be an authentic prophet is known as the 70 prophetic weeks. It reads, in part: “There are seventy weeks that have been determined upon your people and upon your holy city, in order to terminate the transgression, and to finish off sin, and to

make atonement for error . . . And you should know and have the insight that from the going forth of the word to restore and to rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Leader, there will be seven weeks, also sixty-two weeks [making 69 in all]. . . . And after the sixty-two weeks [that is, 7 + 62, or after the 69th week] Messiah will be cut off . . . And he must keep the covenant in force for the many for one week [the 70th]; and at the half of the week he will cause sacrifice and gift offering to cease.”—Daniel 9:24-27.

Many Jewish, Catholic, and Protestant Bible scholars agree that the “weeks” of this prophecy are weeks of years. The *Revised Standard Version*, Ecumenical Edition, reads: “Seventy weeks of years are decreed concerning your people.” Those 490 years began in 455 B.C.E. when Nehemiah was authorized by Persian king Artaxerxes “to restore and to rebuild Jerusalem.” (Nehemiah 2:1-8) Sixty-nine weeks of years later, that is, in 29 C.E., Jesus was baptized and anointed, becoming the Christ, or the Anointed One, the Messiah. “At the half of the [70th] week,” in 33 C.E., he was “cut off.” His sacrificial death made atonement for the sins of mankind, thus causing the animal sacrifices under the Law of Moses “to cease.”*

* For further details on this prophecy, see chapter 7 of the book *“Let Your Kingdom Come,”* published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.



Because of this reliable prophecy, first-century Jewish people "knew that the seventy weeks of years fixed by Daniel were drawing to a close; nobody was surprised to hear John the Baptist announce that the kingdom of God had drawn near."

—*Manuel Biblique*, by Bacuez and Vigouroux.

Beastlike World Powers

Another long-range prophecy, of utmost importance to people living today, foretold

THE "LATE-DATE" THEORY

THE Bible attributes the book of Daniel to the prophet of that name, which would locate the writing of this book in the sixth century B.C.E. (Daniel 7:1) But the prophecies it contains are so astounding that many have doubted that they were written before the events foretold. Some non-Christians, and even many Bible commentators who call themselves Christians, have cast doubt on the authenticity of the book of Daniel. They prefer the so-called late-date, or Maccabean-date, theory, originally advanced by a third-century C.E. anti-Christian philosopher named Porphyry. What are the arguments in support of this theory, and what are they worth?

On the premise that all prophecy is impossible, Porphyry asserted that the book bearing Daniel's name was actually written by an unknown Jew during the Maccabean period, in the second century B.C.E., that is, after many of the events foretold in Daniel had taken place. He speculated that the impostor who wrote in the name of Daniel did so in order to bolster the morale of the Jews at the time of the Maccabean revolt against the Seleucids in the second century B.C.E. But can the respectful and nonviolent conduct of Daniel and his three Hebrew companions in Babylon be considered in any way as an incitement to armed revolt? Absolutely not. (Daniel 1:8; 2:49; 3:16-18, 30) The appearance of "Messiah the Leader" exactly on time in 29 C.E., at the conclusion of the 69 "weeks" of years of Daniel 9:25, also makes Porphyry's claims of the second century B.C.E. look foolish.

According to the Jewish historian Josephus, the canon of the Hebrew Scriptures, which includes Daniel, was closed at the time of Ezra, in the fifth century B.C.E. How, then, can it be said that Daniel was not written until the "late date" of the second century B.C.E.? Furthermore, the Dead Sea Scrolls have shown that the book of Daniel was widely accepted as Scripture in Jewish circles in the second

century B.C.E. Would this have been likely if this book had been a contemporary work?

Another argument used by Porphyry and many higher critics is that the book of Daniel contains historical inaccuracies. Their theory is that Daniel was written in the second century B.C.E. But at that time, discerning Jews were rejecting the First Book of Maccabees as unfit for inclusion in the Scripture canon, even though they considered it to be historically accurate. Educated Jews, who had access to the writings of such secular historians as Herodotus, would certainly have rejected the book of Daniel if it had contained historical errors. Moreover, archaeological discoveries have confirmed the existence of Belshazzar and other details in Daniel that Porphyry and many higher critics held to be inaccurate.

With regard to Porphyry's accusation that Daniel's prophecies were written after the events foretold, Philip R. Davies, of the Department of Biblical Studies, University of Sheffield, England, writes: "This is a sorry verdict on the book of Daniel as largely a deliberate fraud perpetrated on a (supposedly) gullible audience to serve, as it were, a meritorious end by untruthful means . . . I find it difficult to ascribe such gullibility to the original readers of the book. If there is gullibility in this case, it is more probably on the part of rationalistic critics."—*Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*, Issue 17, 1980.

It is hardly surprising that a neo-Platonic philosopher should deny that a Bible writer was inspired by God to prophesy future events. But that Bible commentators who claim to be Christians should try to undermine people's confidence in an important prophetic book of the Scriptures is saddening. It betrays a lack of faith in the One who said: "From the beginning I revealed the future, in advance, what has not yet occurred."—Isaiah 46:10, *The New Jerusalem Bible*.

a succession of world powers, symbolized by fearsome beasts, that would have to make way for God's Kingdom.

Daniel related: "I happened to be beholding in my visions during the night . . . And four huge beasts were coming up out of the sea, each one being different from the others. The first one was like a lion . . . And, see there! another beast, a second one, it being like a bear. . . . And, see there! another beast, one like a leopard . . . After this I kept on beholding in the visions of the night, and, see there! a fourth beast, fearsome and terrible and unusually strong. . . . As for these huge beasts, because they are four, there are four kings that will stand up from the earth. But the holy ones of the Supreme One will receive the kingdom, and they will take possession of the kingdom for time indefinite."

—Daniel 7:2-18.

That these beasts represent world powers is evident from another vision Daniel had. Explaining this vision, he wrote: "The ram that you saw possessing the two horns stands for the kings of Media and Persia. And the hairy he-goat stands for the king of Greece."—Daniel 8:20, 21.

Similarly, the four beasts of Daniel chapter 7 symbolize four world powers dating from Daniel's day and onward, up until the time for the setting up of God's Kingdom. Daniel lived past the fall of the Babylonian World Power (the lion) and into the start of its successor, Medo-Persia (the bear). Daniel's long-range prophecy foretold Medo-Persia's fall before Greece (the leopard), which in turn would be replaced by "a fourth beast," the Roman Empire and its outgrowth, the Anglo-American World Power.*

* For a detailed explanation of this prophecy, see chapters 6 and 7 of the book *Our Incoming World Government—God's Kingdom*, published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.



Daniel accurately foretold the succession of world powers, all of which have shed blood like wild beasts in their lust for world hegemony. Likewise, the righteous Kingdom that he foretold will shortly replace present-day political powers. In a vision, Daniel saw "the Ancient of Days," Jehovah God, give the "son of man," Jesus the Messiah, "rulership and dignity and kingdom, that the peoples, national groups and languages should all serve even him." Will this provide a lasting solution to mankind's problems? Yes, for Jesus' rulership is here described as "an indefinitely lasting rulership that will not pass away, and his kingdom one that will not be brought to ruin."—Daniel 7:13, 14; compare Matthew 16:27, 28; 25:31.

The short-term and long-term prophecies that have briefly been considered in these two articles are merely a sample of the dreams, visions, and prophecies contained in Daniel. These examples are evidence that Daniel is an authentic book of prophecy—history written in advance. The fulfillment of these prophecies continues into the 20th century, and they provide a wonderful hope, as succeeding issues of this magazine will explain.

Who Are Truly Happy?

EVERYONE wants to be happy. Realizing this, Jesus begins his Sermon on the Mount by describing those who are truly happy. As we can imagine, this immediately captures the attention of his vast audience. And yet his opening words must seem contradictory to many.

Directing his comments to his disciples, Jesus begins: "Happy are you poor, because yours is the kingdom of God. Happy are you who hunger now, because you will be filled. Happy are you who weep now, because you will laugh. Happy are you whenever men hate you . . . Rejoice in that day and leap, for, look! your reward is great in heaven."

This is Luke's account of the introduction of Jesus' sermon. But according to Matthew's record, Jesus also

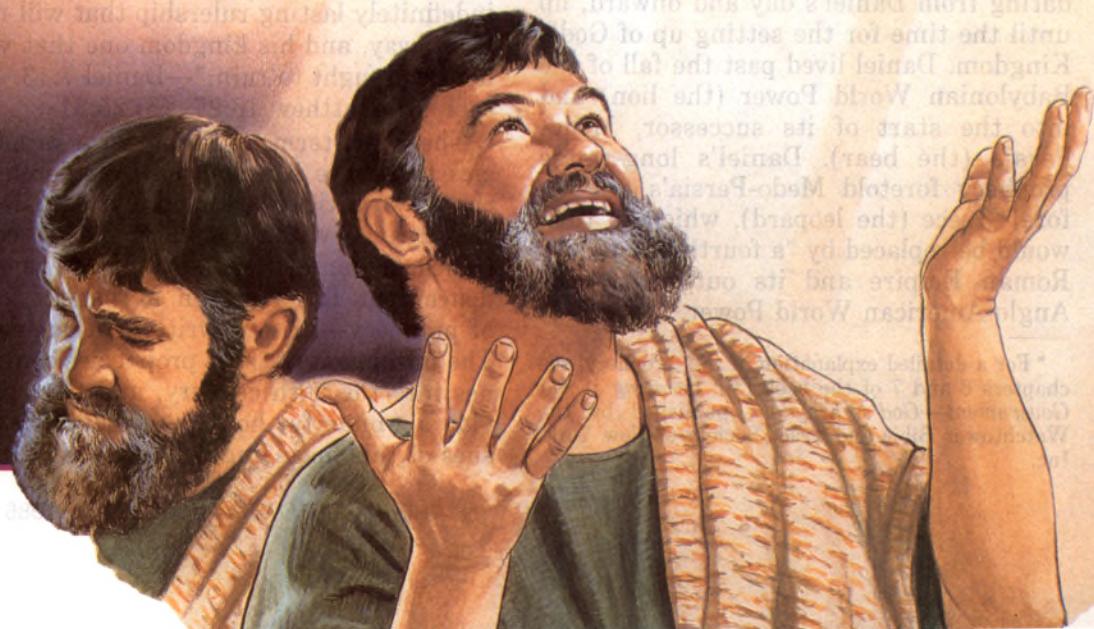


says that the mild-tempered, the merciful, the pure in heart, and the peaceable are happy. These are happy, Jesus notes, because they will inherit the earth, they will be shown mercy, they will see God, and they will be called sons of God.

What Jesus means by being happy, however, is not simply being jovial or mirthful, as when one is having fun. True happiness is deeper, carrying the thought of contentment, a sense of satisfaction and fulfillment in life.

So those who are truly happy, Jesus shows, are people who recognize their spiritual need, are saddened by their sinful condition, and come to know and serve God. Then, even if they are hated or persecuted for doing God's will, they are happy because they know they are pleasing God and will receive his reward of everlasting life.

However, many of Jesus' listeners, just like some people today, believe that being prosperous and enjoying pleasures is what makes a person happy. Jesus knows otherwise. Drawing a con-





trast that must surprise many of his listeners, he says:

"Woe to you rich persons, because you are having your consolation in full. Woe to you who are filled up now, because you will go hungry. Woe, you who are laughing now, because you will mourn and weep. Woe, whenever all men speak well of you, for things like these are what their forefathers did to the false prophets."

What does Jesus mean? Why does having riches, laughingly pursuing pleasures, and enjoying the plaudits of men bring woe? It is because when a person has and cherishes these things, then service to God, which alone brings true happiness, is excluded from his life. At the same time, Jesus did not mean that simply being poor, hungry, and mournful makes a person happy. Often, however, such disadvantaged persons may respond to Jesus' teachings, and they thereby are blessed with true happiness.

Next, addressing his disciples, Jesus says: "You are the salt of the earth." He does not mean, of course, that they

literally are salt. Rather, salt is a preservative. A large heap of it lay near the altar at Jehovah's temple, and officiating priests used it to salt the offerings.

Jesus' disciples are "the salt of the earth" in that they have a preserving influence on people. Indeed, the message they bear will preserve the lives of all who respond to it! It will bring into the lives of such persons the qualities of permanence, loyalty, and faithfulness, preventing any spiritual and moral decay in them.

"You are the light of the world," Jesus tells his disciples. A lamp is not put under a basket but is set on a lampstand, so Jesus says: "Likewise let your light shine before men." Jesus' disciples do this by their public witnessing, as well as by serving as shining examples of conduct that accords with Bible principles. **Luke 6:20-26; Matthew 5:3-16.**

- ♦ Who are truly happy, and why?
- ♦ Who receive woe, and why?
- ♦ How are Jesus' disciples "the salt of the earth" and "the light of the world"?



Comfort From the God of Peace

"Keep comforting one another with these words."

—1 THESSALONIANS 4:18.



PAUL, the apostle, was keenly desirous that the Christian congregation should enjoy peace. Thus, 13 of his letters, as preserved for us in the inspired Scriptures, open with a petition that those addressed may enjoy peace from God. For example, to the fledgling congregation in Thessalonica, Paul writes: "May you have undeserved kindness and peace." Toward the end of that same letter, he petitions: "May the very God of peace sanctify you completely. And sound in every respect may the spirit and soul and body of you brothers be preserved in a blameless manner at the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ."—1 Thessalonians 1:1; 5:23.

² Paul and his companions had not spared themselves in 'laboring and toiling'

1. What petitions by Paul show his interest in peace?
2. (a) What kind of concern did Paul display toward the congregation? (b) How may Christian elders today follow Paul's example?

among those new believers. Said Paul: "We became gentle in the midst of you, as when a nursing mother cherishes her own children. So, having a tender affection for you, we were well pleased to impart to you, not only the good news of God, but also our own souls, because you became beloved to us." Can we not sense in those words the intimate concern, the genuine, deep-seated love that Paul felt for that congregation? Indeed, it is a pattern of the kind of love that Christian elders display in some 50,000 congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses around the earth today.—1 Thessalonians 2:7-9; John 13:34, 35; 15:12-14.

³ The Tempter, Satan, had brought tribulations upon those Thessalonian Christians. So Paul sent Timothy to them, in order 'to make them firm and comfort

3. (a) How was Timothy able to benefit the Thessalonian congregation? (b) This corresponds to what today?

them in behalf of their faith.' Timothy returned to Paul in Athens with a glowing report about their faithfulness and love. All were greatly comforted to learn of one another's faith and integrity, and they continued to supplicate God to make up any lack. (1 Thessalonians 3:1, 2, 5-7, 10) This, too, reflects the theocratic arrangement today, with traveling overseers building up the congregations, even where Jehovah's Witnesses serve under ban or bitter persecution.—Isaiah 32:1, 2.

'At His Presence'

⁴ The apostle Paul concludes this part of his letter with the petition: "May the Lord cause you to increase, yes, make you abound, in love to one another and to all, even as we also do to you; to the end that he may make your hearts firm, unblamable in holiness before our God and Father at the presence of our Lord Jesus with all his holy ones."—1 Thessalonians 3:12, 13.

⁵ Paul was here looking far into the future, to the time of Jesus' "presence and of the conclusion of the system of things" when "the Son of man arrives in his glory, and all the angels with him." Our heavenly King arrived in 1914. From his glorious invisible throne, Jesus is now judging the nations and peoples of earth, separating out humble, sheeplike humans for preservation through the "great tribulation" and for everlasting life in a paradise earth.—Matthew 24:3-21; 25:31-34, 41, 46.

Orders for Our Good

⁶ Are you one who is reaching out for that goal of everlasting life? If so, you must heed what Paul here writes to the Thessalonians: "Finally, brothers, we re-

4, 5. (a) What petition does Paul here make, and why should it be of special interest to us now? (b) Why is our day of particular significance?

6. What exhortation of Paul must we now heed?

quest you and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, just as you received the instruction from us on how you ought to walk and please God, just as you are in fact walking, that you would keep on doing it more fully. For you know the orders we gave you through the Lord Jesus." (1 Thessalonians 4:1, 2) What are some of "the orders" that Paul here emphasizes?

⁷ The first 'order' relates to good morals. Paul states forthrightly: "This is what God wills, the sanctifying of you, that you abstain from fornication; that each one of you should know how to get possession of his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in covetous sexual appetite such as also those nations have which do not know God." Happily, we have come to "know" God and his Son, Jesus Christ, and are reaching out for everlasting life. How shameful it would be if we were to let ourselves be dragged back into the worldly mire of immorality! Sad to say, some have survived years in concentration camps and prisons, or spent a lifetime in zealous missionary service, only to let the Tempter later catch them off guard as to morals. Having received God's holy spirit, may we never 'grieve' it through sexual misconduct!—1 Thessalonians 4:3-8; John 17:3; 1 Corinthians 10:12, 13; Ephesians 4:30.

⁸ Paul's next 'order' is with respect to *phil-a-del-phi'a*, "brotherly love." (1 Thessalonians 4:9, 10) This is a special manifestation of the principled love, *a-ga'pe*, that Paul also warmly recommends here in verse 9, as well as in chapter 3, verses 6 and 12. *Phil-a-del-phi'a* is a very intimate affection, such as evidently existed between Jesus and Peter, and between David and Jonathan. (John 21:15-17;

7. (a) What important 'order' is here given? (b) Having received God's spirit, why must we never let down our guard?

8, 9. (a) What is "brotherly love"? (b) How may we cultivate such love, and with what benefit?

1 Samuel 20:17; 2 Samuel 1:26) It can be added to *a·ga'pe* in building a close companionship, as seen, for example, in the mutual joy of association that many of Jehovah's Witnesses find together in the pioneer ministry and other theocratic activity.

⁹ Says Paul: "Go on doing it in fuller measure." We can always broaden out in our brotherly love. Especially does this fine quality overflow when elders and ministerial servants take the lead in zealous Kingdom service. When all in the congregation busy themselves in 'seeking first the Kingdom,' differences due to human imperfection, personality clashes, and similar problems become secondary. Let us always keep our eyes on the goal!—Matthew 6:20, 21, 33; 2 Corinthians 4:18.

¹⁰ Paul here ties in another 'order'—that we make it our aim to live quietly, mind our own business, and work with our hands. As we thus 'walk decently' in our daily lives, displaying both principled love and brotherly affection, all our needs will be supplied.—1 Thessalonians 4:11, 12; John 13:35; Romans 12:10-12.

Comforted by the Resurrection Hope

¹¹ The apostle refers next to the grand hope of the resurrection. But why should Paul introduce this topic? He wanted to strengthen his brothers to endure the persecutions that were coming their way. They were in danger of losing their lives. It appears that at that time some had fallen asleep in death. Fellow believers were in need of comfort. (1 Thessalonians 2:14-20) Thinking that Christ's "presence" was at hand, they wondered what would happen to those who had already died. What Paul now writes provides not

10. How may we, as Christians, 'walk decently'?
11. (a) Why does Paul now introduce the resurrection? (b) How should this counsel by Paul affect us?

only comfort for those losing Christian loved ones but also encouragement to endure until Jehovah's "day" breaks forth. Paul's counsel should help all of us to show spiritual stability as we continue to declare the good news, in anticipation of the total end of this system of things.

—2 Thessalonians 1:6-10.

¹² Paul says: "Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant concerning those who are sleeping in death; that you may not sorrow just as the rest also do who have no hope." (1 Thessalonians 4:13) What comfort and peace of mind are to be found in the resurrection hope! Some five years later, Paul would introduce his second letter to the Christians in Corinth by saying: "May you have undeserved kindness and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of tender mercies and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those in any sort of tribulation through the comfort with which we ourselves are being comforted by God."—2 Corinthians 1:2-4.

¹³ The apostle did not want us to be ignorant as to the condition of the dead. In time, a great apostasy would set in among professed Christians, so that they would return to Babylonish and Greek philosophies. Such apostates would accept the Platonic doctrine of the inherent immortality of the soul—now a basic teaching throughout the world empire of false religion. The aura of mystery that surrounds the "afterlife," whether said to be in heaven, purgatory, or a place of eternal torment, provides no true comfort. Fur-

12. What real comfort may we have when a loved one dies, and from what source?

13, 14. (a) Why did Paul want Christians to be informed as to the meaning of death? (b) What do the Scriptures show to be the condition of the dead?

ther, inherent immortality contradicts the resurrection doctrine, for how can someone be raised again to life if the soul does not die?

¹⁴ Paul here writes "concerning those who are sleeping in death." Yes, "sleeping." A person who is sleeping is not conscious of anything and is not able to perform any works. (Compare Ecclesiastes 9: 5, 10.) There was an occasion during Jesus' ministry when he said that Lazarus had "gone to rest" and that he, Jesus, would "awaken him from sleep." When Christ's disciples did not understand those words, "Jesus said to them outspokenly: 'Lazarus has died.'" Lazarus' sisters, Martha and Mary, were comforted by the hope of the resurrection, and Jesus brought them further comfort. But how their faith must have been fortified when Jesus raised his friend, already dead for four days, from the sleep of death!—John 11:11-14, 21-25, 43-45.

¹⁵ That miracle, together with Jesus' other works in raising the dead, and preeminently Jehovah's resurrecting of Jesus himself—all these well-documented events strengthen our confidence in the marvelous resurrection hope. (Luke 7: 11-17; 8:49-56; 1 Corinthians 15:3-8) True, death brings sorrow and tears, and it is hard to adjust to the absence of a loved one. But what comfort and strength we gain from the assurance that the Sovereign Lord Jehovah "will actually swallow up death forever, and . . . will certainly wipe the tears from all faces"! (Isaiah 25:8; Revelation 21:4) One of the best cures for sorrow is keeping busy in the service of the God of peace, giving out to others the heartwarming Kingdom hope that we ourselves have so gratefully received.—Compare Acts 20:35.

15. (a) How is our hope in the resurrection strengthened? (b) How may we be helped to adjust at the death of a loved one?

Order of the Resurrection

¹⁶ Our faith is strong that Christ, "the firstfruits" of the resurrection and now enthroned at God's right hand in the heavens, will carry to completion Jehovah's glorious Kingdom purposes. (Hebrews 6:17, 18; 10:12, 13) As Paul states in another letter: "He [Jesus Christ] must rule as king until God has put all enemies under his feet. As the last enemy, death is to be brought to nothing." How? In part through the resurrection and the removal of the effects of Adamic death. The apostle had just explained it this way: "Since death is through a man, resurrection of the dead is also through a man. For just as in Adam all are dying, so also in the Christ all will be made alive. But each one in his own rank: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who belong to the Christ during his presence." (1 Corinthians 15: 20-26) It is to this order of the resurrection that Paul next refers in his first letter to the Thessalonians, saying:

¹⁷ "If our faith is that Jesus died and rose again, so, too, those who have fallen asleep in death through Jesus God will bring with him. For this is what we tell you by Jehovah's word, that we the living who survive to the presence of the Lord shall in no way precede those who have fallen asleep in death; because the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a commanding call, with an archangel's voice and with God's trumpet, and those who are dead in union with Christ will rise first."—1 Thessalonians 4:14-16.

¹⁸ After 1914, during Jesus' "presence" in Kingdom power, he, as the archangel, issues the heavenly command for those "in union with Christ" to assemble. In the

16, 17. (a) How will "the last enemy" be brought to nothing? (b) What order of resurrection does Paul now explain?

18. When were the anointed ones who were "asleep in death" resurrected?

case of such anointed ones "asleep in death," this trumpetlike summons calls for their spiritual resurrection into the heavens. *The Watchtower* has long presented the view that this resurrection of anointed Christians from death commenced in the year 1918.

¹⁹ However, what of the remaining anointed Christians on earth, now a diminishing group of less than 10,000? These, too, must complete their earthly life course in faithfulness. As though he were with them during Christ's presence, Paul writes: "Afterward we the living who are surviving will, together with them, be caught away in clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and thus we shall always be with the Lord." (1 Thessalonians 4:17; compare Revelation 1:10.) Thus, in due course, all the 144,000 will be raised to serve as priests and kings on the heavenly Mount Zion with the Lamb, Jesus Christ. "This is the first resurrection." (Revelation 14:1, 4; 20:4, 5) But what awaits the billions of mankind who are now in their graves?

²⁰ Though Paul does not specifically

19. When and how will those remaining "be caught away in clouds," and for what purpose?
- 20, 21. (a) What lies ahead for the billions of mankind in their graves? (b) What group will never need to die off the earth, and why? (c) If individuals of this group should die, what happy prospect is there for them?

In Summary—

- What petitions does Paul make on behalf of Christians?
- What "orders" does the apostle give for our good?
- How does God's Word comfort us with regard to the dead?
- What order of the resurrection does Paul describe?

mention these in his first letter to the Thessalonians, Revelation 20:12 assures us that "the dead, the great and the small," will be raised up to stand before God's judgment throne. (See also John 5:28, 29.) However, today "a great crowd" numbering into the millions has already been gathered before that throne. As a group, these will be saved alive through the impending "great tribulation." They are shepherded by the Lamb and guided to "fountains of waters of life," so that they will never need to die off the earth. But due to age or unforeseen occurrence, some of them may die during the Lord's "presence." (Revelation 7:9, 14, 17; Ecclesiastes 9:11) What of these?

²¹ The joyful hope of an early resurrection lies ahead for all such "other sheep." (John 10:16) Their faith and works, like those of Abraham of old, have already brought them into a state of friendship with God. Like those men and women of faith described in Hebrews chapter 11, these modern-day "other sheep" have endured trials. Logically they, too, will experience "a better resurrection," no doubt early in the post-Armageddon period. (Hebrews 11:35; James 2:23) Indeed, each one who has, in faith, 'fed on Jesus' flesh and drunk his blood' will share in the fulfillment of his promise: "He . . . has everlasting life, and I shall resurrect him at the last day."—John 6:54; Romans 5:18, 21; 6:23.

²² After discussing the glorious resurrection hope, Paul admonishes: "Keep comforting one another with these words." (1 Thessalonians 4:18) Then he discusses further vital matters regarding "the presence of our Lord Jesus." (1 Thessalonians 5:23) What are these? See the article "Peace From God—When?"

22. How may we comfort one another?

1986—A Year “to Safeguard Peace”?

THE UN has proclaimed 1986 as the International Year of Peace. What progress is there toward world peace? The following comments come from around the globe.

From April 7 to 12, 1986, legislators from 103 countries took part in the 75th IPU (Inter-Parliamentary Union) meeting in Mexico City.

UN Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar conveyed this message to the Union: “As the International Year of Peace begins, let all be mindful that its theme—‘To Safeguard Peace and the Future of Humanity’—provides an important focus not only for 1986 but for the years ahead. Let us seize the opportunities of 1986 with determination.”

The president of IPU stated that he had visited a number of countries “to ask whether the parliamentarians there could not become parliamentarians of peace.” His conclusion: “I found out how difficult this is, indeed in some cases hopeless.”

The Mexican Group itself expressed “grave disappointment that despite growing public concern at the dangers of the arms race and the efforts made by the United Nations, no substantive progress has been made in recent years in the field of disarmament.”

The Argentine Group took into account “that neither the sixty million dead in the second world war, nor its nuclear epilogue in Hiroshima, nor the one hundred and thirty armed conflicts since then have been sufficient to teach mankind that he is on the threshold of self-destruction.” It was deeply concerned that “five nuclear Powers have accumulated more than 50,000 nuclear weapons, an amount that equals three tons of conventional explosives for each inhabitant of our planet.”

The permanent members of the UN Security Council were represented, and some of their comments were as follows:

The British Group stated: “A key policy

objective must be to prevent an arms race in space. However, we need to be realistic . . . Space is already militarized.” The French Group stressed “that the inability of the United Nations to maintain collective security and peace stem in particular from the violation by some States of the essential principles of international and morality law.” The U.S.S.R. Group expressed “grave concern over the danger of nuclear catastrophe threatening mankind, which can lead to the end of civilization on earth.” The U.S. delegation was reported as saying that it would “attempt to communicate the need for international cooperation to combat terrorism.”

On the other side of the earth, the International Year of Peace was marked on March 21 by a rally in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. Chinese premier Zhao Ziyang was more optimistic than others in saying: “So long as the people of the world keep up their unremitting efforts, they will certainly win peace.”

In connection with the UN International Year of Peace, Pope John Paul II has said that the Holy See wants to inspire a “worldwide movement of prayer for peace involving all nations and all religions.”

Peace eludes this world. And why? Real peace must be based on love; the world is divided by nationalistic pride and hatred. Real peace requires wise and just rulership; imperfect human rulers cannot measure up to this standard. Real peace must center around united worship of the one true God; the world's religions are divided hopelessly into thousands of sects, none of which honor Jehovah as Sovereign Lord. Real peace requires the removal of “the god of this system of things,” Satan the Devil, and his system of rulership; only Jehovah's Kingdom in the hands of His Christ can crush Satan and his works.

—2 Corinthians 4:4.



Australia's gold “peace” dollar



Kenya's 10-shilling “peace” stamp

IF THE mad race for armaments continues, it is bound to result in a slaughter such as has never occurred in history. If there is a victor left the very victory will be a living death for the nation that emerges victorious." That forecast made in 1938 by Mohandas Gandhi actually looked far beyond his time.

² Previously, in 1931, Gandhi had told a British viceroy: "When your country and mine shall get together on the teachings laid down by Christ in this Sermon on the Mount, we shall have solved the problems not only of our countries but those of the whole world." As the Hindu sage indicated, Jesus' sermon points the way to lasting peace. In that sermon Christ said: "Happy are the peaceable, since they will be called 'sons of God.'" (Matthew 5:9) Many "sons" now enjoy peace from God. In time, all meek ones of earth will find "exquisite delight in the abundance of peace." (Psalm 37:11) But can we be confident of this outcome?

³ Today, the specter of world annihilation hovers over mankind. A recent study states: "The ultimate absurdity is the \$3-4,000,000,000,000 (3-4 trillion dollars) spent since World War II to create a nuclear arsenal which, if used, will mean global suicide. . . . The megatonnage in the world's stockpile of nuclear weapons is enough to kill 58 billion people, or to kill every person now living 12 times."^{*} Yet the mad race has continued to accelerate. MAD indeed, since those initials stand for Mutually Assured Destruction, the shaky concept on which the superpowers balance their so-called peace. This surely is not peace from God.

* The publication *World Military and Social Expenditures 1985*.

1, 2. (a) What did a Hindu sage say about war and peace? (b) Who are the happy ones who come to enjoy peace from God?

3. Why is there no real peace on earth today?

Peace From God When?

"The God who gives peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly."

—ROMANS 16:20.

⁴ In every way, this world presents a sorry spectacle. Never before has human society had to endure more political corruption, more criminal violence, more economic headaches, or more godlessness and religious confusion than in this present age. Never has it been truer of mankind that "all creation keeps on groaning together and being in pain together." Yet God promises that his human creation "will be set free from enslavement to corruption and have the glorious freedom of the children of God." (Romans 8:21, 22) Those peace-lovers who worship the God of the Bible, the Sovereign Lord Jehovah, are assured of entering into that freedom. It will be a freedom that is firmly rooted in true peace, eternal peace. (Ezekiel 37:26-28) But when and how will that peace come?

God's View of 'Times and Seasons'

⁵ The apostle Paul had comforted the

4. (a) What spectacle does the world now present? (b) Yet what strong hope do worshipers of Jehovah entertain?

5. What question arises in connection with 1 Thessalonians 5:1?



Christians in Thessalonica by explaining how the resurrection is related to "the presence of the Lord" Jesus. Next he says: "As for the times and the seasons, brothers, you need nothing to be written to you."—1 Thessalonians 4:15; 5:1.

⁶ Do the apostle's words indicate that 'times and seasons' are not important to God? Far from it! (Ecclesiastes 3:1) It was "when the full limit of the time arrived," at the end of 69 weeks of years, that "God sent forth his Son." And Jesus' ministry lasted three and a half years—from 29 C.E. to 33 C.E.—just as had been prophesied. (Galatians 4:4; Daniel 9:24-27) It was exactly at the end of "the appointed times of the nations" in 1914 that Jesus was installed as King in "heavenly Jerusalem." (Luke 21:24; Hebrews 12:22; Ezekiel 21:27; Daniel 4:31, 32) The "great tribulation" will also come at the "day and hour" decreed by Jehovah. "It will not be late."—Matthew 24:21, 36; Habakkuk 2:3.

6. How do we know that 'times and seasons' are important to God?

⁷ However, at this point Paul had no need to write of "the times and the seasons." Those Thessalonian Christians were already convinced that it was the 'season' for the conclusion of the Jewish system of things, which would end some 20 years later, in 70 C.E. Their zeal and "joy of holy spirit" shone forth as exemplary. (1 Thessalonians 1:4-7) Likewise, Jehovah's Witnesses today are fully aware that the world wars and other distressing events since 1914 are "the sign" of Jesus' invisible presence in Kingdom power and glory.—Matthew 24:3-8; 25:31.

⁸ Next, the apostle reassures his fellow Christians, saying: "For you yourselves know quite well that Jehovah's day is coming exactly as a thief in the night." (1 Thessalonians 5:2) Though we do not know the exact timing, that day for executing judgment moves ever closer. It will break suddenly, instantly, at God's

7. Why did Paul have no need to write to the Thessalonians about 'times and seasons'?
8. Why must we keep awake and active?

appointed hour. Therefore, we must keep awake and active.—Luke 21:34-36.

A Climactic Call for Peace

⁹ "Peace and security!" Paul here alerts us to the proclamation that will be heard at the climax of Christ's "presence." (1 Thessalonians 5:3) Will we soon hear that cry? Where could such a call for the world's peace and security originate? Obviously not from among Christ's followers, for Jesus stated that neither they nor his Kingdom are "part of the world." (John 15:19; 17:14, 16; 18:36) Those who herald forth this cry must therefore be worldlings who are opposed to the incoming Kingdom of God. They are part of the world that 'lies in the power of the wicked one,' Satan the Devil. (1 John 5:19) Like the political and religious leaders of Jeremiah's day, these will speak "the vision of their own heart," saying, "Peace is what you people will come to have," wrongly contending that such peace is from God. How false their claim will prove to be! —Jeremiah 23:16, 17, 19, 20.

¹⁰ A chain of events leads up to this cry of "Peace and security!" It was in 1920 that the League of Nations was brought forth in the wake of the Great War, now known as World War I. The purpose of this League was to banish war from the earth forever. But World War II tumbled the League into an abyss. On October 24, 1945, this body was revived, rising from the ashes with a new name, the United Nations. (Compare Revelation 17:8.) Its primary objective is "to preserve world peace and security." Its founders expressed determination "to save succeeding

9. (a) What cry arises, and why do true Christians not share therein? (b) Who herald forth this call, and how do they compare to the rulers in Jeremiah's day?

10. What chain of events has led up to the present world situation?

generations from the scourge of war." Has the UN been successful in assuring such peace and security?

¹¹ However sincere some of the founders of the UN may have been, that body, like the League before it, has failed to fulfill its chartered purpose. The world now sits on a powder keg of nuclear armaments. The accident at Chernobyl, U.S.S.R., in April 1986, with the resultant radioactive fallout over much of Europe, shows that even when used for peaceful purposes, nuclear power has a terrible potential. Some nations in the South Pacific are trying to maintain their area as a nuclear-free zone. But if a full-scale nuclear war ever broke loose, there would be survivors nowhere.

Are "Peace and Security" Possible?

¹² Fully aware of the deepening crisis, the United Nations declared 1986 to be the International Year of Peace. This has met with a mixed reception among the nations. Most of them have supported the UN Year of Peace in one way or another, but they point to nuclear war as the overshadowing threat to peace. In the meantime, miniwars continue to be fought around the earth, some 150 of them since World War II, with a combined death toll of more than 30,000,000. Can it be said that any nation really has taken the initiative in acting upon those famous words of Isaiah 2:4 that are emblazoned on the plaza wall at the UN?

¹³ The religions of the world have not been backward in giving support to the UN Year of Peace. Pope John Paul II proclaimed January 1 as a World Day of Peace and urged statesmen to provide the leadership needed for establishing a basis

11. How serious is the crisis that confronts the world?

12. What declaration has the UN made for 1986, and with what response among the nations?

13. How have religious leaders given support?

for universal peace. He also called upon the world's faiths to meet for prayer at Assisi, Italy, during the International Year of Peace. The Archbishop of Canterbury, head of the Church of England, and Buddhist groups warmly welcomed this invitation. The World Council of Churches issued a declaration on the International Year of Peace, urging that nuclear disarmament begin immediately.

¹⁴ However, in this matter of establishing "peace and security," what is the will of "the God who gives peace"? Does God's prophetic Word show that imperfect men and nations can bring peace and security to this world? Far from it! "Certain success" would depend on Jehovah's handling matters in harmony with his righteousness and to his praise.—Isaiah 55:11; 61:11.

Impending "Sudden Destruction"

¹⁵ The apostle Paul tells us what is about to happen. He says: "Whenever it is that they are saying: 'Peace and security!' then sudden destruction is to be instantly upon them just as the pang of distress upon a pregnant woman; and they will by no means escape."—1 Thessalonians 5:3.

¹⁶ At first reading, those words may seem shocking. But the Bible clarifies matters. The ways of the nations today are not God's ways. (Isaiah 55:8, 9) His reason for permitting the various forms of man-rule to continue is to answer an issue that the wily Serpent, Satan the Devil, raised some 6,000 years ago. When Satan persuaded our first parents to choose independence from God, he disputed whether mankind really needs God-rule.—Genesis 3:4, 5.

14. How only may a project for peace succeed?
15. What startling announcement does Paul next make?
16. Why are the ways of the nations not God's ways?

¹⁷ During the millenniums that have followed, God has allowed men to experiment with every imaginable form of human government. Whether it endured for a few years or for hundreds of years, each kind of man-rule has failed miserably to bring in true peace and security. War, crime, terror, and death have been the continuing lot of mankind under every type of human government. Throughout history, "man has dominated man to his injury." (Ecclesiastes 8:9) It is no different today. Anyone aware of the issue can now say, as did God's prophet: "I well know, O Jehovah, that to earthling man his way does not belong. It does not belong to man who is walking even to direct his step."—Jeremiah 10:23.

¹⁸ Now the time is at hand to settle the issue once and for all. God-rule alone can bring true peace and security to mankind. However, it is not God-rule that the nations favor when they cry "Peace and security!" They want to continue domination according to their own prideful ideologies. But time has run out! The nations sense that something drastic must be done. Otherwise, all will be lost in some nuclear holocaust. So they will do what Jeremiah foretold: "They try to heal the breakdown of my people lightly, saying, 'There is peace! There is peace!' when there is no peace." But it will be in vain! —Jeremiah 6:14; 8:11, 15.

The Prophesied End

¹⁹ "Sudden destruction . . . instantly," says the apostle Paul. God's prophet Isaiah adds: "Look! Their very heroes have cried out in the street; the very messengers of peace will weep bitterly." (Isaiah

17. What record has man-rule made, and what does this prove?
18. Why is the nations' cry of "Peace and security!" in vain?
19. How will "Jehovah's day" break forth?

33:7) In many places, the Bible shows that Jehovah's execution of judgment upon wicked nations and men will come swiftly, unexpectedly—truly "as a thief in the night." (1 Thessalonians 5:2, 3; Jeremiah 25:32, 33; Zephaniah 1:14-18; 2 Peter 3:10) At a time when the world is loudly proclaiming that it has reached some plateau of peace and security, "Jehovah's day" will break forth with frightening suddenness. God's people will have recognized that cry of "Peace and security!" for what it is and will be safe in Jehovah's provided refuge.—Psalm 37:39, 40; 46:1, 2; Joel 3:16.

²⁰ In God's Word, the course of the League of Nations and its successor, the United Nations, is likened to that of "a scarlet-colored wild beast" having seven heads (representing the world powers from which it originates) and ten horns (standing for the governmental powers that now support it). The Bible shows it to be a political "beast," comparable to the British "lion" and the Russian "bear." Upon its back there rides a woman, "Babylon the Great, the mother of the harlots and of the disgusting things of the earth." (Revelation 17:3-8) This well expresses Jehovah's view of false religion, which does not represent him and his righteous King-

20. (a) The UN is what kind of "beast"? (b) How does Jehovah view false religion, and why?

How Would You Answer?

- Why are 'times and seasons' important to God and to us?
- How should we regard the approach of "Jehovah's day"?
- Who share in the cry of 1 Thessalonians 5:3, and when?
- What momentous events are triggered by that cry?

dom. She commits spiritual harlotry by getting involved in politics. Religion's linking up with the UN in the world's campaign for peace and security is an example of this. She would also like to have peace and security from God's judgment message proclaimed by Jehovah's Witnesses. To this end, she has influenced some governments to ban the Christian activity of the Witnesses.—Psalm 2:1-3.

²¹ How will "Jehovah's day" break forth? In this darkest night of human history, it will indeed come "as a thief"! That will be when God maneuvers nations of the UN beast to turn suddenly on false religion. Displaying their underlying hatred for Babylon the Great, they will expose her for what she is and utterly devastate her. So swiftly will this execution come that former political paramours will exclaim: "Too bad, too bad, you great city, Babylon you strong city, because in one hour your judgment has arrived!" But the nations and their armies will also attack God's people. Then, the King of kings, Jesus Christ, will destroy all those enemies and abyss the arch-opposer, Satan the Devil.—Revelation 17:16, 17; 18:10; 19:11-21; 20:1-3; compare Ezekiel 38:11, 16, 18-23.

²² At last, true peace and security will flourish under God's Kingdom! (Psalm 72: 1, 7; Isaiah 9:6, 7) Happily, many today who 'stay awake and keep their senses' will live to see it. (1 Thessalonians 5:4-6) "A great crowd . . . out of all nations," who exercise faith in Jehovah's ransom provision through Christ, will be saved out of "the great tribulation" to enjoy eternal peace from God. (Revelation 7:9-17; 21: 3, 4) May you be one of them!

21. (a) What action marks the start of "Jehovah's day"? (b) To what finale does the "day" next proceed?

22. (a) What grand prospect do believing humans have today? (b) How may you come to enjoy peace from God?

Kingdom Proclaimers Report

Are You Grateful for the Public Ministry?

THE house-to-house ministry is Scriptural, and Jehovah's Witnesses are known the world over for this feature of their public service. (Acts 20:20, 21) Jesus told his followers: "You will receive power when the holy spirit arrives upon you, and you will be witnesses of me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the most distant part of the earth." (Acts 1:8) Acts 5:42 shows that those early Christians went "from house to house" without letup.

In Haiti there was a confrontation regarding the house-to-

house ministry of Jehovah's Witnesses. This came about when a special pioneer met a staunch Protestant woman. During the conversation, the brother pointed out that only Jehovah's Witnesses preach from house to house as the Bible outlines. The woman replied that members of her church could go from house to house and had done so on occasion. Sure enough, the next Saturday, the Witness met a group going from house to house, directed by this woman. There were about a hundred in the group. The woman, being quite proud of this accom-

plishment, called the brother to witness this feat.

A week later, the same woman headed another group and was happy to point this out to the brother. He remarked, however, that there were only about half as many as the week before. By the fourth Saturday the group had dwindled to 20, and on the fifth Saturday the woman was alone. Humbly she came to the brother and admitted: "Only Jehovah's Witnesses have the truth, since only they can keep going in the witness work week after week."

The special pioneer offered the woman a Bible study that would show her why the Witnesses can continue to preach from house to house and why others cannot. The woman accepted. She and her husband started to study and made good progress. Both of them are now associating with Jehovah's Witnesses, zealously proclaiming the Kingdom publicly and from house to house!

The house-to-house and other methods of public ministering are a wonderful and loving provision that Jehovah has arranged for searching out those of honest heart and helping them to learn of his requirements for life. Accordingly, Jehovah's Witnesses gladly share in this and other features of their sacred service to God. Their attitude is similar to that of the apostle Paul, who said: "I am grateful to Christ Jesus our Lord, who imparted power to me, because he considered me faithful by assigning me to a ministry."—1 Timothy 1:12.



“Love Your Neighbor”

What Is the Most Practical Way?

WHEN you see fellow humans in dire need, what do you feel? What does a picture of starving children, for example, make you want to do? ‘I feel pity,’ you will say, ‘and I want to help.’ The vast sums of money annually contributed to charitable organizations and relief agencies indicate that many people evidently feel the same way.

Performing such good works for the benefit of people in need is commendable, especially in view of Jesus’ instruction to love our neighbor as ourselves. (Matthew 19:19) Many sincere people believe that the most practical way of showing their neighbor love is by building and supporting hospitals and schools, by contributing to good causes, and by engaging in various forms of social work. ‘That is what Christianity is all about,’ they may say, perhaps adding, if speaking to Jehovah’s Witnesses, ‘certainly more practical than spending your time and energy preaching from house to house about religion as you people do.’

But is it? Just how can we love our neighbor in the most practical way and to his greatest long-term benefit?

What Does Your Money Accomplish?

Prospective donors to worthy causes have reason to ask: ‘Just how much of my contribution will directly benefit the people it is designed to help?’ A 1978 investigation of 15 leading charitable organizations in the Federal Republic of Germany, for example, revealed that at that time administrative and distribution costs ate

up some 42 percent of the organizations’ total income.

When television officials checked the savings accounts of six “adopted children” in Bolivia, they discovered that only 6 to 15 percent of the total amount of contributions made by their “adoptive parents” in the Federal Republic of Germany had been credited to the children’s bank accounts. A spokeswoman for the organization denied charges of fraud, however, explaining that prospective donors are clearly told that the children will get only about one third of their “parent’s” contributions. The rest, after caring for administrative costs, reportedly would be used for educational and medical purposes.

Of course, examples of misused charity are not unknown. This is true of relief measures in connection with recent famines in Africa. In Ethiopia, political problems prevented much of the food from reaching those in need, and in some instances food donations were reportedly sold—at excessive prices—rather than distributed free of charge.

Carl Bakal’s publication *Charity U.S.A.* cautions: “Where the cause is noble, how the money is spent is never questioned. I don’t want people to stop giving. I just thought questions should be answered because they were giving so blindly.” Obviously, giving blindly is unwise and can hardly be considered practical.

Following the Example Set by Jesus

These facts are regrettable, of course, but would they justify refusing to support



such worthy causes? After all, did not Jesus heal the sick and miraculously feed the hungry, thereby setting a pattern for Christians today?

It is true that Jesus was moved with pity when he saw people in need. Eight Bible texts mention this. Two refer to the people's need for food (Matthew 15:32; Mark 8:2), three to their need for physical healing (Matthew 14:14; 20:34; Mark 1:41), and one to their need for comfort upon the death of loved ones. (Luke 7:13) But the other two texts refer to an even greater need. Matthew 9:36 says: "On seeing the crowds he felt pity for them, because they were skinned and thrown about like sheep without a shepherd." And Mark 6:34 reports: "He saw a great crowd, but he was moved with pity for them, because they were as sheep without a shepherd. And he started to teach them many things."

In fact, even though pity for the people prompted Jesus to care for them in a

physical way, his chief interest was in offering them the spiritual help their religious leaders had failed to provide. (See Matthew, chapter 23.) Jesus was "the fine shepherd," one willing to surrender "his soul in behalf of the sheep." (John 10:11) Because he gave this preaching activity—not engaging in social work or building hospitals or running relief agencies—top priority in life, he was later able to tell Pilate: "For this I have been born, and for this I

have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth."—John 18:37.

Although Jesus bestowed upon his apostles the ability to perform miraculous good works of healing, he made no mention of this when issuing his final instructions to them before ascending into heaven. Instead, he commanded: "Go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy spirit, teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you." Obviously, then, the more important work was to "make disciples . . . baptizing them . . . teaching them."—Matthew 28:19, 20.

Why Preaching Is So Practical

Preaching is practical because it helps people apply Bible principles. This in turn helps them avoid problems that might bring them into need. Applying Bible principles dealing with work and our attitude toward material things, for example,

can help prevent poverty. (Proverbs 10:4; Ephesians 4:28; 1 Timothy 6:6-8) Or following the Bible's advice on the use of drugs and observing its moral standard can improve our health and ensure a happier family life.

Take the example of a 35-year-old Yugoslavian, living in the Federal Republic of Germany, who admits: "At the age of 18 or 19 I was already becoming an alcoholic. At 20 I was drinking a liter of schnapps and at least a case of beer [20 bottles] a day. Three times I was hospitalized as attempts were made to cure me of my habit, but the doctors were unable to help. Although I earned DM1,300 a month, I brought scarcely any of it home for my family." It was what Jehovah's Witnesses told him during their preaching work that developed in him a desire to have a better relationship with his Creator. "By means of prayer," he continues, "I was able to achieve what the doctors could not." We can imagine the positive effect this has had upon his family life.

To be sure, preaching will not solve every problem. Yet it is practical because it offers hope. Under God's Kingdom every problem *will* be solved. Jesus will then perform miracles of a physical nature for everyone alive, not for just a few. Rather than offering temporary relief, the benefits will be lasting, in fact, everlasting. (See John 17:3.) So teaching people to exercise faith in Jesus' ransom sacrifice and its provisions will accomplish the most good in the long run.

Many religious organizations in Christendom point with pride to their "good works" of caring for the sick, the needy, and the unfortunate. But they would do better to place more emphasis on offering spiritual help, even as Jesus did. Like the religious leaders of the first century, they have failed to carry out the more important commission. They may have filled the

stomachs of some poor people with literal food, but they have left their minds and hearts hungering for words of truth. (See Amos 8:11.) They may have donated money to help the needy of the nations, but they have not declared "to the nations the good news about the unfathomable riches of the Christ" or about God's Kingdom government. (Ephesians 3:8) Their missionaries may have helped undeveloped nations to become more proficient in the use of the plow, but they have not induced them "to beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning shears."—Isaiah 2:4.

Be Balanced in Loving Your Neighbor

Rightfully placing primary emphasis upon spiritual help, of course, does not excuse us from offering physical help—either to individuals or to groups—when it is necessary and when we are in a position to do so. We should want to follow the example set by early Christians. (See Acts 11:27-30.) In times of real need or disaster, we should be quick to follow Paul's advice to "work what is good toward all, but especially toward those related to us in the faith." (Galatians 6:10) To ensure accomplishing the greatest good, Jehovah's Witnesses generally do this on a personal basis. And since Witnesses who help out in such relief actions serve without pay, administration costs are eliminated.

But while helping others in a physical way, Christians never want to lose sight of their primary obligation, preaching the good news of God's established Kingdom. That Kingdom will soon rid the world of all sickness, poverty, and need. How gratifying to be able to assist people to gain life in a world where the word "pity" will no longer need to be used. Could you possibly love your neighbor in a way more practical than that?

Child Sacrifice —Why So Detestable?

"And they have built the high places of Topheth, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, in order to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire, a thing that I had not commanded and that had not come up into my heart."—Jeremiah 7:31.

IN THE days of the Judean kings Ahaz and Manasseh, the nation of Israel fell into the snare of the degraded worship of neighbor nations. This included sacrificing their children to Molech. (2 Chronicles 28:3; 33:6, 9) Even though King Josiah later abolished many of "the detestable" practices, "Jehovah did not turn back from the great burning of his anger, with which his anger burned against Judah over all the offensive things with which Manasseh had made them offend." (2 Kings 23:10, 26) Why? What made the transgression so "offensive" that it could not be forgiven?

"Child-sacrifice was a prominent feature of the worship of the Phenician Malik-Baal-Kronos," says the Funk and Wagnalls *Jewish Encyclopedia*. The Phoenicians originally occupied the northern coastal regions of Canaan. Being a seafaring people, they established colonies throughout the Mediterranean, and wherever they went they took with them their detestable ritual of child sacrifice. A recent archaeological find at the ancient Phenician city of Carthage (now a suburb of Tunis in Tunisia, North Africa) has shed some light on the depth of depravity of this practice.

The site was first discovered in 1921. But starting in the 1970's, intensive excavation was done because of the expansion of the modern city toward the area. The dig turned out to be a huge burial ground for the remains of sacrificed children. The journal *Biblical Archaeology Review* reports:

"Here, from the eighth century B.C. until the second century B.C., mothers and fathers of Carthage buried the bones of their children sacrificed to the god Ba'al Hammon and to the goddess Tanit. By the fourth century B.C. the Tophet [from Biblical Topheth] may have been as large as 64,800 square feet (6,000 square meters), with nine levels of burials."

Similar sites have been discovered in Sicily, in

Sardinia, and elsewhere in Tunisia. At one time, all had been Phoenician colonies. In the Carthaginian burial ground, the researchers found numerous stone markers inscribed with figures of the goddess Tanit, who has been identified with the Canaanite goddess Ashtoreth, or Astarte, the wife of Baal. Underneath the markers are found earthen urns, some brightly decorated, that contain the charred bones of the sacrificial victims.

As an indication of the extent of the practice, the report says: "Using the density of urns in our excavated area as a standard, we estimate that as many as 20,000 urns may have been deposited there between 400 and 200 B.C." This enormous number is made all the more shocking when one bears in mind that in its heyday the population of Carthage, according to the article, was only about 250,000.

Inscriptions on the stone markers show that children were sacrificed to fulfill vows their parents made to Baal or Tanit in exchange for favors. Ranks and titles on the markers indicate that the practice was particularly popular with the upper class, evidently to invoke the blessing of the gods on their efforts to achieve and maintain their wealth and influence. Some of the urns were found to contain the remains of two or three children, possibly of the same family, judging from the age differences.

If the practice of the Phoenicians is shocking, then remember that "Manasseh kept seducing Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to do worse than the nations that Jehovah had annihilated from before the sons of Israel." (2 Chronicles 33:9) It was no exaggeration when Jehovah said: "They have filled this place with the blood of the innocent ones." (Jeremiah 19:4) Appropriately, the *Review* article observes: "The growing body of archaeological and epigraphic evidence, provided by the Carthaginians themselves, strongly suggests that the classical and Biblical writers knew what they were talking about."

Thus, as Jehovah "annihilated" the idolatrous Canaanite "nations," he did not spare the unfaithful Israelites. They received their just due at the hands of the Babylonians in 607 B.C.E. Likewise, he will have an accounting with those today who, directly or indirectly, share in shedding the blood of millions upon millions through such abominable practices as war, murder, and abortion.—Revelation 19: 11-15.

Trail Without End

As told by Eva Carol Abbott

I WAS born in 1908, in the month of December and on the 21st day, to Grace Pearl and William Reuben Vaughan. A farm near Emporia, Kansas, U.S.A., was the place. From Emporia we moved to the prairies of Colorado, where life was difficult and lonely. We had a barn, a windmill, and a house that my mother described to me as resembling a railroad car. There was a very large kitchen and another large room combining a living room and a bedroom.

Some of the very few neighbors, though, lived in dugouts. These dwellings were half above the ground and half below. During parts of the long winter, their huts would be completely blanketed with snow. On such occasions my parents received phone calls from these snowbound neighbors (poor as they were, they had telephones) inquiring the time, and after being told, the next question was, 'Do you mean night or day?'

Several times a year the homesteaders, as we were called, would go to the forest for days at a time to cut posts. The posts would be piled high on wagons pulled by a sturdy team of horses and taken to town to be exchanged for food, winter provisions, and summer seed for the planting of crops. During these periods Mother would be alone with me, and through the long evenings she would burn the midnight oil reading and rereading her Bible. She believed very strongly that God had a



people, and she was searching for their trail.

When I was three, my parents moved to a farm in Kansas near the small town of Kiowa. Part of the trip was made in a wagon, the top of which father had covered with canvas. I became ill with what was called the grippie, and I recall lying on a pallet on the floor of the wagon, nice and warm, watching the coal-oil lantern swinging back and forth from the canvas canopy overhead. My mother was rubbing me with a combination of lard, turpentine, and coal oil. I still remember how good it felt and the coziness and love that went with it.

Trail's Beginning

Included in my childhood memories is our moving to Alva, Oklahoma. Mother was still searching for the path leading to "God's people." One day Mother found some Bible tracts on our porch. Soon after that my father was approached in a store where he worked by a colporteur (full-time minister), who showed him one of the volumes of *Studies in the Scriptures* by C. T. Russell, the first president of the Watch Tower Society. Although Father purchased the book, it was Mother who read it and recognized the message to be from the same source as the tracts left on the porch.

Father was invited by the colporteur to a Bible-study meeting that evening. He did not elect to go, but Mother did, taking me

along. I can barely remember attending this meeting, but the details I heard many times from my mother. There were some 10 or 12 in attendance, and the question was asked, "How do we die?" A sister in attendance answered, "As the brute beast." Mother was shocked. She interrupted: "Pardon me, but do I understand you to believe that we die as the brute beast?" The brother conducting the meeting answered: "Will you turn to Ecclesiastes 3:19-21 and read it for yourself?"

"They let me break up that whole meeting with my questions one after the other, and they devoted the whole evening to answering them," Mother would relish telling me. I remember Mother being very excited on returning home. Surely she had found God's people and the course of life she wanted to follow. Here was the trail's beginning!

This was 1913. Soon there was the showing of the Watch Tower Society's motion picture and slide show, "Photo-Drama of Creation." Mother was so happy to be one of the attendants during its showing in the town theater. Those years in Alva were heartwarming to Mother. I would say to her, "Mama, you smile now, and you didn't use to very much."

By now Mother had taken a firm stand for the truth. This was during the time when it was believed by some Bible Students that they would be taken to heaven just "any day now," so a life of ease soon to take place was envisioned by them. But not so with Mother. She was not consumed with immediate heavenly expectations. Mother was 'too busy,' as she said, 'learning, studying, going to the meetings, and sharing in the preaching of the good news of the Kingdom.'

Soon World War I was in full swing, and this brought persecution from the townspeople. I remember accompanying Mother from door to door getting signers

for a petition to the U.S. government to release Brother Rutherford and his seven associates from the Atlanta, Georgia, penitentiary where they had been unjustly imprisoned. But something else happened that forced us to move.

The war ended, and the flu epidemic raged. The flu left my mother physically depleted. The doctor advised Father to move her to southern California where the climate would be better. We arrived in Los Angeles and settled in Alhambra, one of the city's environs. There I faced the biggest decision of my life.

In 1924 my girlfriend and I boarded the train to Los Angeles to attend the funeral of a Christian sister whom we admired. On the return trip, we discussed the subject of consecration (now known as dedication). I began to think seriously about my own life and discussed this with Mother. This resulted in my researching the subject by using the *Watch Tower* reprints, reading everything on consecration back to the year 1908. Soon after that I dedicated my life to Jehovah, and in October 1925 I was baptized.

Partners on the Trail

One day in 1927, I was told that there was a brother named Herbert Abbott who wanted to meet me. I was startled, as I did not even know who he was. But it did not take me long to find out. Knowing that I was 18 and had been consecrated for two years pleased him. We were introduced, courted for three months, and married in July 1927.

Herbert and I bought a house in the beautiful hills of Pasadena. One day in the spring of 1928, I brought in the mail, which included information regarding pioneer service. In the evening when Herbert came home from work, I proposed the idea that we sell our home and enter full-time pioneer service. He said that if I was

willing to give up our current way of life, he could not say no.

We received territory in Charles City, Iowa, to be worked after attending the convention in Detroit, Michigan. By the summer our plans for pioneering were completed, but to our surprise I was pregnant. What were we to do? For us to change our plans now would be like saying: "We know, Jehovah, that you could take care of the two of us but not three."

After the convention, Herbert and I went to our assignment in Charles City. But at about my eighth month of pregnancy, it seemed wise to return to Los Angeles. In early January of 1929, our beautiful daughter Perousia Carol was born. Our joy with her, though, lasted only nine months; in October she died.

Jehovah's promise of a resurrection was uppermost in our minds. However, death is an enemy, and to see our tiny daughter dead was devastating! The harsh thought of our little darling lying in the cold earth was soothed by our knowledge of God's Word. She was simply asleep; she would remain in Jehovah's memory. (John 11: 11-14, 23-25) Indeed, she has had a long sleep, but one day in the future she will awaken and prove God's Word true. My desire continues that she may eternally bring praise to Jehovah's great name.

In Our Next Issue

■ The Global Power Struggle
—Who Will Win?

■ Do More Than Say: "Keep
Warm and Well Fed"

■ Praising Jehovah With Music

Trails and Trailers

Again we made plans for pioneering. The following March we purchased a canvas-covered trailer with a folding top and traded our seven-passenger Studebaker for a Model A Ford to pull the trailer. Thus began our 25 years of trails and trailers.

The small trailer with which we so happily rolled down the road lasted us for over eight years. The clear floor area was 4 x 5 feet (1.2 x 1.5 m), and the cooking space was a board 11 x 12 inches (28 x 30 cm) that pulled out. There were two good beds, a two-burner gasoline stove, a pail for water, a gasoline lantern, a coal-oil heater, a washtub, a washboard, a gasoline iron, and an ironing board. There was also a portable shelf above the stove, with a small cupboard where I kept our beautiful Haviland china, which had been a wedding present. One night the bolts holding the shelf broke, and down came the shelf with one big crash. Down, too, came the gasoline lantern upside down, with no harm done except that our lovely dishes were in many pieces!

A few times we had to replace the canvas top on the trailer. To do this we would buy heavy canvas covers that were used by fruit growers to cover orange trees for fumigating. We would cut the canvas into strips and sew them on with curved needles until the trailer top was finally covered.

Monday was clothes-washing day. We would wash and rinse the clothes in water carried from a creek, a river, or from the town-well and heated over an outside fire. We also had a small folding oven, which I would use to bake a cake for the coming week's lunches. Now we were ready to meet the challenge of our territory.

In the 1930's there was an exodus from the farms to the cities. Sometimes we would follow a road winding its way for

miles across mountains and canyons toward a house, only to find the house abandoned. To solve this problem, we used a pair of binoculars to determine if there were clothes on the line, if there was smoke coming from the chimney, or if perhaps cattle were nearby. This saved us time and gas. Of course, we could not always see if there was a house on the road, so we would ask the neighbors if the road led to a house.

One time we did not know what to do. There was a ranch 15 miles (24 km) across the mountains, but neighbors were not sure if anyone was at home. Gas for the next day's travel had to be considered. We were near a clear mountain stream about 4 or 5 feet (1.2-1.5 m) wide, and Herb was thirsty. He got down on his knees for a drink, when something shimmering caught his eye. He reached in and picked from the streambed coins amounting to several dollars. So, of course, we were no longer undecided and forged ahead. It was a long, hard trip and the rancher was not interested, but we knew the territory had been covered and the rancher had received a witness.

Trail Experiences

Through the years, we had many thrilling experiences, and amusing ones too.

For example, there was the time we faced mob violence in Corning, California. Four sisters and I went to the aid of Aleck Bangle (now a missionary in Jamaica) when he was being beaten. There were over a hundred onlookers on the street, all cheering for the persecutor. It is laughable now to recall my taking off my high-heeled pump and hitting the persecutor on the head as he bent over to deliver a heavy blow to our brother Aleck!

The May 29, 1940, issue of *Consolation* (now *Awake!*) had on the cover a picture of the third American president, Thomas Jefferson, and the American flag. Since those were days of trouble and persecution, I felt it would be good always to carry several of those issues in my magazine bag, in case we needed one. Sure enough, one Saturday while doing magazine street witnessing, I approached two men on the corner. One, a very austere-looking man, said belligerently: "Well, young lady, if you had one with the American flag on it, I would take it, but you Jehovah's Wit—" Before he could say another word, my answer, of course, was: "Oh, Sir, I am so glad I have just the one you want," and took that issue from my magazine bag. He stopped jingling the change in his pocket, turned red, stammered, and gave me the



contribution—and I gave him the magazine!

I had another amusing time when we were distributing a special booklet to all the clergy—*The Kingdom, the Hope of the World*. At one house, a clergyman answered. He was not the least bit interested in receiving it, but our instructions were to leave it at the door if at all possible, so I pleasantly said: "This is your copy, Sir, and I will just lay it here for you." I turned to leave, and as I was walking down the path, the booklet came sailing past me and landed on the ground near a puddle. I picked it up, not wishing to leave it there, but at that moment a huge dog came growling after me, snatched the booklet out of my hand, and raced back to his

master, the preacher. So what I could not deliver, the dog did!

In 1953, Mother, Herbert, and I settled in Sacramento. Since Herbert's health was giving him trouble, we both had to change the pattern of our lives. Often I have thanked Jehovah for being blessed with my faithful mother and my loyal husband. Both are gone now, having received their heavenly reward. Mother died in 1975; Herbert finished his earthly course in September 1980, at 82 years of age. The loneliness is still great, but when I reflect on the years of our service together, I am comforted. And I know there will never be a trail's end, for Jehovah, by his Son Jesus Christ, is my Guide on the trail extending throughout eternity.

Questions From Readers

- How can a Christian distinguish between bribing (condemned in the Bible) and giving a "tip" or "gift" for a service rendered?

We need to appreciate that practices differ from area to area. Ways that are accepted in some lands would be offensive or improper elsewhere. For example, people in one country may bow before an official, but in another land that would be viewed as idolatry.* Similarly, a "tipping" practice accepted in one land might be shocking or illegal in another. While bearing such differences in mind, all Christians should apply God's counsel against bribery.

What is bribery, and what does the Bible say about it? *The World Book Encyclopedia* explains: "Bribery means giving or offering something of value to a person in a position of trust, who in return

violates his or her duty or the law in order to benefit the giver." Thus it is bribery to give money (or a gift) to a judge to influence his decision and pervert justice. It is also bribery to offer money so as to circumvent the law, such as asking a building or automobile inspector to ignore a violation.

God condemns bribery, telling Israelite judges: "You must not pervert judgment. You must not be partial or accept a bribe, for the bribe blinds the eyes of wise ones and distorts the words of righteous ones." (Deuteronomy 16:19; compare Proverbs 17:23; Isaiah 1:23; 5:23; 1 Samuel 8:3-5.) Jehovah himself sets the standard, for with him "there is no unrighteousness or partiality or taking of a bribe." (2 Chronicles 19:7; Deuteronomy 10:17) Chris-

tians desiring God's approval refuse to resort to bribery.—Compare Acts 24:26.

While men worldwide denounce and have laws against bribery, many people face the problem reflected in the above question. They know that it takes a "gift" or "tip" to get minor officials in their land to do their job or to do it fairly. For instance, *The Wall Street Journal* said about a land race with inflation: "To obtain the extra cash needed to get by, government workers resort to petty corruption. You have to pay them to hand you any kind of form," says the head of a state agency. Meanwhile, immigration officials badger bewildered foreign tourists at the international airport for \$20 to stamp their passports so the travelers don't miss their planes."

Recently, *U.S. News & World Report* commented on bureau-

* "Questions From Readers," *The Watchtower* of June 1, 1968.

catic delays and resulting payoffs that are common around the world. For instance, it said: "An Indian these days must slip money to an official on the side to enroll a child in school, to gain admittance to a hospital, even to secure reservations on a train." Other illustrations of this include:

—A tradesman needs a permit before he can work. He pays the official fee at the government office, yet everyone knows that without a "gift" his papers will be kept on the bottom of the pile. While he is not asking to be put ahead of others, if he gives the normal "tip," his paper will be properly handled.

—In a certain land, people know that traffic officers get low pay and are expected to add to it with "gifts for refreshments." An officer stops a driver and says that a law was broken, so the man must pay a fine. When the driver protests that he broke no law, the officer warns that if the matter goes to court, he will charge the man also with assaulting an officer. Thus, many simply pay the "fine," viewing it as unofficial taxation. Others refuse, being willing to take the consequences.

—A municipality is supposed to provide garbage collection. But it is normal for a householder to give the garbagemen a "gift." If someone does not, his trash is "forgotten," and he is liable to be fined for unsanitary conditions.

Such problems show that many in authority use their government post for unjust profit. (Ecclesiastes 8:9) Christians long for God's righteous new system, but until then they must cope with the present system. (2 Peter 3:13) This may mean recognizing local situations wherein public servants expect gifts for performing their job. Even in lands where such is normal, many of Jehovah's Witnesses who deal with inspectors and customs officials

have declined to give "tips" to obtain what the law entitles them to. Because they are known for this stand, they receive treatment that most people get only through a payment. (Proverbs 10:9) However, each Christian must be guided by his Bible-educated conscience according to the local situation.

Love for neighbor is a factor to consider. (Matthew 22:39) It would be unloving to use a "gift" to get preferred treatment, such as being moved to the head of a line, bypassing those who were waiting. Jesus counseled us to treat others as we want to be treated. (Matthew 7:12) Some Christians may feel that as their turn in line comes, they can comply with the practice of the land to give a "gift" to get an official to do what his job requires. Of course, in lands where such "gifts" are not customary or they are shocking to public sensibilities, the loving Christian will act in a way that does not stumble others.—1 Corinthians 10:31-33.

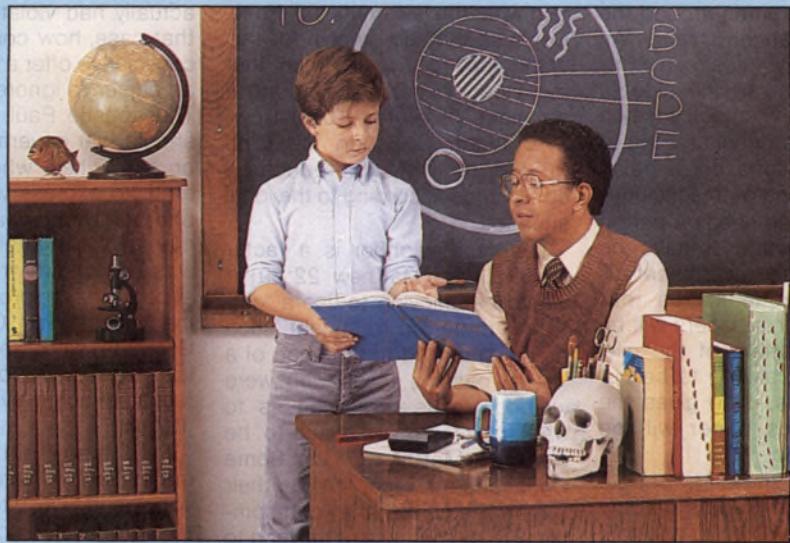
Another factor is obedience to law. Jesus urged: "Pay back Caesar's things to Caesar, but God's things to God."* (Mark 12:17; see also Matthew 17:24-27.) It is one thing if a Christian who has not broken the law is expected to "tip" a government employee or other

official. But what if a Christian actually had violated the law? In that case, how could he in good conscience offer a bribe to induce an officer to ignore the violation? The apostle Paul wrote that we should fear governmental superior authorities, who are empowered "to express wrath upon the one practicing what is bad." (Romans 13:3, 4) Paul's own position was: If he did wrong, he would accept the appropriate punishment. (Acts 25:10, 11) Thus, a Christian who violated a traffic law might have to pay a fine or fee, as directed by an officer or a judge.

Paul also said that governments are 'ministers to you for your good.' Despite the greed of some officials, governments do provide services for the public good. For instance, officials inspect automobiles as to their roadworthiness, and they examine whether buildings are in compliance with fire codes. Therefore, if a Christian felt that, within the law, he could "tip" an official who expected a "service fee," it is evident that this is quite different from bribing an inspector to ignore violations of the law.

In whatever land they live, Christians should exercise practical wisdom in dealing with local situations. God's servants should remember that those who 'will be guests in God's tent and reside in his holy mountain' cannot resort to bribery. (Psalm 15:1, 5) With regard to giving "tips" to receive rightfully due services or to avoid unfair treatment by officials, a Christian must decide what his conscience permits and bear responsibility for any resulting complications. He certainly should pursue a course that leaves him with a good conscience personally and that does not sully the good name of Christianity or stumble observers.—2 Corinthians 6:3.

* Elders in the Christian congregation are responsible to handle violations of divine law, such as stealing, murder, and immorality. But God did not require congregation elders to enforce Caesar's laws and codes. Hence, Paul did not feel compelled to turn over to Roman authorities Onesimus, who was a fugitive under Roman law. (Philemon 10, 15) Of course, if someone flagrantly violates secular law, gaining the reputation of being a law-breaker, he would not be a good example and might even be disfellowshipped. (1 Timothy 3:2, 7, 10) If lawbreaking was involved in causing another's death, bloodguilt requiring congregation investigation might result.



His Teacher Wanted One

That is what a youth reported when he took the publication *Life—How Did It Get Here? By Evolution or by Creation?* to school. He explains:

"I went to school with my new book. I told my teacher that I wanted to share the book with the class. So he looked through it and liked it so much that he stopped the class from the work they were doing and shared it with them. The next day he asked me if he could have one. And that afternoon, after school, I placed it with him. He really likes it."

