

The WATCHTOWER



"GOOD NEWS"
-Even For Our Day!

JANUARY 1, 1977

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

The WATCHTOWER

January 1, 1977
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A watchtower enables a person to see far into the distance and announce to others what is coming. Can a magazine serve similarly in our day? Yes, from its first issue (July 1879) onward, *The Watchtower*, published by Jehovah's Witnesses, has done just that.

How can it benefit you? Consider: Do you long for a better world, one of true justice and free from sorrow, hatred and war? Do you want to live at a time when genuine peace and love prevail among people of all races? Then this magazine can aid you. Using God's Word, the Bible, as its authority, it points out the clear evidence that the present wicked system of things will soon end, destroyed by God. But it also announces the coming in of a righteous new order. There, under the rule of God's kingdom, his heavenly government, people will enjoy life forever in true peace, health and happiness on a paradise earth.

Faithfulness to the Word of God lifts *The Watchtower* above the contradicting religious teachings and philosophies of men. It stays strictly neutral as regards political affairs. It wholeheartedly upholds the highest moral standard—that of man's Maker, Jehovah God. From this source, it shows solutions to the problems of daily life.

We know that many sincere persons would appreciate a discussion of these things in their own home with a qualified person. One of Jehovah's Witnesses will be glad to call on you free of charge. To arrange for this, simply write the publishers of this magazine or contact Jehovah's Witnesses locally.

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A NEW YEAR —TIME FOR A CHANGE?

A “*No nuevo, vida nueva*” is an old Spanish proverb that means “a new year, a new life.” Lots of people today—and not just those who are sick, poverty-stricken, hungry or threatened by war and violence—would like to see the new year bring a turn for the better in their personal lives.

But most of us know that replacing an old calendar with a new one really does not change anything. When we pick up the January 1, 1977, newspaper the news in it will be very much what it was the day before. That is because the change in the year will not change people—and people are what makes life what it is.

Yet the end of a year and the start of a new one does do something. It often makes people reflect on their lives and the passing of time. It can make one ask: “Just where am I going? What am I doing with the years of my life? Is it time for a change?”

We cannot change what others are and certainly not what the whole world is. But we can give new direction to our own lives that can bring us greater happiness. By New Year’s resolutions? No. Most people break these within a few days of making them. Resolving to make a change just because the year is changing does not give us genuine, strong motivation to follow through. There needs to be a greater force, a solid hope of something better that moves us to action.

That is why the Bible urges: “Trust in Jehovah with all your heart and do not

lean upon your own understanding. In all your ways take notice of him, and he himself will make your paths straight.”—Prov. 3: 5, 6.

If our hopes for a better future are based on just ourselves and our own imperfect knowledge and abilities,

we have to admit that this is not much of a foundation. Even if they are based on an entire nation or on the whole world, the situation is really no better. The world shows the same imperfections as we ourselves have, only on a bigger scale. And that will prove true in 1977 just as much as in 1976 or in any other year. Good sense, then, tells us that we need to look to a source higher than ourselves—loftier than the whole world of imperfect mankind.

Do you, perhaps, feel as though you are only marking time, not really accomplishing anything with your life? Or do you find that your married life or your family life is showing signs of stress and even dangerous trouble? Or do you wonder why humankind as a whole just seems to flounder along, going from one crisis to another with little or nothing to encourage us that the future will bring better things?

In that case—not because of a change in the calendar, but because of what it can bring you in the way of sound help and a solid hope—there could be no better time for you to investigate the contents of the Bible. This can bring about a change in your life for which you will be forever grateful. The publishers of this magazine are interested in showing you how you can gain such Bible understanding.

“Trust in Jehovah with all your heart and do not lean upon your own understanding. In all your ways take notice of him, and he himself will make your paths straight.”

—Prov. 3:5, 6.

WHAT DID THE WISE MAN MEAN?

KING Solomon was one of the wisest men that ever lived. Speaking truthfully, he could say: "I myself have greatly increased in wisdom more than anyone that happened to be before me in Jerusalem, and my own heart saw a great deal of wisdom and knowledge." (Eccl. 1:16) In saying that his "own heart saw a great deal of wisdom and knowledge," Solomon evidently meant that he had more than just a brain filled with much information. Wisdom and knowledge had affected his heart, becoming a part of him. He appreciated their value and was motivated to use his knowledge and wisdom.

Solomon left no avenue unexplored in getting to know wisdom. He comments: "I set my heart to seek and explore wisdom in relation to everything that has been done under the heavens. . . . I proceeded to give my heart to knowing wisdom and to knowing madness, and I have come to know folly." (Eccl. 1:13, 17) Solomon was stirred to be diligent, whole-hearted, in his efforts to become intimately acquainted with wisdom. He did not limit himself to investigating the commands and dictates of wisdom but also explored madness and folly. He observed carefully how other men followed a course of madness and foolishness. Based on what he saw, Solomon drew sound conclusions as to how to avoid problems.

What did he learn from his thorough investigation of all aspects of mundane knowledge and wisdom? "This too is a



striving after wind. For in the abundance of wisdom there is an abundance of vexation, so that he that increases knowledge increases pain."—Eccl. 1:17, 18.

As Solomon pointed out, a basic reason for this is: "That which is made crooked cannot be made straight, and that which is wanting cannot possibly be counted." (Eccl. 1:15) The person who increases in worldly knowledge becomes painfully aware of the fact that many "crooked" things in this imperfect system cannot be straightened out. Neither time nor circumstances allow it to be corrected. In fact, so many things in human affairs are defective that they cannot even be numbered. The greater a person's knowledge and wisdom, therefore, the keener his awareness of how limited his opportunities are to change things for the better. A short life-span and unfavorable conditions in an imperfect human society work against him. This gives rise to vexation and frustration.

Godly wisdom, however, does not produce such negative effects, but builds hope, faith and confidence. Such wisdom is described in the Scriptures as follows: "The wisdom from above is first of all chaste, then peaceable, reasonable, ready to obey, full of mercy and good fruits, not making partial distinctions, not hypocritical." (Jas. 3:17) To which kind of wisdom are you giving the greatest attention—to the kind that brings frustration or to godly wisdom, the kind that can help you to get the best from life even now?

"GOOD NEWS"

-Even For Our Day!

MY WIFE died, I lost my job, my TV went bad and the radio too. I had a bad accident, got injured and have so much pain. There's nothing more in life for me. So I'm going to end all my troubles." Thus spoke a man in Ohio to a complete stranger. Obviously this man desperately needed "good news." But is there any "good news" today that could bring comfort to such a man and to millions of other distressed humans?

One book that has existed for centuries can rightly lay claim to providing the best of news. Millions, including the troubled man in Ohio, have been encouraged and cheered by its message. It has given many persons renewed hope and put meaning into their lives. The book has universal appeal. Its "good news" is, in fact, directed to "every nation and tribe and tongue and people." (Rev. 14:6) Appropriately this book, the Bible, has been translated, the whole or in part, into more than 1,575 languages and dialects.

REASON FOR THE "GOOD NEWS"

To appreciate just what the "good news" found in the Bible is, we need to know why we find ourselves living in a world filled with sickness, pain, lawlessness, violence and death. Again, it is



the Bible that furnishes this information. What does it tell us?

It was never God's purpose for people to suffer. The Creator, Jehovah God, set before the first humans, Adam and Eve, the prospect of never-ending life in a delightful earthly paradise. (Gen. 2:8, 9, 15) However, man's Maker arranged matters in such a way that the life of humankind depended upon conformity to law. For example, man must breathe, eat and drink in order to continue living. Likewise, obedience to God's stated commands is essential for the continuance of man's life. Therefore, when Adam disobeyed God's law, he lost perfection and, as a sinful man, could father only imperfect offspring. Says the Bible, "Through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men because they had all sinned."

—Rom. 5:12.

Happily, Jehovah God purposed to free the human race from sin and death in his own due time. Meanwhile, with few

exceptions, he allowed humans to follow their own desires and did not prevent their enjoying the benefits of the natural cycles he put into operation ages ago. For this reason the Christian apostle Paul could say to the idolatrous people of Lystra: "In the past generations [God] permitted all the nations to go on in their ways, although, indeed, he did not leave himself without witness in that he did good, giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling your hearts to the full with food and good cheer."—Acts 14:16, 17.

Of course, if people choose to ignore their conscience or foolishly disregard physical laws, they cannot escape bringing trouble upon themselves and likely also upon others. Jehovah God does not step in to prevent the outworking of the unchangeable law: "Whatever a man is sowing, this he will also reap." (Gal. 6:7) So the Most High has allowed mankind to experience both good and bad, while working out his own purpose respecting them.

FREEING MANKIND

The Scriptures reveal that Jehovah God has already laid the basis for freeing mankind from sin and death. He did so by providing a ransom price for the human race. How and why did he do this?

When Adam violated God's law, he lost perfect human life for himself and for his unborn offspring. Thus the entire human race came into slavery to sin and death. A ransom price was needed to free the human family from this slavery. That price had to be the exact equivalent of what Adam lost through his disobedience—perfect human life.

No human effort could provide this valuable price. The hopelessness of doing so is well described by the inspired psalmist: "Not one of them can by any means redeem even a brother, nor give to God

a ransom for him; (and the redemption price of their soul is so precious that it has ceased to time indefinite) that he should still live forever and not see the pit."—Ps. 49:7-9.

However, through a miracle Jehovah God provided what was needed. By means of his holy spirit, he transferred the life of his only-begotten Son from the heavens to the womb of the Jewish virgin Mary. Hence, this one, who came to be called Jesus Christ, could be born "holy," free from sin. The angel Gabriel made this clear when saying to Mary: "Holy spirit will come upon you, and power of the Most High will overshadow you. For that reason also what is born will be called holy, God's Son."—Luke 1:35.

Being perfect as was Adam when created, Jesus could offer up his life in sacrifice, thereby furnishing the needed ransom price. In effect, he stepped in for the human race, taking upon himself the penalty that sinful mankind deserves—death. Explaining this, the apostle Peter wrote: "He himself bore our sins in his own body upon the stake, in order that we might be done with sins and live to righteousness. And 'by his stripes you were healed.'" (1 Pet. 2:24) Since that time humans have been given the opportunity to accept, on God's terms, the benefits of this ransom provision.

A RIGHTEOUS RULE WILL TRANSFORM THE EARTH

Back in the first century C.E., those who accepted God's provision for salvation had opened up to them the opportunity of becoming associated with Jesus Christ as king-priests after finishing their earthly life in faithfulness and being raised to immortal heavenly life. The Bible says of those who are chosen as joint heirs of Christ: "Happy and holy is anyone having part in the first resurrec-

tion; over these the second death has no authority, but they will be priests of God and of the Christ, and will rule as kings with him for the thousand years.”—Rev. 20:6.

For centuries, then, God has been selecting persons to officiate as kings and priests with his Son. As far as is humanly possible, those chosen must prove themselves to be persons who can be described as follows: “No falsehood was found in their mouths; they are without blemish.” (Rev. 14:5) Only tried, faithful servants of God could be allowed to share in the weighty responsibility of restoring the human race to perfection. Like the priests of ancient Israel who offered animal sacrifices to atone for sins, these will share in applying the sin-atoning benefits of Jesus’ sacrifice toward mankind on earth.

So, by means of Jesus Christ and his fellow king-priests, Jehovah God will bring about the fulfillment of the grand promise: “He will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away.”—Rev. 21:4.

What marvelous “good news” this is! The rule of Jesus Christ and his associates will effect a complete liberation from everything that has made life on earth unpleasant. The removal of all undesirable pain will necessarily mean as well the end of crime, poverty, violence, injustice, oppression and famine. Gone, too, will be the debilitating effects of sickness and old age. All mankind will enjoy youthful strength and vigor. No more will bitter tears be shed on account of suffering or death. In the light of what will be accomplished, we can appreciate why the Bible speaks of the “good news of the kingdom.”—Matt. 24:14.

Surprisingly, though, it is not “good news” for all of earth’s inhabitants. The

Holy Scriptures indicate that God’s kingdom by Christ would have many enemies and that the nations would prefer their own rulerships. Their lining themselves up against God’s kingdom, however, is doomed to fail. The prophecy of Daniel informs us: “In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be brought to ruin. And the kingdom itself will not be passed on to any other people. It will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, and it itself will stand to times indefinite.” (Dan. 2:44) Yes, human rulerships and all their staunch defenders will go down in defeat before the “King of kings and Lord of lords,” Jesus Christ.—Rev. 19:11-16.

The destruction will be so stupendous as to fit the Biblical description of “a time of distress such as has not been made to occur since there came to be a nation.” (Dan. 12:1) Frightful as this “great tribulation” will be, it will bring welcome relief to all who truly want to be subjects of God’s kingdom by Christ. (Rev. 7:14) The Scriptures assure us: “Jehovah knows how to deliver people of godly devotion out of trial, but to reserve unrighteous people for the day of judgment to be cut off.” (2 Pet. 2:9) From the Bible book of Revelation we learn that there will be far more than just a few survivors. They are described as “a great crowd, which no man was able to number, out of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues.”—Rev. 7:9.

These survivors, including many children, will then come under the direct rule of Jesus Christ. They will experience the concern and compassion that are prophetically attributed to him: “He will deliver the poor one crying for help, also the afflicted one and whoever has no helper. He will feel sorry for the lowly one and the poor one, and the souls of the poor ones he will save. From oppression and from

violence he will redeem their soul, and their blood will be precious in his eyes."

(Ps. 72:12-14) It will also be their privilege to have his aid in overcoming weaknesses and imperfections, finally to stand before the Most High as sinless humans. Revelation 7:17 points to this when saying that the Lamb, Christ Jesus, "will shepherd them, and will guide them to fountains of waters of life."

What of those who die before the "great tribulation" brings destruction upon all the enemies of God's kingdom by Christ? They will be given the opportunity to gain the benefits of Christ's sacrifice through a resurrection from the dead. Just think of the joy the tribulation survivors will have in welcoming back the dead—men, women and children—in fulfillment of Jesus' words: "Do not marvel at this, because the hour is coming in which all those in the memorial tombs will hear his voice and come out."—John 5:28, 29.

WHEN WILL IT BE?

The thrilling news for our day is that the time for God's kingdom to take over earth's affairs is fast approaching. Note, for example, what the Bible says about the conditions that would mark the "last days" of the ungodly system of things: "In the last days critical times hard to deal with will be here. For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, self-assuming, haughty, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, disloyal, having no natural affection, not open to any agreement, slanderers, without self-control, fierce, without love of goodness, betrayers, headstrong, puffed up with pride, lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God, having a form of godly de-

votion but proving false to its power."

—2 Tim. 3:1-5.

Similarly, Jesus Christ told his disciples that deliverance would come at a time of great fear and anxiety among the nations. After saying that on the earth there would be "anguish of nations, not knowing the way out," Jesus followed this up with these encouraging words: "As these things start to occur, raise yourselves erect and lift your heads up, because your deliverance is getting near." Illustrating his point, he continued: "Note the fig tree and all the other trees: When they are already in the bud, by observing it you know for yourselves that now the summer is near. In this way you also, when you see these things occurring, know that the kingdom of God is near. Truly I say to you, This generation will by no means pass away until all things occur."—Luke 21:25-32.

Have we not witnessed the very things foretold in the Bible? Do we not, therefore, have good reason to expect deliverance soon? Yes, this means that there are persons alive today who may actually see the end of the present ungodly system, with its injustices and oppression. Those who may die before that time will not lose out on the blessings that only God's kingdom by Christ can bring about—total release from sickness, pain and death. Any injury that they may have experienced in this system will be completely undone upon their being resurrected with the prospect of never-ending life.

Surely the Bible does contain "good news" for our day. How encouraging it is to know that soon this earth will be a place of peace, a delightful paradise, free from sickness, pain and death!

Contentment

• A person can greatly increase his contentment in life by learning to be happy with what he has instead of fretting constantly over what he does not have.

ONE of the outstanding qualities of Jesus Christ is his humility. He willingly gave up his high position in the heavens to become a man "a little lower than angels." (Heb. 2:7; Phil. 2:5-7) Then, while on earth, he did not seek to be served but humbly served others. (Matt. 20:28) Yet future is his fine royal act of humility as "King of kings and Lord of lords." (Rev. 19:16) This is referred to at 1 Corinthians 15:24, where we read: "Next, the end, when he hands over the kingdom to his God and Father." To appreciate what this involves, we must consider why Jehovah purposed to have his Son rule as King.

When Jehovah God created the first humans, Adam and Eve, he wanted them to remain in his love and at perfect unity with him. He had created them in such a way that everlasting life would be possible for them only if they maintained a good relationship with him through perfect obedience. By transgressing God's law, Adam and Eve alienated themselves from their Maker and lost the spiritual connection that they needed to continue living. Having ruined his perfection, Adam also lost the capability to father perfect offspring. "That is why," says the Bible, "just as through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men because they had all sinned." (Rom. 5:12) As sin means missing the mark of perfect obedience to God, the entire human race thus came to be at disunity with its Creator.

It was not God's will, however, for this situation to continue. This is evident from what the apostle Paul wrote about Christ's rule, at 1 Corinthians 15:25, 26: "He must rule as king until God has put all enemies under his feet. As the last enemy, death is to be brought to nothing." The bringing of death to nothing calls for the removal of all human weaknesses and im-

Jesus' Royal Act of Humility

perfections. This is so because, as the Bible states, "the sting producing death is sin." (1 Cor. 15:56) According to Revelation 20:4, "a thousand years" have been set aside for Christ, along with a body of associate rulers purchased from among mankind, to bring death to nothing by restoring mankind to perfection.

The arrangement for liberating mankind from enslavement to sin and death is symbolically portrayed at Revelation 22: 1, 2. The apostle John there describes what an angel revealed to him in vision: "He showed me a river of water of life, clear as crystal, flowing out from the throne of God and of the Lamb. . . . And on this side of the river and on that side there were trees of life producing twelve crops of fruit, yielding their fruits each month. And the leaves of the trees were for the curing of the nations."

The Bible makes it clear that the stain of sin can be removed only on the basis of Jesus' sacrifice. The apostle John wrote under inspiration: "The blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin." (1 John 1:7) So the "river of water of life," with trees alongside its banks, represents God's provision for life, including the sin-atonishing benefits of his Son's sacrifice. Since "life's water" and the trees are symbolic of God's provision for life, partaking of that provision definitely involves exercising faith

in the atoning benefits of Jesus' blood.
—Rev. 22:17.

Such faith must express itself in action, for, as the Bible points out: "Faith without works is dead." (Jas. 2:26) What action is required? Obedient response to the direction of God's kingdom in the hands of Christ and his associate rulers. As individuals loyally submit to Kingdom rule during Christ's thousand-year reign and have the atoning benefits of his sacrifice applied in their behalf, they will be growing to perfection.

That the lifting up of mankind to perfection will be a gradual process is implied in the symbolic description of God's provision for life. The trees alongside the "river of water of life" yield their fruits *each month*. Were it a matter of partaking of God's provision for life just once, manifestly there would be no need for such a regular, unfailing supply of life-sustaining fruits.

Further, to assist mankind, Jesus Christ and his associate rulers will be using earthly representatives. These will be men of outstanding devotion to what is right and having genuine love for others. Among them will be faithful men in the earthly line of Jesus' ancestry. By reason of Jesus Christ's raising them to life, they will become his children.—Ps. 45:16.

Clearly, then, the Messianic kingdom became necessary in God's purpose only because the human race had been plunged into sin and death. With the removal of all traces of sin, there will be no further need for the Messianic kingdom to rule in this respect. However, it will not come to a violent end; that kingdom will not be brought to "ruin," for the fruitage of its fine works will remain forever. (Dan. 7: 14) It appears to be in this sense that the Scriptures speak of Christ's rule as having "no end."—Isa. 9:7; Luke 1:33; Rev. 11: 15.

At the conclusion of his thousand-year

reign, Jesus Christ will have accomplished his assigned task of bringing humankind to perfection. In true humility he will then hand over to his Father the authority he exercised toward mankind in the capacity of "King of kings and Lord of lords." The words of 1 Corinthians 15:28 will thus be fulfilled: "When all things will have been subjected to him [the Son], then the Son himself will also subject himself to the One who subjected all things to him, that God may be all things to everyone." Following his example, his associate rulers and the Kingdom's earthly representatives will gladly and humbly relinquish their positions. At that time all humans will stand as equals before God, free from weaknesses and imperfections.

How should this knowledge affect us even now? It should impress upon us that in the Christian congregation positions are not what count as all-important. Not the responsibility or authority entrusted to the individual, but what *he is as a person and his approved relationship with God* are the truly important things. In the Christian congregation there are no "great men"; even elders or overseers are but servants or slaves of their brothers. (Matt. 20:25-27) Furthermore, it would seem that the arrangement of elders or overseers today and during Christ's thousand-year reign may be only temporary, and that it may continue only until such time as mankind attains to perfection before Jehovah God. Truly, this understanding of matters puts the emphasis where it should be—on the Supreme Sovereign, Jehovah God.

Let us, therefore, imitate Jesus Christ in maintaining our humility before our Maker, keeping uppermost in mind that an approved relationship with him is an abiding possession. (Prov. 22:4) If we do this, it may be our privilege to be among those who witness Jesus' royal act of humility—his handing over the kingdom to his God and Father.

Insight on the News

- The "National Catholic Reporter" of October 22, 1976, in a story from East Hanover, New Jersey, U.S.A., stated:

"Parish school children will be barred from attending St. Rose of Lima school unless their parents volunteer to help with bingo. Parents

who do not assist at an assigned game will be fined \$10." This publication also printed a letter to the parishioners in which the pastor, Alphonse Tuozzo, said: "Without these games we would be in dire financial straits." His letter also stated: "If the fine is not paid within a week, the child or children will not be permitted to return to school."

Financial necessity or a desire for more money may, for some, seem to justify such compulsion in the name of religion. But this is certainly not a Christian method. The apostle Paul stated: "Let each one do just as he has resolved in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." (2 Cor. 9:7) The greed promoted by gambling is not a Christian trait either, for Paul said that "greedy persons" will not inherit God's kingdom.—1 Cor. 6:9, 10.

- "Family Health" of October 1976 states: "Two recent cases from Appalachia [a region of the United States], reported by doctors from the University of Kentucky, show

Human "Wolves" that lycanthropy—the delusion that one is becoming a wolf—is not a long-vanished myth but a still-present psychiatric disorder." One of the afflicted persons was a middle-aged man who "often slept in cemeteries and howled, wolf-like, at the moon." The other, a younger man, "felt an unconquerable need to chase live rabbits and eat them."

While some readers may view such reports as mere items of interest, others may see that cases of this kind give added support to the Bible's account of King Nebuchadnezzar's madness. In fulfillment of a prophetic dream explained by the prophet Daniel, that Babylonian monarch was stricken with insanity for seven years, "and vegetation he began to eat just like bulls." Regarding his mental derangement, it has been said: "The

form of madness from which he suffered when pride overthrew his reason was that called lycanthropy, in which the patient fancies himself one of the inferior animals and acts as such." ("The Westminster Dictionary of the Bible," p. 422) After seven years, God restored Nebuchadnezzar's sanity.

- Writing in the Toronto "Star" of October 4, 1976, Stuart Shaw mentions the book

"Jehovah's Witnesses in Canada: Champions of Freedom

of Speech and Worship," by

James Penton, associate professor of history at the University of Lethbridge. Shaw

explains that it discusses the

intense persecution of the Witnesses in that country from 1939 to 1956, "first at the instance of the federal government and then at that of the government of Quebec." When Jehovah's Witnesses were banned in Canada on July 4, 1940, he says: "Prime Minister Mackenzie King's official explanation was a typical piece of gobbledegook, from which emerged only a suggestion that the sect was somehow impeding the war effort."

Referring to the recent book, however, and shedding some light on the underlying cause, Shaw comments: "Penton argues convincingly, citing official correspondence and documents of the period, that the real reason was entirely different. The King government was under heavy clerical pressure—from the Roman Catholic Church in particular, but also from some Protestant clergymen—to suppress these 'heretics.' "

The nationwide ban on the Witnesses ended in a few years, though persecution of them continued. Nonetheless, their ultimate success in 'defending and legally establishing the good news' benefited many. (Phil. 1:7) Interestingly, Shaw commented: "The law of sedition has been clarified so that it can no longer be used to harry people for their religious beliefs alone. The power of provincial and municipal governments to harass religious groups has been largely nullified."

"Freedom of religion and freedom of expression generally are a good deal safer than they were 25 years ago. And for that all Canadians—whatever they think about their theology—owe the Witnesses a debt of gratitude."

A Debt of Gratitude

SERVING with

THE FAITHFUL “SLAVE”

“Look! I am coming as a thief. Happy is the one that stays awake and keeps his outer garments.”—Rev. 16:15.

HERE I AM! Send me.” In the spirit of these words of the prophet Isaiah, in recent years multitudes of honest-hearted persons have offered themselves for service to the Sovereign Lord Jehovah. And with what result? The joyous good news that Jehovah has established his heavenly kingdom in the hands of his Son Jesus Christ has been proclaimed “to the extremities of the inhabited earth.” Those who have made great sacrifices in order to share fully in this grand work have been greatly blessed.—Isa. 6:8; Rom. 10:18.

² Along the way there have been bitter trials and persecutions, and many of us have grown old in Jehovah’s service. Like faithful Isaiah, we have had to endure in witnessing, time and again, to people whose hearts are “unreceptive,” whose ears are “unresponsive” and whose eyes

1. How have Isaiah 6:8 and Romans 10:18 had particular application to Jehovah’s people today?
2. (a) How are Isaiah’s words, “How long, O Jehovah?” to be applied? (b) What does Jehovah’s answer indicate to us today?

have been ‘pasted together’ so that they are unable to recognize the glorious message of God’s kingdom now in operation.

Like Isaiah, at times we may have asked the question, ‘How long, O Jehovah, will these people continue to show such obstinacy?’ Jehovah answers: “Until the cities actually crash in ruins, to be without an inhabitant, and the houses be without earthling man, and the ground itself is ruined into a desolation; and Jehovah actually removes earthling men far away, and the deserted condition does become very extensive in the midst of the land.”

—Isa. 6:10-12.

³ Patiently and with zeal we must keep on giving the Kingdom witness to the full extent purposed by Jehovah. And as we hold fast to “the full assurance of the hope” we can know for a certainty that ‘God is not unrighteous so as to forget our work and the love we showed for his name.’ (Heb. 6:10-12) How grand our privilege of serving out of sheer love for our God Jehovah!—Mark 12:28-31; 1 Tim. 1:5.

⁴ Jehovah’s marvelous Kingdom purposes will be carried out to their completion and on time. (Isa. 55:11; Heb. 10:37) For our part we must continue to praise his beauteous name with thankfulness, as we eagerly anticipate the early fulfillment of his precious Kingdom promises.

—1 Chron. 29:11-13; Isa. 9:6, 7; 2 Pet. 1:4, 11.

3. (a) What will result from our continued zealous Kingdom service? (b) What should be our motive in serving Jehovah?
4. (a) What confidence should we have with regard to Jehovah’s purposes? (b) So what grand privilege is now ours?

⁵ The true followers of Christ Jesus have always served in expectation of "the end." At Luke 19:11 we read that Jesus' disciples "were imagining that the kingdom of God was going to display itself instantly." Later, when Jesus appeared to them after his resurrection, these disciples asked him: "Lord, are you restoring the kingdom to Israel at this time?" (Acts 1:6) And to expectant Christians at a still later time, Paul wrote: "Brothers, respecting the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we request of you not to be quickly shaken from your reason nor to be excited either through an inspired expression or through a verbal message or through a letter as though from us, to the effect that the day of Jehovah is here." Rather, they were to be made "firm in every good deed and word."—2 Thess. 2:1, 2, 17.

⁶ Though they lived in hope of that "day of Jehovah," none of those first-century Christians survived to see its arrival. Did this affect their zeal and faith? Not at all! No matter when the wicked system might end, the "good news of the kingdom" remained just as glorious, the service of the Kingdom just as joyful, and their blessed relationship to Jehovah and his Christ just as precious. Though they did not live to see the "end," yet they got to preach the good news "in all creation that is under heaven."—Col. 1:23.

⁷ But what of our present day? Have God's people lost out on anything in that the great day of Jehovah has not yet burst forth upon the wicked of the earth? No, for along with the anointed remnant of Jehovah's Witnesses, some two million

5. (a) What expectation have Jesus' followers always had? (b) What caution and counsel does Paul give in Second Thessalonians?

6. How did nonarrival of the "day of Jehovah" affect first-century Christians?

7. (a) What has resulted today due to Jehovah's exercising patience? (2 Pet. 3:15) (b) Why will none of Jehovah's faithful servants have reason for disappointment?

persons now stand in the place of spiritual security. (Ps. 91:9, 10) Even though some may yet die from persecutions, old age or other causes, their resurrection is assured. (1 Thess. 4:13, 14) Those who keep feasting upon God's Word and who keep zealous in their service to God will not be disappointed.—Rom. 10:11.

⁸ Continuously from 1879, when it was first published, this magazine has encouraged such wholehearted Kingdom service. For example, there was this passage in *The Watch Tower* of January 1, 1914, page 3:

"So far as our judgment goes, the Year 1914 is the last one of what the Bible terms 'Gentile Times'—the period in which God has allowed the nations of the earth to do their best to rule the world. . . . We believe that the year 1914 gives evidence of greater possibilities of service for the truth than has any previous year of the harvest. . . . Let us be more than ever on the alert, therefore, to be used and useful in the service of our king. Let us remember that the moments and the hours are important, that no matter how many cares of life we may have, we can always find some time for the service of the truth."

Jehovah's faithful people have always regarded the "service of our king" as being of paramount importance.

⁹ Yes, for over thirty years until 1914, a small group of devoted Christians had been serving as the modern-day "faithful and discreet slave" in providing spiritual food for fellow servants of the household of God. (Matt. 24:45; Eph. 2:19-22; Gal. 6:10) And now, from 1914, the prophecies that they had pointed to began to be fulfilled in World War I and other "pangs of distress" and they themselves came to be persecuted by the war-mad nations. Clearly the "sign" was evident that Christ

8. As shown by *The Watch Tower* in 1914, what have Jehovah's people always regarded as of paramount importance?

9. In 1914, what clear evidence was there of the fulfillment of the "sign"?

had arrived to "sit down on his glorious [heavenly] throne" and was proceeding to the judgment of the nations. (Matt. 24:3, 7-9; 25:31, 32) What did the future hold for the "slave" class?

"HAPPY IS THAT SLAVE"

¹⁰ It was now that the Master judged the "slave" to be worthy of further privileges, in line with his prophetic promise:

"Who really is the faithful and discreet slave whom his master appointed over his domestics, to give them their food at the proper time? Happy is that slave if his master on arriving finds him doing so. Truly I say to you, He will appoint him over all his belongings."—Matt. 24:45-47.

¹¹ How wonderfully have these words been fulfilled! In the year 1919 God's people experienced a complete release from the politico-religious bondage that had been imposed on them during World War I and their joy was great when Jehovah's energizing spirit was poured out upon them as they assembled in convention at Cedar Point, Ohio, U.S.A. Vigorously, they now took up the work with a new instrument of service, the *Golden Age* magazine (known today as *Awake!*). A further high point of happiness was reached at the Cedar Point assembly of 1922, when the call went forth: "Advertise, advertise, advertise, the King and his kingdom." Truly, the Master had entrusted to this "slave"—to the exclusion of faithless Christendom—all his "belongings," the performing of a Kingdom role on earth. And in what would the intensified activity of this happy "slave" result?

¹² Jehovah had richly rewarded his anointed Witnesses as they continued faithfully to proclaim the Kingdom during

10. What prophecy did the Master now fulfill toward the "slave"? (Luke 12:42-44)

11. How did the "slave" respond to the Master's appointment? (Compare Acts 1:8.)

12. (a) How was the "slave's" zealous activity rewarded? (b) As stated in *The Watchtower* in 1944, what do Jehovah's servants consider all-important? (Matt. 24:14)

those years. (Matt. 25:21, 23) And later their joy overflowed when the "great crowd," with hopes of living forever on this earth, began to join them. (Rev. 7:4, 9) By the end of World War II, these integrity-keeping Christians had grown to about 140,000 in number. Now they learned that a great work remained to be done and they shouldered this responsibility with the attitude described in *The Watchtower* of September 15, 1944, page 280:

"The awake ones . . . do not say, 'It is a long time yet to the wind-up, and, according to the present understanding of Bible chronology, six thousand years of human history will end first in the coming seventies and till then it is a long stretch to serve the Lord continuously and undividedly.' No; the faithful watchers and servants do not worry about chronology, whether it is to be the second or third watch of the night, or even if the apparent extension of the time is one day more, until tomorrow. They keep their eye and heart on Jehovah's kingdom, and not on the time clock."

To this day, it is the Kingdom that is all-important. The "slave" class and all co-workers must keep on the watch as they hold fast the joy of Kingdom service, appreciating that any who become sluggish are in danger of losing everything.—Mark 13:35-37; Matt. 25:26, 29.

¹³ Today, we find more than 2,000,000 persons actively engaged in proclaiming the Kingdom, and further expansion is in prospect, for at the 1976 celebration of the Memorial of Jesus' death, in some 40,000 congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses around the earth, the attendance totaled 4,972,571, of whom only 10,187 professed to be of the anointed "slave" class. How happy is this "slave" that Jehovah's 'patience' has resulted in an ingathering far beyond the early expectations!—2 Pet. 3:9; Isa. 60:8, 22.

13. What reason does the "slave" have today for being happy?

KEEPING ON WATCH FOR THE MASTER

¹⁴ In 1971, the Governing Body of the "slave" class began to be enlarged in order to give broader spiritual supervision over the "belongings" of the Master here on earth. This includes caring for the interests of the "great crowd." It includes giving oversight to the preparing of Kingdom publications, to teaching God's people and to helping them in their service in the field.

¹⁵ Over the years, the Governing Body of the "faithful and discreet slave" was always associated closely with the corporate body now known as the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania, which was first incorporated in 1884, and which administers necessary matters for Jehovah's Witnesses world wide. There is no question that the first president of this corporation, C. T. Russell, was used mightily by Jehovah during the period when basic Bible truths were being restored among God's true worshipers on earth. Then, from 1917 to 1942, J. F. Rutherford served as president, and fought courageously against Christendom's efforts to discredit and destroy God's organized people on earth. From 1942, N. H. Knorr, who is still serving as president of the Watch Tower Society, has energetically pushed a great Bible educational campaign to the very ends of the earth. Administration by these faithful men and their fellow workers in the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses has been marvelously blessed by Jehovah. It is indicative of heaven's direction, and of the permanence and stability of the organization, that in the space of almost a hundred years, only three different men have served as president of the Watch Tower Society, each with abilities particularly suited to the needs of the time.

14. For what "belongings" does the "slave" now care? 15. (a) How has the Governing Body of the "slave" been blessed over the years? (b) What has helped in giving permanence to the organization?

¹⁶ To meet further demands of expansion, it was arranged in 1971 to increase the number of "older men" serving as the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses from seven (the directors of the Watch Tower Society) to a total of eleven members. Further expansion, to eighteen members, took place late in 1974; of these, John Groh has since finished his earthly course. And it was during the next year, 1975, that one of the most significant organizational readjustments in the 100-year history of the modern-day witnesses of Jehovah came under consideration. After discussions that continued through most of that year, the reorganization was approved on December 4, 1975, by a unanimous vote of the seventeen members of the Governing Body. It became operative from January 1, 1976.

¹⁷ What was involved in this reorganization? As always, Christ Jesus continued to be recognized as Head over the "slave" class, his congregation here on earth. (Eph. 1:22; 5:23) Under this one Head, the anointed members of the Governing Body serve as equals, with a chairman rotating alphabetically each year. Administrative responsibilities are divided among the Chairman's Committee of three members (comprising the chairman for the current year, for the previous year and for the year to follow), and five permanent committees of from five to seven members, which oversee the activities of Jehovah's Witnesses world wide. Each of these five committees has a chairman rotating each year and a permanent coordinator or secretary.—Prov. 11:14.

¹⁸ The Writing Committee supervises the

16. (a) How were needs of expansion met in 1971, and in 1974? (b) What significant readjustment was planned in 1975, and when did it become operative?

17. (a) Who is always Head over the "slave" class? (Matt. 23:8, 10) (b) How were responsibilities delegated, in harmony with Proverbs 11:14?

18. (a) Specifically, how do the committees share responsibilities? (b) What is the organization now well equipped to handle? (Isa. 60:5; 32:1, 2)

preparation of all publications; the Teaching Committee prepares materials for the various schools, meetings and assemblies arranged for God's people; the Service Committee takes care of all matters related to Kingdom-preaching and disciple-making; the Publishing Committee handles all printing operations and business affairs; and the Personnel Committee watches over the interests of all persons serving in the Bethel homes and factories of Jehovah's Witnesses. Thus responsibilities are shared, as was done among "older men" in the first-century Christian congregation. Moreover, the organization is now well equipped to handle further expansion, as well as problems that may arise due to the worsening world crisis.—Acts 15:1, 2, 6-29; 1 Cor. 14:40.

¹⁹ On February 1, 1976, a similar arrangement was put into effect in all branch offices of the Watch Tower Society throughout the earth. No longer is there a branch overseer, but three or more experienced "older men" serve as a committee under the Governing Body in watching over the interests of Jehovah's Witnesses in that area. In these committees, too, the chairman rotates each year, while one member serves continuously as coordinator.—Prov. 15:22.

19. How have the Watch Tower branch offices been reorganized, in line with Proverbs 15:22?

²⁰ With Jehovah's blessing, the work of his self-sacrificing Witnesses has borne marvelous fruitage, and the organization has expanded accordingly. There are some faithful workers in the field who have served Jehovah loyally for forty, fifty, sixty and more years, and these continue as outstanding examples to the entire congregation. There are those, too, who have expended themselves in "pioneering" difficult territories, in carrying the Kingdom message into new cities and lands, and in serving "underground" for decades in countries where Jehovah's Witnesses are banned. As all of us continue to serve with zeal, we can be confident that fine fruitage will be produced right through to the time when "Jehovah's day" brings sudden and instant destruction on this wicked world.

—1 Thess. 5:1-4.

²¹ Clearly, "expressions inspired by demons" are now going forth "to the kings [rulers] of the entire inhabited earth, to gather them together to the war of the great day of God the Almighty." It is in this situation that our Master adds the warning: "Look! I am coming as a thief.

20. (a) What marvelous fruitage has been produced by faithful workers in the field? (Matt. 13:23) (b) What encouragement does First Thessalonians 5:1-4 give toward our continuing to bear such fruitage?

21. (a) In what situation do the Master and his "slave" admonish all to serve God with zeal? (b) What rewards result from zealous service? (Prov. 18:10; Isa. 26:20, 21)

JEHOVAH GOD
Jesus Christ
"Faithful and Discreet Slave" Class — Matt. 24:45-47
GOVERNING BODY

Chairman's Committee	Writing Committee	Teaching Committee	Service Committee	Publishing Committee	Personnel Committee
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Happy is the one that stays awake and keeps his outer garments, that he may not walk naked and people look upon his shamefulness." That would be disastrous! Therefore, the "slave" class will continue to encourage all lovers of truth to put on, and keep on, "garments" that identify

IT WAS in Judea, probably during the fall of 32 C.E., that Jesus told his disciples: "Happy are those slaves whom the master on arriving finds watching! Truly I say to you, He will gird himself and make them recline at the table and will come alongside and minister to them. And if he arrives in the second watch, even if in the third, and finds them thus, happy are they!" (Luke 12:37, 38) Even if earlier expectations of the Master's coming were not fulfilled, they were to keep on watching right into the third watch—the darkest hour that precedes the dawn.

—Compare Matthew 25:13.

² Though this period of awaiting the arrival of Jesus, the Son of man, should stretch beyond early expectations, his thief-like approach is certain! None should be lulled into thinking that it is indefinitely delayed. That hour must strike! As Jesus himself assures us: "Know this, that if the householder had known at what hour the thief would come, he would have

them as those who serve God with zeal and "in true righteousness and loyalty." Such zealous, loyal service will keep us in the place of spiritual security now, and result in our being saved from destruction at Har-Magedon.—Rev. 16:14-16; Eph. 4:24.

"Girded" for **THE WORK AHEAD**



"Stand firm . . . with your loins girded about with truth."—Eph. 6:14.

kept watching and not have let his house be broken into. You also, keep ready, because at an hour that you do not think likely the Son of man is coming."—Luke 12:39, 40.

³ However, Jesus' watchful slaves are to do more than simply keep awake. Just as the Master 'girds himself' to minister to them, so he expects them to be "girded" for service. He tells them: "Let your loins be girded and your lamps be burning, and you yourselves be like men waiting for their master." (Luke 12:35, 36) Our diligence in doing these things will result in our being counted "happy" at the Master's coming.

1. Why would the Master's slaves be made happy?
2. What calls for the slaves to be vigilant?

3. What is required in addition to keeping awake?
(1 Pet. 1:13)

GIRDLED FOR GOD'S SERVICE

⁴ What does it mean for the slave to have 'his loins girded'? In ancient times warriors used to bind themselves around the waist or hips with a leather belt. This provided them with a firm support as they went forth to battle. In like manner, Christians today need to be "girded," in preparation for action or activity. The apostle Paul tells us that in order to 'stand firm against the crafty acts of the Devil,' we need to put on "the complete suit of armor from God." This requires, in the first place, the 'girding' of our loins with truth. Our continued study of and deep appreciation for the truth of God's Word will help us to "stand firm" against the wicked one.—Eph. 6:11-14; see *Kingdom Interlinear*.

⁵ Our spiritual warfare is real. We need, therefore, to keep our "loins girded constantly." We need to keep up our study of God's Word, cultivating ever stronger faith, that we may be truly equipped to turn back every weapon that crafty Satan may use against us. If we are "taught by Jehovah," no weapon will succeed against us. (Isa. 54:13, 17) Our 'girding' results in our spiritedly proclaiming the "good news of the kingdom," and this activity leads on to salvation, both for ourselves and for those who listen to us.—Acts 8:12; 1 Tim. 4:16.

⁶ Our 'girding' is like that of the prophet Jeremiah, who served Jehovah without letup for forty years and longer. When Jehovah first commissioned Jeremiah, he told him:

"And as for you, you should gird up your hips, and you must rise up and speak to them everything that I myself command you. Do not be struck with any terror because of them, in order that I may not strike you with terror before them. But as

4. How may we 'gird' ourselves for God's service? (Ps. 18:31, 39)

5. What teaching will help us to 'gird' ourselves, and for what activity?

6. What did Jehovah assure Jeremiah would result from 'girding up his hips'? (Compare 1 Kings 18:46.)

for me, here I have made you today a fortified city and an iron pillar and copper walls against all the land, toward the kings of Judah, toward her princes, toward her priests and toward the people of the land. And they will be certain to fight against you, but they will not prevail against you, for 'I am with you,' is the utterance of Jehovah, 'to deliver you.'”—Jer. 1:17-19.

⁷ What marvelous words of encouragement! And they contain strong assurance for us today, that no matter what worldly governments or people may scheme against God's faithful servants, he will fight our battles for us, and the victory will be ours. But we must treasure always our close personal relationship with Jehovah, as *his* witnesses, commissioned to proclaim *his* message among the doomed nations. As long as there is time for it, may we always be "girded" for this service, and be zealous in making known the truth to others!

"GIRD UP YOUR HIPS"

⁸ Like the prophet Jeremiah, we have had to 'gird up our hips' for an extended period of Kingdom-preaching and disciple-making. Already this "time of the end" has stretched out over sixty-two years, and many of us have been sharing "the true knowledge" with others for twenty, thirty, forty or more years. (Dan. 12:4) At times we may have felt as did Jeremiah when he said: "I am not going to make mention of him [Jehovah], and I shall speak no more in his name." But the girding of truth around our hips impels us to go forward in God's service. His word proves to be 'like a burning fire shut up in our bones,' so that we cannot desist from making known Jehovah's glorious name and kingdom.—Jer. 20:9; Ps. 96:2, 10.

⁹ That Jehovah is continuing to help us

7. How can we show that we treasure our relationship with Jehovah?

8. As with Jeremiah, what impels us onward in God's service?

9. What shows Jehovah's continued care for his people? (Ps. 3:8)

to 'gird' for this all-important service is shown by thrilling reports received from Jehovah's Witnesses all around the world, with regard to their activity during the service year of 1976. The progress is excellent, generally. The peak number of Kingdom proclaimers world wide increased to 2,243,390. A fine total of 196,656 newly dedicated persons were baptized, and congregations increased to a total of 40,155. Although their activity dropped off 23,000,000 hours world wide, the Witnesses very commendably spent 359,258,019 hours in the direct service of telling the "good news of the kingdom" to the public, and conducted, on an average, 1,339,466 Bible studies in private homes. (Compare Acts 2:46, 47.) The chart on pages 20 through 23 gives details.

¹⁰ Joyful reports come from Jehovah's Witnesses in many lands. In the Americas, for example, Canada sends word: "Our field service activity for 1976 was highlighted by two peaks in Kingdom publishers, the latest being 62,880 proclaimers of the good news in May." Costa Rica writes: "Almost every Kingdom Hall is overflowing with interested persons. As a result ten new congregations were formed during the year." Honduras tells us: "More than half of all our [Kingdom] publishers were baptized during the last three years."

¹¹ In the Argentine, Jehovah's Witnesses now serve under a ban, and some brothers have been in prison. However, "the word of God is not bound." (2 Tim. 2:9) They continue to sound forth the "good news," and their joyful experiences include the following:

10. In line with Proverbs 10:22, what was the experience of God's servants in the Americas during 1976?
11. (a) Despite a ban, how did our brothers in the Argentine share in the fulfillment of Romans 10:18? (b) Referring also to the chart, what other fine increases were there in the Americas?

"People of all ages and with handicaps are answering Jehovah's call to praise him. (Psalm 148:12, 13) A pioneer sister walked six miles to conduct a study with a little old lady, 105 years old. As the study progressed, she, realizing her responsibility to preach, walked with her cane to her neighbors and told them the marvelous things she was learning. Through her preaching two studies were started, one of which was with a man who had previously ordered the pioneer sister off his property."

There has been much unrest in Chile, but there the peak number of active Witnesses increased 18 percent, to 16,862. Brazil reports a fine attendance of 212,441 persons at twenty-four "Divine Sovereignty" district assemblies.

¹² What of the activity of Jehovah's Witnesses in Europe? Finland informs us that the Kingdom witness is now so extensive that each new issue of the *Kingdom News* tract is distributed to every home in the country. Even more delightful than Austria's mountain scenery are the throngs now flocking there to Christian meetings, so that seventeen new Kingdom Halls were dedicated there this past year. Spain has been dedicating new Kingdom Halls at the rate of six a week, so that now their 614 congregations are served by more than 440 Kingdom Halls, as well as two assembly halls for circuit gatherings. Portugal writes that, in the two years since the April 24, 1974, revolution, Kingdom proclaimers have increased 41 percent, and the number of congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses from 172 to more than 300.

¹³ There is encouraging news, too, out of Asia. Hardworking missionaries in Pakistan rejoiced to see a new peak of 192 Kingdom witnesses active in their country. From war-torn Lebanon comes this typical report:

12. (a) In harmony with Romans 15:10, 11, 13, what does the chart indicate about the joy and hope of European Witnesses? (b) What interesting reports came out of Spain and Portugal?

13. How do reports from Asia, including those in the chart, show fulfillment of Acts 2:39?

1976 SERVICE YEAR REPORT OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES WORLD WIDE

Country	Population	1976 Peak Pubs.	Ratio, One Publisher to:	1976 Av. Pubs.	% Inc. over 1975	1975 Av. Pubs.	1976 No. Bptzd.	Av. Plo. Pubs.	No. of Congs.	Total Hours	Av. Bible Studies	Memorial Attendance
AFRICA												
Afars & Issas Terr.	125,000	7	17,857	5		5	2		1	507	4	14
Algeria	13,350,000	23	580,435	17	-11*	19		4	1,440	19	70	
Angola	5,100,000	3,822	1,334	2,941	17	2,507	507	68	30	451,328	4,755	13,141
Benin	2,700,000	2,372	1,138	1,733	-22*	2,228	141	176	44	414,467	1,515	4,506
Botswana	630,379	283	2,227	266	8	246	38	25	12	65,612	247	836
Burundi	4,000,000	151	26,490	149	32	113	46	2	1	24,361	153	364
Cameroon	6,500,000	12,269	530	11,886	5	11,319	1,228	1	407	793,155	7,615	16,540
Central Afr. Rep.	1,720,000	1,289	1,334	1,112	8	1,033	102	109	52	266,671	1,170	4,744
Chad	3,870,000	156	24,808	127	14	111	29	35	11	66,155	237	538
Congo	1,300,120	1,802	721	1,618	3	1,578	102	176	43	371,167	1,473	5,621
Ethiopia	25,000,000	1,903	13,137	1,809	18	1,537	350	144	49	473,525	2,719	4,732
Gabon	975,000	344	2,834	305	9	281	36	14	10	44,674	268	666
Gambia	493,000	9	54,778	6	-40*	10	3	2	1	3,666	9	20
Ghana	9,817,725	22,381	439	21,776	7	20,324	2,668	1,120	414	4,165,917	18,909	63,521
Guinea	5,143,284	255	20,170	228	7	213	24	71	15	121,845	505	751
Guinea-Bissau	517,000	5	103,400	5	New			2	1	1,845	44	12
Ivory Coast	6,670,000	1,156	5,770	1,127	19	949	207	101	37	290,277	1,623	3,940
Kenya	13,500,000	1,973	6,842	1,868	16	1,608	218	224	86	598,532	1,943	4,842
Lesotho	1,181,900	672	1,759	622		619	65	62	25	162,523	538	2,128
Liberia	1,300,000	1,060	1,226	1,020	2	1,001	103	108	23	279,648	1,277	3,304
Libya	2,350,000	2	1,175,000	1		1				139	1	1
Malawi	4,900,000	5,631	870	4,209		160	27	108	255	549,371	1,352	9,051
Mali	5,000,000	32	156,250	26	44	18	3	7	1	13,569	101	61
Mauritania	1,500,000	2	750,000	2		2				187	2	10
Morocco	17,800,000	188	94,681	177	-2*	180	22	13	4	38,897	137	339
Mozambique	8,446,000	15,692	538	9,532		22,632	647	292	269	1,302,777	5,543	18,927
Niger	2,870,000	61	47,049	53	4	51	4	18	4	34,666	101	92
Nigeria	79,758,969	114,029	699	107,924	2	105,686	11,066	6,651	2,056	21,103,063	80,433	232,376
Rhodesia	6,418,900	12,951	496	12,127		12,079	593	596	524	2,175,513	8,267	29,477
Rwanda	4,200,000	46	91,304	38	52	25	23	13	4	25,066	67	178
Senegal	5,000,000	337	14,837	316	4	305	28	55	7	112,391	425	835
Sierra Leone	3,002,426	1,217	2,467	1,155	5	1,096	121	269	58	500,428	2,227	3,671
South Africa	25,471,000	29,098	875	27,770	2	27,351	2,154	1,760	825	5,410,137	18,096	72,272
South-West Africa	610,000	349	1,748	309	3	300	27	22	12	58,239	225	676
Sudan	17,000,000	101	168,317	96	7	90	11	13	3	32,387	160	171
Swaziland	465,000	689	675	644	-3*	666	68	37	26	141,181	482	1,701
Tanzania	15,000,000	1,575	9,524	1,512	3	1,475	97	139	87	371,086	1,225	3,397
Togo	2,100,000	2,668	787	2,520	2	2,483	60	218	64	621,128	2,918	8,581
Tunisia	4,470,000	48	93,125	44	13	39	7	1	1	4,423	24	79
Uganda	11,000,000	166	66,265	158	10	143	8	23	10	53,918	255	500
Upper Volta	5,258,141	65	80,894	54	29	42	26	21	3	38,150	145	183
Zaire	25,000,000	19,327	1,294	18,696	21	15,468	2,854	1,873	580	5,367,757	26,339	77,604
Zambia	5,138,000	57,885	89	55,616	2	54,289	3,202	1,564	1,125	7,760,786	53,857	205,331
Alaska	420,000	1,268	33,503								532	2,855
Argentina	25,050,000										25,980	70,056

AMERICAS

Belize	130,000	584	223	557	-2*	571	29	50	14	131,362	539	2,070
Bolivia	5,802,803	2,476	2,344	2,133	6	2,020	377	346	56	711,879	2,392	8,619
Brazil	110,767,500	106,228	1,043	101,298	6	95,894	12,447	4,201	1,937	14,488,540	68,118	242,697
Canada	22,487,000	62,880	358	60,573	4	58,380	3,662	2,825	1,011	9,297,068	24,649	120,533
Chile	10,454,300	16,862	620	15,947	12	14,220	2,782	828	269	2,667,031	15,812	46,940
Colombia	24,835,400	16,286	1,525	15,608	8	14,501	2,212	930	267	2,916,891	15,938	56,924
Costa Rica	1,993,784	5,104	391	4,698	7	4,400	628	182	107	735,490	3,765	12,870
Ecuador	6,633,366	5,995	1,111	5,712	9	5,254	758	457	103	1,268,723	6,130	21,067
El Salvador	4,144,963	6,010	690	5,632	10	5,124	984	345	118	1,143,587	6,224	19,364
French Guiana	45,000	200	225	194	10	176	23	12	2	40,419	258	625
Guatemala	5,626,273	5,259	1,070	4,940	10	4,507	989	268	76	894,164	4,636	15,032
Guyana	740,000	1,415	523	1,367	3	1,328	112	152	33	328,790	1,227	3,371
Honduras	2,653,857	3,226	823	3,013	16	2,606	502	276	62	771,361	4,333	13,454
Mexico	62,329,189	84,356	739	82,098	9	75,484	10,864	5,807	3,314	14,785,324	70,124	327,822
Nicaragua	2,100,000	3,246	647	3,144	8	2,903	435	204	58	644,693	3,645	9,839
Panama	1,718,700	3,028	568	2,931	9	2,686	346	202	67	599,877	3,286	9,292
Paraguay	2,646,000	1,414	1,871	1,363	8	1,267	150	157	48	354,950	1,259	3,406
Peru	15,361,200	12,103	1,269	11,465	8	10,646	2,199	1,107	234	2,842,366	12,178	37,699
Surinam	375,000	911	412	896	2	892	.86	125	15	248,344	850	2,654
U.S. of America	213,350,000	577,362	370	544,644	2	534,765	43,900	25,954	7,341	84,986,395	282,557	1,279,075
Uruguay	2,763,964	4,771	579	4,634	3	4,494	548	374	85	1,015,265	4,582	12,717
Venezuela	13,000,000	13,749	946	12,951	10	11,825	1,103	623	164	2,380,531	12,393	43,561

ASIA

Abu Dhabi	49,000	11	4,455	8	-11*	9			1	356	2	15
Afghanistan	16,000,000	9	1,777,777	8	-11*	9			1	1,547	4	26
Bangladesh	79,000,000	2	39,500,000	1	-50*	2				42		
Burma	31,150,000	845	36,864	823	8	764	95	171	66	328,432	777	1,960
Dubai	59,000	24	2,458	7	600	1				325	3	7
Hong Kong	4,000,000	576	6,944	530	27	416	127	96	9	211,704	794	1,358
India	600,000,000	4,687	128,014	4,449	3	4,300	452	498	250	1,807,598	3,175	11,204
Iran	32,000,000	38	842,105	34	55	22	2	8	1	15,606	48	107
Iraq	10,410,000	28	371,786	16	14	14			1	1,384	8	44
Israel	4,663,200	276	16,896	262	5	250	28	15	5	49,495	158	416
Jordan	2,560,000	76	33,684	47	31	36	6	1	1	4,146	22	107
Korea	34,680,644	32,561	1,065	31,393	7	29,362	3,993	3,231	493	6,915,064	25,504	60,580
Kuwait	880,000	18	48,889	17		17				1,147	6	36
Lebanon	3,213,000	1,827	1,759	1,591	-13*	1,831	51	46	46	201,173	742	3,071
Macao	375,000	7	53,571	7	17	6			1	7,426	14	18
Malaysia	12,649,950	433	29,215	415	11	373	60	62	18	139,348	721	921
Nepal	13,000,000	17	764,706	13		13			1	2,893	13	29
Pakistan	68,000,000	192	354,167	180	10	164	13	28	5	57,715	191	488
Saudi Arabia	8,100,000	4	2,025,000	3		3			3	240	3	
Syria	6,895,000	203	33,966	186	3	180	6	4	5	24,812	71	487
Thailand	42,276,319	732	57,755	709	13	625	73	124	27	231,153	580	1,484

EUROPE

Andorra	30,264	70	432	61	36	45	13	4	1	10,008	39	155
Austria	7,456,403	12,514	596	12,172	4	11,692	877	473	213	1,946,666	5,764	21,710
Belgium	9,750,152	19,745	494	18,870	1	18,620	1,414	749	274	3,010,497	6,841	36,372
Denmark	5,072,516	14,611	347	13,899	-1*	14,027	553	701	235	1,944,355	4,254	23,491
Finland	4,720,000	13,402	352	12,908	1	12,815	632	811	241	2,064,665	5,227	21,507
France	52,658,253	65,827	800	63,428	6	60,119	6,921	2,069	1,175	9,849,235	34,861	123,696
Germany, West	59,967,000	102,044	588	98,648		98,194	4,469	2,959	1,384	13,518,552	32,313	161,829
Gibraltar	31,000	87	356	83	5	5	3	1	1	10,856	48	150
Greece	9,000,000	18,711	481	18,571	4	17,868	332	654	451	2,926,088	7,006	32,210

Country	Population	1976 Peak Pubs.	Ratio, One Publisher to:	1976 Av. Pubs.	% Inc. over 1975	1975 Av. Pubs.	1976 No. Bptzd.	Av. Plo. Pubs.	No. of Congs.	Total Hours	Av. Bible Studies	Memorial Attendance
Italy	55,586,000	60,156	924	57,255	20	47,736	7,997	2,516	1,141	10,700,196	40,766	130,348
Liechtenstein	23,949	21	1,140	20	5	19	3	1	3,637	16	45	
Luxembourg	425,677	819	520	799	5	762	66	54	17	148,348	509	1,628
Netherlands	13,733,578	29,723	462	28,954	3	28,097	1,502	2,087	282	5,557,457	9,749	46,416
Norway	4,027,063	7,543	534	7,201	2	7,051	501	2,21	195	907,848	2,214	13,037
Portugal	9,000,000	18,119	497	17,319	17	14,837	3,041	570	301	2,559,614	14,795	45,221
San Marino	18,000	56	321	52	16	45	8	2	1	9,201	23	95
Spain	34,549,637	34,954	988	33,352	14	29,210	4,652	2,061	614	6,646,789	25,390	70,971
Sweden	8,218,744	16,444	500	15,913	3	15,438	996	1,186	290	2,802,777	7,751	27,307
Switzerland	6,405,000	10,193	628	9,821	1	9,719	774	272	216	1,415,663	5,829	18,201
West Berlin	2,024,000	5,620	360	5,387	-1*	5,426	220	140	62	708,880	1,687	7,826

22

ISLANDS OF THE SEA

American Samoa	30,000	89	337	85	13	75	18	9	1	20,002	69	198
Anguilla	6,524	16	408	13	-7*	14	2	1	1	5,231	9	34
Antigua	70,794	170	416	164	-5*	172	12	14	3	31,935	117	400
Aruba	62,405	357	175	338	6	319	34	7	5	51,668	226	899
Australia	13,684,900	29,101	470	27,936	1	27,610	2,088	1,463	517	4,905,396	11,018	55,862
Azores	275,900	248	1,113	223	17	190	33	18	9	48,394	223	602
Bahamas	200,000	519	385	492	4	475	48	18	9	75,688	458	1,482
Barbados	253,000	1,231	206	1,159	3	1,120	205	46	15	165,623	679	2,828
Bequia	5,300	25	212	23	-4*	24	2	1	1	4,025	13	55
Bermuda	60,000	217	277	202	12	180	17	12	3	38,221	161	480
Bonaire	8,585	35	245	30		30	1	3	1	7,204	32	116
British Isles	54,607,555	80,544	678	76,694	2	75,168	5,297	3,552	1,068	12,061,054	36,202	157,070
Brunei	112,000	2	56,000	1		1				49		3
Canary Islands	1,299,236	1,128	1,152	1,075	9	987	169	70	24	201,694	720	2,465
Cape Verde Rep.	291,000	60	4,850	53	130	23	19	15	2	24,627	177	130
Carriacou	8,400	27	311	24	-14*	28		3	1	6,129	19	129
Cayman Islands	14,200	27	526	21	-22*	27		1	1	2,940	25	78
Comoro Islands	277,000	2	138,500	1		1			1	320	1	1
Cook Islands	19,522	48	407	42	11	38	6	3	2	8,351	36	148
Curaçao	156,740	681	230	649	11	585	69	33	7	135,693	846	1,800
Cyprus	660,000	846	780	824	8	760	55	35	11	119,339	255	1,478
Dominica	70,302	226	311	203	-1*	205	17	16	7	40,092	97	558
Dominican Rep.	4,696,793	6,540	718	6,395	7	5,975	620	520	113	1,426,052	8,117	21,679
Faroe Islands	41,211	82	503	73	6	69	15	5	5	15,173	30	127
Fiji	594,000	640	928	594	10	541	62	65	20	146,675	611	1,863
Gilbert Islands	54,500	2	27,250	2	-60*	5			1	142	3	50
Greenland	49,666	94	528	85		85	2	23	8	24,080	59	126
Grenada	99,000	324	306	283	7	265	23	25	5	61,817	271	743
Guadeloupe	324,000	2,580	126	2,470	7	2,319	228	66	32	359,809	1,897	5,995
Guam	98,580	136	725	108	-12*	123	5	14	2	30,852	110	382
Haiti	5,000,000	3,569	1,400	3,492	4	3,350	308	253	73	772,689	4,742	13,678
Hawaii	865,000	4,872	178	4,750	2	4,647	251	798	58	1,380,145	4,619	12,003
Iceland	219,033	165	1,327	154	6	145	19	14	3	31,517	98	264
Indonesia	135,000,000	4,264	31,660	4,064	2	4,001	585	578	137	1,186,798	4,207	11,298
Ireland	4,506,000	1,891	2,383	1,774	15	1,543	136	317	63	613,785	908	3,394
Jamaica	2,093,000	6,765	309	6,383	4	6,111	497	194	169	867,495	4,316	14,486
Japan	111,637,548	38,367	2,910	36,180	19	30,294	5,895	8,405	866	15,623,782	53,991	82,622
Madagascar	9,000,000	805	11,180	772	15	672	82	54	20	165,834	911	2,440
Madeira	260,000	252	1,032	228	16	197	41	10	5	37,743	188	780
Malta	318,500	91	3,500	83		83	6	4	1	12,656	47	206
Malvinas Islands	2,089	3	696	2					1	218	2	7
Manus Island	27,600	9	3,067	5	-38*	2	8	3	1	1,843	5	9

Marshall Islands	25,044	182	138	168	17	143	15	21	2	48,932	235		493
Martinique	330,000	1,105	299	1,055	6	994	142	44	15	176,953	918		2,836
Mauritius	867,000	380	2,282	363	7	339	35	23	7	71,339	304		842
Montserrat	12,335	29	425	26	1	26	1	3	1	6,792	30		80
Nevis	11,230	47	239	44	13	39	8	5	5	9,263	21		112
New Britain	189,000	200	945	183	10	166	20	19	12	50,605	191		664
New Caledonia	134,000	359	373	332	15	289	64	8	8	42,554	212		747
Newfoundland	530,000	1,146	462	1,086	3	1,058	69	98	35	218,704	501		2,094
New Guinea	1,531,000	492	3,112	455	-2*	462	26	56	23	118,894	441		1,706
New Hebrides	98,000	47	2,085	42	11	38	5	1	3	7,199	60		118
New Ireland	64,500	51	1,265	47	-6*	50	2	6	4	12,061	32		116
New Zealand	3,095,300	7,442	416	6,903	-1*	6,951	500	394	114	1,168,476	3,379		15,055
Niue	3,969	16	248	12	33	9	3	1	1	903	12		85
North Solomons	102,400	49	2,090	33	38	24	6	7	2	11,174	53		110
Okinawa	1,195,951	921	1,299	889	12	794	85	165	21	327,090	1,108		2,008
Palau	12,674	32	396	29	21	24	13	1	1	21,565	109		107
Papua	739,200	731	1,011	680	26	622	53	54	35	133,612	637		2,217
Philippines	42,000,000	77,248	544	73,223	-5*	76,662	5,279	7,232	1,885	13,990,243	31,174		170,651
Ponape	23,251	196	119	86	-2*	88	2	13	2	23,666	79		206
Puerto Rico	3,030,000	16,620	182	16,161	9	14,779	2,209	485	214	2,415,444	11,425		39,190
Réunion	476,675	514	927	491	17	419	74	27	10	96,729	405		1,451
Rodrigues	26,600	13	2,046	11	11	11	1	1	1	613	4		59
St. Helena	4,967	107	46	96	3	93	1	2	9,011	32		191	
St. Kitts	35,135	147	239	130	-9*	143	20	9	2	23,351	87		337
St. Lucia	106,000	271	391	261	9	240	45	17	4	47,744	265		742
St. Martin	10,423	48	217	39	-7*	42	5	2	1	5,054	35		133
St. Pierre & Miquelon	6,000	2	3,000	2	2	2	2	2	1	3,449	7		14
St. Vincent	93,500	159	588	143	-8*	155	4	17	3	39,152	144		353
Saipan	14,335	26	551	24	-8*	26	2	9	1	17,300	39		52
Seychelles	60,000	49	1,224	45	15	39	20	3	2	7,790	60		119
Singapore	2,300,000	344	6,686	327	13	289	36	25	6	80,354	593		670
Solomon Islands	196,708	610	322	564	-6*	601	20	80	31	157,240	613		2,383
Sri Lanka	13,680,000	545	25,101	528	10	482	43	92	16	181,533	633		1,533
Tahiti	119,168	385	310	365	29	284	30	19	9	61,672	280		906
Taiwan	16,500,000	1,233	13,382	1,108	-12*	1,255	42	132	47	260,798	739		2,924
Tobago	39,037	133	293	114	8	106	8	11	2	27,996	110		257
Tokelau Isls.	1,630	4	408	3	-25*	4	3	1	1	299	2		23
Tonga	90,000	27	3,333	22	22	6	2	1	1	4,770	21		51
Trinidad	1,024,438	2,935	349	2,811	4	2,697	339	205	43	528,430	2,509		7,189
Truk	31,600	41	771	36	71	21	3	8	1	15,432	90		190
Turks & Caicos Isls.	6,000	19	315	16	14	14	4	1	4	4,783	42		111
Tuvalu Isls.	6,000	5	1,200	3	New	1	1	1	1	685	2		26
Virgin Is. (Brit.)	10,500	83	127	76	-11*	85	6	2	1	9,391	64		273
Virgin Is. (U.S.)	75,500	479	158	452	5	429	49	16	9	67,610	338		1,273
Western Samoa	146,627	128	1,146	121	2	119	14	8	4	24,077	109		371
Yap	7,869	39	202	34	42	24	4	7	1	15,875	87		176
196 Countries		2,058,241		1,953,872	3.7	1,884,417	182,587	111,375	37,100	341,568,511	1,251,476		4,683,144
†14 Other Countries		190,149		184,665	3.8	178,032	14,069	2,551	3,055	17,689,508	87,990		289,427
GRAND TOTAL (210 countries)		2,248,390		2,138,537	3.7	2,062,449	196,656	113,926	40,155	359,258,019	1,339,466		4,972,571

* Percentage of decrease

† Work banned and reports are incomplete

OTHER COUNTRIES

MEMORIAL PARTAKERS WORLD WIDE: 10,187

"The bombs landed in the buildings near us—one in the building next to us and one in another about 30 meters (98 feet) away; that was three days ago. Yesterday it was a pleasure to go [witnessing] from house to house for two-and-a-half hours, being tactful to cause no disturbance. We rejoiced in the privilege."

India writes that the Kingdom proclamation penetrated into new territories in the Punjab and northeastern Assam. Despite difficulties, a limited work was accomplished among the millions of Afghanistan, Nepal and Bangladesh. In Korea, so many persons attended the Memorial celebration at the Seoul branch building of the Watch Tower Society that five meetings had to be held, some of them in the Bethel dining room and lounge, as well as in the Kingdom Hall. More than 60,000 attended the Memorial in all of Korea.

¹⁴ Winds of change are blowing through Africa, and persecutions continue to flare up in various places. From one country it is reported that, in order to read the daily text without molestation, the Witnesses have to get up in the middle of the night. In another country where Jehovah's work is banned, nineteen new congregations were formed and 195 persons symbolized their dedication to Jehovah by water baptism. Still another country under ban reports:

"What was amazing for us was the attendance at the Memorial, which was 94 percent more than the previous year's average of Kingdom publishers."

Zaire writes that in that land more people are now studying the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses than ever before. Brazzaville, in the Congo, advises that in December they had a remarkable peak of 580 auxiliary pioneers in the field, almost one third of their total of Kingdom publishers that month. Sierra Leone now has 25 per-

14. What encouraging news and figures are reported from strife-torn Africa?

cent of their Kingdom witnesses in full-time "pioneer" service. In Zambia, many congregations were formed, and a new peak of 57,885 Witnesses were active in the field, one for every 89 persons in the land.

¹⁵ What of the islands of the sea? From that very large island of Australia comes word that foreign-speaking congregations have continued to grow to the point where Greek- and Italian-speaking circuit overseers will be used for a number of months each year. A report from the British Isles states that 157,070 persons attended the Memorial, and that, from this year, 75 percent of the British Witnesses will be attending circuit assemblies in their own assembly halls. Iceland was encouraged by an all-time peak of nineteen persons baptized, *all* of them native Icelanders. In Taiwan (and also in Hong Kong) excellent progress was made among the Chinese, and a 31-percent increase was reported in the two congregations in Taipei. Sri Lanka makes this comment: "Forty-three persons were baptized this year. Most of them had been Roman Catholics." From Tahiti, in French Polynesia, comes the report: "The Kingdom was preached in fifteen new islands, representing a population of 7,700, and in these, 610 subscriptions for *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* in Tahitian were obtained." The Republic of Cape Verde tells us: "What is taking place in these islands is phenomenal! Publishers in the field have increased 125 percent, to a peak of sixty."

¹⁶ The reports given above cover only a small cross section from the worldwide field where Jehovah's Witnesses are serving. You can review the complete report in the accompanying pages. In over forty countries Jehovah's Witnesses carry out

15. Are the islands "joyful," as stated at Psalm 97:1? What does the chart indicate?

16. How do the Witnesses in countries under ban show that they are 'rejoicing in sufferings'? (Col. 1:24)

their work under official ban or restrictions, so that it is not wise to include a number of these by name in the detailed report. However, the total figures include their self-sacrificing activity also. We rejoice with all faithful Witnesses that Jehovah so richly blessed the proclamation of his Kingdom during the year just past.

LOOKING AHEAD

¹⁷ As the end draws near, we can expect troubles to increase in the earth. Our faith may be sorely tried. But we should keep well in mind Jesus' words that "in all the nations the good news has to be preached first." (Mark 13:10) Jesus also declared: "It is Jehovah your God you must worship, and it is to him alone you must render sacred service." (Luke 4:8) In this, Jesus himself set the outstanding example. (Luke 8:1; 10:1) When we follow that example, and keep busy in proclaiming God's kingdom, time passes quickly. This makes us joyful, as we hasten on toward the end.

¹⁸ The apostle Paul served under a variety of difficult circumstances, but always his attitude was: "Really, woe is me if I did not declare the good news!" (1 Cor. 9:16) It would be "woe" for us, too, individually, if we should slow down in Jehovah's service at this climax of "the last days." (2 Tim. 3:1, 14) After many years of trials, Paul was still determined to keep serving with all his might. As he said at Philippians 3:13, 14: "Brothers, I do not yet consider myself as having laid hold on [the prize]; but there is one thing about it: Forgetting the things behind and stretching forward to the things ahead, I am pursuing down toward the goal."

17. What words and example of Jesus should we keep in mind?

18. How should Paul's attitude and determination serve to encourage us?

¹⁹ Let us then be strong and serve, as we wait patiently on Jehovah. Already, his patience has meant salvation for a multitude of persons. Supposing World War II had escalated into the "great tribulation": In Germany, only a few thousand—including those faithful ones in Hitler's concentration camps—would have survived, whereas today 102,044 are serving in the way of salvation in Western Germany, along with many others in Berlin and Eastern Germany. In Catholic Italy, as late as 1951, only 1,741 Kingdom proclaimers were reporting service, whereas today they have a peak of 60,156 Witnesses in the field. In Japan, a mere handful of Witnesses were 'standing firm' for the "good news" when the shackles of the war lords and Shintoists were removed in 1945, but today the entire country is "assigned territory"—regularly covered by a peak of 38,367 Witnesses, almost 25 percent of whom are in full-time "pioneer" service. These miracles of salvation and expansion have all taken place following World War II.

²⁰ Who knows what further feats of ingathering Jehovah purposes to perform before his appointed time for the "great tribulation"? (Ps. 86:8-10) Whatever Jehovah's will is for the days just ahead, let us continue to "stand firm," girded for his service. Let us have confidence that always "the solid foundation of God stays standing, having this seal: 'Jehovah knows those who belong to him.'" (2 Tim. 2:19) As we expend ourselves in Kingdom service, may we be used by Jehovah in finding many more of "those who belong to him," that all of us, together, may come to rejoice in his undeserved kindness by Christ Jesus, both now and for all the eternity to come!

19. How has Jehovah's patience resulted in salvation and increase? (Isa. 42:8-10)

20. What confidence should we have, and how should we show it?

THE MEDO- PERSIAN EMPIRE



IN PROPHECY

HISTORICAL developments involving the great powers that dominated large sections of the earth were not all just mere coincidence. There is One who has at times intervened in human affairs, resulting in tremendous changes

on the world scene. This One, Jehovah God, by means of his prophets, also foretold long in advance the rise and fall of certain empires.

For us today the unerring fulfillment of Bible prophecies in the past furnishes a solid basis for trusting that prophetic word regarding future events. More importantly, this can serve as a strong encouragement to live in harmony with God's purpose, confident that he will make the 'word of his servants come true.'—Isa. 44:26.

The book of Daniel is notable for its many prophecies. Josephus, the ancient Jewish historian of the first century C.E., was moved to write: "All these things, as God revealed them to him, he left behind in his writings, so that those who read them and observe how they have come to pass must wonder at Daniel's having been so honoured by God."

One of the remarkable prophecies recorded by Daniel concerns the Medo-Persian Empire. In the eighth chapter of his book, Daniel relates a vision in which the Medo-Persian Empire is represented as a ram. (Dan. 8:20) We read: "Look! a ram standing before the watercourse, and it had two horns. And the two horns were tall, but the one was taller than the other, and the taller was the one that came up afterward."—Dan. 8:3.

What does this mean? As is evident from Daniel 8:21, 22, horns represent kings or kingdoms. The text states: "The hairy he-goat stands for the king of Greece; and as for the great horn that was between its eyes, it stands for the first king. And that one having been broken, so that there were four that finally stood up instead of it, there are four kingdoms from his nation that will stand up, but not with his power."

Accordingly, in the case of Medo-Persia the fact that the ram's second horn came up afterward and was taller than the other one would be a foretelling that one kingdom, the Persian, would in time gain the ascendancy over the other one (the Median). Did such a thing happen?

Yes, this is confirmed by the facts of history. Originally the Medes held the dominant position. But, then, Cyrus (II), upon ascending the throne of Anshan, united the Persian forces in an attempt to throw off the Median yoke. In 550 B.C.E. the Medes under the command of Astyages (Ishtumegu)

and the Persians under Cyrus met in battle. The army of Astyages revolted against him and brought Astyages in fetters to Cyrus. Thereafter Cyrus seized the capital of Media, Ecbatana. From then on Media played a secondary role in the Medo-Persian Empire.

Though the Medes were now in a subservient position, Media and Persia formed a dual world power and, therefore, could be represented by one ram. As Daniel 8:20 explains: "The ram that you saw possessing the two horns stands for the kings of Media and Persia." Commenting on the dual nature of the empire, Professor Olmstead's *History of the Persian Empire* (page 37) says: "The close relationship between Persians and Medes was never forgotten. Plundered Ecbatana remained a favorite royal residence. Medes were honored equally with Persians; they were employed in high office and were chosen to lead Persian armies. Foreigners spoke regularly of the Medes and Persians [just as the Bible generally refers to them jointly]."

Continuing his description of the ram, Daniel states: "I saw the ram making thrusts to the west and to the north and to the south, and no wild beasts kept standing before it, and there was no one doing any delivering out of its hand. And it did according to its will, and it put on great airs."—Dan. 8:4.

No power could stand before Medo-Persia when it was in its heyday. Pushing northward, King Cyrus captured Babylon in 539 B.C.E. His son Cambyses directed a campaign southward, conquering Egypt. Darius I pushed his conquests westward, gaining control of Thrace and Macedonia.

In time, however, Medo-Persia fell before the world power of Greece. This had been foretold in the prophecy of Daniel

as follows: "I, for my part, kept on considering, and, look! there was a male of the goats coming from the sunset upon the surface of the whole earth, and it was not touching the earth. And as regards the he-goat, there was a conspicuous horn between its eyes. And it kept coming all the way to the ram possessing the two horns, which I had seen standing before the watercourse; and it came running toward it in its powerful rage. And I saw it coming into close touch with the ram, and it began showing bitterness toward it, and it proceeded to strike down the ram and to break its two horns, and there proved to be no power in the ram to stand before it. So it threw it to the earth and trampled it down, and the ram proved to have no deliverer out of its hand."—Dan. 8:5-7.

In fulfillment of these words, the world power represented by the ram fell before Alexander the Great, the one represented by the "conspicuous horn." It is of note that the goat was recognized as a symbol of the Grecian or Greco-Macedonian World Power. *The Imperial Bible-Dictionary* (Vol. I, p. 664) tells us: "Monuments are still extant in which this symbol occurs, as one of the pilasters of Persepolis, where a goat is depicted with one immense horn on his forehead, and a Persian holding the horn, by which is intended the subjection of Macedon by Persia." As Daniel had foretold, however, the former domination of Persia over Macedonia was to come to an end. In fulfillment of the prophecy, the Medo-Persian "ram" fell before the Grecian "goat."

In view of such fulfillments of prophecy, it is wisdom on our part to examine what the Bible says about events still future. Only then can we make sure that our lives harmonize with the prophetic word. This is vital in gaining God's approval and blessing.—2 Pet. 1:19-21.

An Aged Man Whose ANTICIPATION was running high. The time was drawing close for one of the grandest happenings of human history. This event had been foretold centuries in advance. What was it? The appearance of the Messiah, or the Christ.

Faith Was Rewarded

The prophecy of Daniel indicated that the Messiah would arrive sixty-nine weeks of years after the command to rebuild the walls of the city of Jerusalem. (Dan. 9: 25) Calculating from Nehemiah's rebuilding of those walls, this pointed to what is now known as the year 29 C.E.

So toward the close of the first century B.C.E. there was little prospect for aged Jews to live long enough to see the fulfillment of their cherished hope regarding the Messiah. Yet certain aged men and women looked forward to it in faith and with the fervent desire to witness it. Among them was Simeon. The Bible describes him as "righteous and reverent, waiting for Israel's consolation." (Luke 2:25) Though Simeon doubtless died before Jesus was anointed by God's spirit and thus became the promised Messiah, or Christ, his unshakable faith that the Messiah would come was rewarded. How?

Jehovah God took note of Simeon's outstanding faith and favored him with a special revelation. By means of his spirit, the Most High made known to him that he would not die before actually seeing the Christ. (Luke 2:26) What a thrilling prospect!

One day, under the impelling power of God's spirit, Simeon came into the temple area. It just so happened that a poor married couple, with an infant, also arrived. From outward appearance, the man, his wife and the baby boy were nothing special. The situation seemed quite ordinary, for a Jewish mother was required by law to offer sacrifice at the conclusion of a forty-day purification period after the birth of a male.—Luke 2:27.

In actuality, though, something remarkable had taken place, something that Simeon viewed as ample reward for his faith. The full significance of this was made manifest to him through holy spirit. The infant was none other than the one who was destined to be the Messiah, the Christ. With joy Simeon accepted the babe into his arms and, compelled by God's spirit, said: "Now, Sovereign Lord, you are letting your slave go free in peace according to your declaration; because my eyes have seen your means of saving that you have made ready in the sight of all the peoples, a light for removing the veil from the nations and a glory of your people Israel."—Luke 2:29-32.

By reason of the privilege extended to him, Simeon felt an inward peace or tranquillity. He now knew for a certainty that God's marvelous means of salvation had been provided. He had seen the child with his own eyes and felt it with his own hands. Simeon's prophetic words that enlightenment would come even to the nations that were in darkness, without knowledge of God and in sin, harmonized fully with the Hebrew Scriptures. For example, regarding the Messianic "servant," Isaiah 42:6 states: "I myself, Jehovah, have

called you in righteousness, and I proceeded to take hold of your hand. And I shall safeguard you and give you as a covenant of the people, *as a light of the nations.*"

Next, Simeon blessed Joseph and Mary, evidently wishing them God's blessing in fulfilling their responsibilities toward the child. Directing his attention particularly to Mary, Simeon continued: "Look! This one is laid for the fall and the rising again of many in Israel and for a sign to be talked against (yes, a long sword will be run through the soul of you yourself), in order that the reasonings of many hearts may be uncovered." (Luke 2:34, 35) Yes, the appearance of Messiah would affect his own people in radically different ways.

As had been pointed to earlier in prophecy, there would be many who would stumble over him, remaining unrepentant and unbelieving. The prophet Isaiah recorded these words: "He must become . . . as a stone to strike against and as a rock over which to stumble to both the houses of Israel, as a trap and as a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many among them will be certain to stumble and to fall and be broken, and to be snared and caught." (Isa. 8:14, 15) To unbelievers, Jesus would be as a "sign" or object of contempt, someone to revile and reproach. Others, however, by putting faith in him were to be 'lifted up' from a state of being dead in trespasses and sins, to enjoy a righteous standing with God.

The actions that people would take toward the Messiah would reveal just what was in their hearts. As Simeon said: "In order that the reasonings of many hearts may be uncovered."—Luke 2:35.

The fact that Jesus would be rejected by the majority would have an especially distressing effect on Mary. Simeon directed attention to this, saying: "A long sword will be run through the soul of you yourself." (Luke 2:35) How painful it

must have been for Mary to see Jesus nailed to a stake like a criminal of the worst kind! This was comparable to having a sword run through her.

Truly Simeon was highly favored in being able to see the infant Jesus and, then, to be inspired to utter prophecy that would be especially strengthening to Mary as she witnessed these indignities brought upon her firstborn son.

For us today God's dealing with Simeon should be faith-strengthening. During his lifetime, a person may not see the complete fulfillment of all his cherished hopes based on Jehovah's unfailing promises. Nevertheless, he can rest assured that the Most High will not forget his efforts to serve in faithfulness. Whatever blessings and guidance he does receive during his life of loyal service will be enough to show that he has a sure prospect of a resurrection from the dead, with eternal life in view.

The unchangeable God cares just as much about his faithful servants today as he did for Simeon. Hence, the Bible urges: "Throw all your anxiety upon him, because he cares for you." (1 Pet. 5:7) Like the aged Simeon, we can look forward to a rich reward for our faith. What fine encouragement this is for all of us to continue living in harmony with our God-given hope, proving ourselves to be "righteous and reverent" as was Simeon!

IN COMING ISSUES

- **Do You Want Crime Stopped?**
- **Facing the "Great Tribulation" with Confidence.**
- **Does It Really Matter Who Your Friends Are?**

Do You Remember?

Have you read the recent issues of *The Watchtower* carefully? If so, you will doubtless recall these points:

- What is meant by the petition, "Do not bring us into temptation"?—Matt. 6:13.

This is a request that God might remember us in time of trial, calling to our minds the strong warnings of his Word so that we do not yield to temptation. It is really a petition to be strengthened by the Most High to endure and not be permitted to succumb to a trial-some circumstance.—P. 516.*

- How should we approach Jehovah God in prayer?

This should be in the name of Jesus Christ and with deep respect, free from needless repetitions, appreciating that Jehovah is the almighty Creator and Supreme Sovereign.—P. 547.

- At 2 Corinthians 10:4, what kind of warfare did Paul have in mind when he wrote that "the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly"?

As shown by the context, Paul was discussing spiritual warfare carried on in the congregation to protect its members from destructive, false reasonings and teachings. In such warfare no fleshly weapons—cunning, trickery or high-sounding language—are used. The main weapon is the "sword of the spirit," God's message or word.—Pp. 585, 586.

- What makes our "sacred service" complete?

We must both declare the "good news" contained in the Bible and live in such a way as to bring glory to Jehovah God.—P. 598.

- Why were early Christians persecuted by the Roman ruling authorities?

The early Christians gave Jehovah God ex-

clusive devotion and refused to worship the emperor. This was regarded by the Roman authorities as meaning that Christians were politically disloyal and, therefore, deserved the severest punishment.—P. 634.

- What is the source of the idea that the human soul is immortal?

This is not the Bible, which plainly teaches that the soul dies. (Ezek. 18:4, 20) Christendom's theologians got this teaching from the thinking of the Greek philosopher Plato, who, in turn, adopted it from mystery religions originating in ancient Babylon.—Pp. 652, 653.

- What is signified by the fact that the "wild beast" of Revelation 13:1 ascended "out of the sea"?

As is evident from Isaiah 57:20, 21, the "sea" represents humanity alienated from God, humanity that, because of dissatisfaction, is as restless as the sea. Hence, the "wild beast," or political rule as a whole, is shown to be of human, not divine, source.—P. 657.

- How can true Christians defend themselves against defamers?

By maintaining praiseworthy conduct and continuing to make a calm, positive presentation of the Bible's teaching.—P. 703.

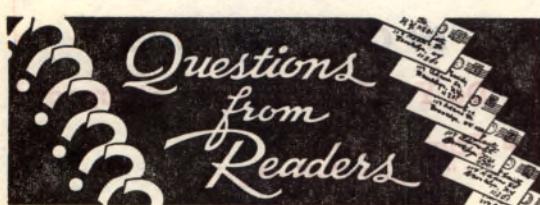
- What makes one a practitioner of sin?

As long as a person is committing serious wrongs or has not come to the point of repentance, he is living in sin. His record of sin stands against him.—P. 726.

- What is the "city having real foundations" that Abraham was awaiting, and how will he attain it?

It is God's government. Abraham will attain it upon being raised from the dead, thereby coming under the absolute rule of that city, God's kingdom by Christ.—P. 746.

* All references are to *The Watchtower* for 1976.



- At John 2:20 we read: "This temple was built in forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?" How does one calculate this forty-six years?

The context of this statement shows that Jesus was then in Jerusalem to celebrate his first passover after being baptized. (John 1:29-33; 2:13) According to the prophecy of the "seventy weeks" found at Daniel 9:24-27, the Messiah would make his public appearance in the fall of 29 C.E.* This would locate the following passover in the spring of 30 C.E.

Regarding the forty-six years, a passage in the writings of Jewish historian Flavius Jose-

* See the article "Seventy Weeks" in *Aid to Bible Understanding*, p. 1473.

thus proves helpful. In *Antiquities of the Jews* we read: "And now Herod, in the eighteenth year of his reign, and after the acts already mentioned, undertook a very great work, that is, to build of himself the temple of God, and make it larger in compass, and to raise it to a most magnificent altitude."—Book 15, chapter 11, section 1.

Josephus states that Herod captured Jerusalem twenty-seven years after the city fell into the hands of Pompey (which was in 63 B.C.E.). This would place Herod's capture of Jerusalem in 36 B.C.E., in July or perhaps October, according to some scholars. Josephus likely reckoned the intervening period from Herod's takeover of the throne until the following spring month Nisan as an "accession" year. Herod's first "regnal" year would therefore not begin until the following spring and would run from 35-34 B.C.E. Counting forward seventeen years gives Herod's eighteenth year (in which he began the temple work) as 18-17 B.C.E. An additional forty-six years leads to 29-30 C.E.

- If an unbelieving husband tries to divorce his Christian wife on a false charge such as mental cruelty or desertion, should she contest the divorce?

She must decide personally whether to contest the divorce or not. Each case has its own circumstances. The wife can consider factors such as how her husband has been treating her and how he seems likely to treat her or care for her in the future, what his charge is, what legal options are open to her, the cost of legal representation and what her conscience recommends that she do.

Many unbelieving husbands acknowledge that when their wives became true Christians they actually became better wives. (Compare 1 Peter 3:1-5.) And regarding a Christian woman with an unbelieving husband who is "agreeable to dwelling with her," the Bible urges, "Let her not leave her husband," for in time he too may become a Christian.—1 Cor. 7:13, 14.

Yet sometimes the husband chooses to terminate the marriage. He may have an intense hatred for true Christianity and so refuse to live with his wife and permit her the freedom of worship that the law of the land grants her. Or he may decide to divorce her simply because she will not share in debased sexual perversions that the Bible rightly condemns. (Rom. 1:26-32) Similar problems must have existed in the first

century, for the apostle Paul counseled: "If the unbelieving one proceeds to depart, let him depart; a brother or a sister is not in servitude under such circumstances."—1 Cor. 7:15.

A husband in this situation has the problem of finding a legal ground for the divorce he wants. What can he charge? His wife is striving to be a good homemaker, a pleasant companion, a clean, faithful sex partner and an exemplary mother if they have children. So, after he has left the family he may lyingly charge his wife with abandonment. Or he may resort to some broad charge that does not require much legal proof, such as claiming that she has been 'mentally cruel' to him. Perhaps he agrees to continue providing for her and the children, as he has an obligation to do, but still he is determined to get a divorce on his lying charge. What will she do? She cannot make him live with her. And, while not agreeing with his lie, she is not obliged to undertake expensive legal action to keep him within the marriage bond or to counter every lie he tells about her. So she may conclude that, rather than contesting the divorce, she will just ignore his lying charge, having in mind the advice, "If the unbelieving one proceeds to depart, let him depart."

Sometimes, though, a Christian wife is concerned as to whether others who learn of the divorce might conclude that she was to blame if she does not contest the divorce and present the facts. She may worry that an uncontested divorce on such a charge might bring reproach on her or on the Christian congregation.

That possibility cannot be ignored. However, in most instances few people ever examine the charge that was the basis for the divorce; all they may learn is that there was a divorce. And if some persons did learn that the divorce was on the ground of mental cruelty or something like that, it is quite likely that they would view the charge as a mere legal expedient. Probably they would understand that the husband was only employing the easiest basis for getting a divorce even if his real reason was that he wanted to marry another woman or do something else. So, often there would be no suggestion of reproach on the faithful wife or on the congregation.

If, though, a wife felt that the false charge was so scandalous that she ought to contest it, she would have to decide what legal course to follow. Or, within the time limit the law

allows, she might elect to contest it if that appeared to be the only way to protect her rights—her right to some family property, her rights involving child custody, her right to economic help for herself and the children, and so forth. (If there is any question of child custody or financial support, usually it is best to settle it legally before the court decision is rendered rather than trying to have it modified afterward.) How she could best present the facts and defend her rights might depend on the legal possibilities where she lives.

One option is to obtain legal advice or representation from an attorney promptly. Of course, unless the court requires the husband to pay the legal costs, that might entail considerable expense for her. In some places there are social agencies or legal aid societies from which a person might obtain free legal help. Or she could contact a representative of the court handling family cases to see how to make a presentation of the facts and claims if unable to hire legal counsel. Many judges are quite understanding toward a person who is not able to have legal representation.

It certainly is a pity that a husband should force such problems on his wife instead of remaining with her and benefiting from her wholesome application of divine principles. Still, there is no need for the wife to feel that she is absolutely obliged to fight the divorce. True, in cases involving property, support or child custody a wife may conclude that contesting a divorce or entering a counter suit is advisable. But as to preventing the divorce or trying to force an unbeliever to stay with the family, the basic Bible advice is: "If the unbelieving one proceeds to depart, let him depart."—1 Cor. 7:15.

The above principles are, of course, true also where an unbelieving wife seeks to divorce her Christian husband by use of false charges.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

February 6: Serving with the Faithful "Slave."

Page 12. Songs to Be Used: 58, 28.

February 13: "Girded" for the Work Ahead.

Page 17. Songs to Be Used: 16, 63.

February 20: "Serving with the Faithful Slave"

February 27: "Girded for the Work Ahead"

March 6: "The Slave of Christ"