

The WATCHTOWER

DECEMBER 1, 1954

Semimonthly

Announcing
**JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM**

**THE FIGHT FOR FREEDOM
TO PREACH WORLD-WIDE**

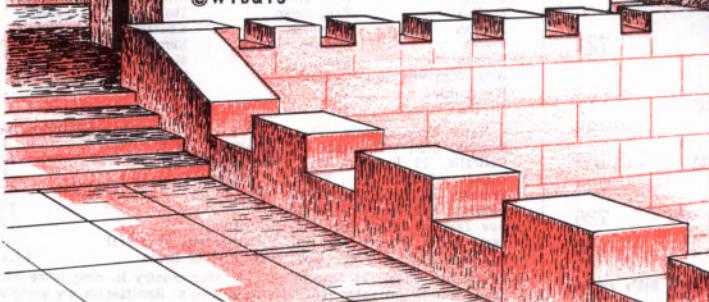
**NEVER FIGHTING ILLEGALLY OR
QUITTING WORLD-WIDE PREACHING**

THE "TIME OF THE END"

HOPE FOR THE LIVING AND THE DEAD

**1954 DISTRICT ASSEMBLIES
WORLD-WIDE**

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

THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER"

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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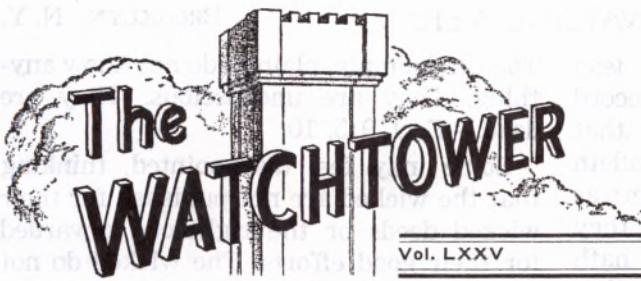
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Announcing
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KINGDOM

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HOPE FOR THE LIVING AND THE DEAD

HAVE you ever wondered where the dead are? Whether they are in heaven or in hell or confined to some other place like limbo or purgatory? Or just what is the state of the dead? Have you ever wondered why men die? What happens at death? Is it just the body that dies and not the soul, or do both die? What is a soul? Most thinking persons ask themselves these questions. But on these points there are about as many theories as there are people on earth.

Strange, is it not, that there should be so many conflicting opinions when all of Christendom's religions claim to get support for their doctrines from one harmonious book, the Holy Bible? Surely the Bible is not so vague or confusing on these issues as are the theories and philosophies of men, nor is it divided into as many conflicting opinions regarding the place and state of the dead. In fact, the Bible is in perfect harmony on this subject.

The Bible is plain that man is a creature created. Note Genesis 2:7 (NW) on this point: "Then Jehovah God proceeded to form the man out of dust from the ground and to blow into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man came to be a living soul." Thus we learn that man is a combination of two things, namely, the "dust from the ground" and "the breath of life." The combining of these two things or factors produced a living soul or crea-

ture called *man*. The apostle Paul called Adam "a living soul" at 1 Corinthians 15:45. That this soul, Adam, could die is clearly stated by God at Genesis 2:17 (NW): "You will positively die." There should be no question in the minds of intelligent creatures of Adam's mortality.

Why does man die? Again the Bible plainly answers for us in the third chapter of Genesis that man disobeyed God's commandment and proved himself unfit for existence. Verses 17-19 (NW) contain the pronouncement of the judicial decision: "And to Adam [God] said: 'Because you listened to your wife's voice and took to eating from the tree concerning which I gave you this command: "You must not eat from it," cursed is the ground on your account. In pain you will eat its produce all the days of your life. And thorns and thistles it will grow for you, and you must eat the vegetation of the field. In the sweat of your face you will eat bread until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken. For dust you are and to dust you will return.'" This sentence says nothing about punishing man in a place of eternal torment, nor does it speak of a limbo or purgatory. It states plainly that man is to labor and then return to the dust from which he was made. Is not that what we have witnessed for the past six thousand years?

Even the prophets believed that the dead returned to the dust. The inspired record at Ecclesiastes 3:19, 20 says: "For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast: for all is vanity. All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again." The inference is that both animals and man are created from the same dust, breathe the same air, and in death both go to the same place. Both are made from dust and both return to dust again.

Some may object to this view, and say: "Is not this a rather hopeless view to take? Does not some part of man live on? What about the soul? Does not this live after the human body dies?" The Bible states specifically that the living creature man is a soul, and nowhere does it say that man possesses a soul alive apart from his body. After reading Ezekiel 18:4, 20 there should be no doubt in the minds of those who believe the Bible that the soul dies. Those verses very conclusively say: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." If it dies, then it is not immortal as some claim.

As to the state of the dead, note what God's Word has to say on the matter: "For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest." In these few verses the Bible tells us plainly that the dead are in the grave, that they "know not anything," that "there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom" there. If that is the state of the dead, then they are not undergoing conscious suffering or torment as some teach, nor are they in a state of bliss.

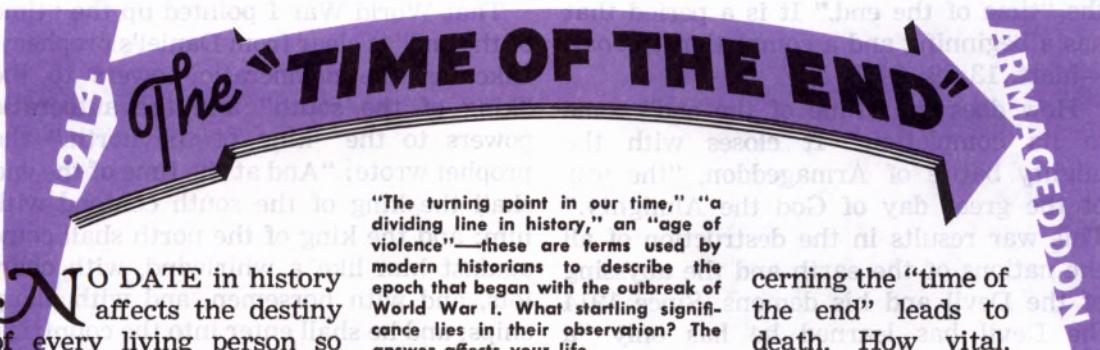
The dead simply, plainly, do not know anything. They are unconscious. They are dead.—Eccl. 9:5, 10.

Some may feel disappointed, thinking that the wicked are not punished for their wicked deeds or the righteous rewarded for their good efforts. The wicked do not go unpunished. They are "like the beasts that perish." They die without hope of ever living again. The righteous who die have hope of a resurrection from the dead. Jesus emphasized the hope of a resurrection with these 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, those who did good things to a resurrection of life, those who practiced vile things to a resurrection of judgment." As Jesus called Lazarus forth from the memorial tomb four days after burial, so he will call all of humankind that are held in the memory of God and these will come forth with an opportunity to live for all eternity under his Kingdom arrangement. This was the hope of the prophets of God, to live under the kingdom of God by Christ. As Job wrote: "O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me! If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands."—Ps. 49:12, 15; John 5:28, 29, NW; Job 14:13-15.

But we living today who exercise faith in Jehovah God and his Son Jesus Christ have the unspeakable hope of never dying! Some might find this hard to believe; nevertheless, it is true. Listen to the words of Jesus (John 11:25, 26, NW): "I am the resurrection and the life. He that exercises faith in me, even though he dies, will come to life, and everyone that is living and ex-

ercises faith in me will never die at all. Do you believe this?" Jehovah's witnesses believe it. This is the hope of the dead and the living. The

dead receive it through a resurrection; the living, through the spirit and power of God, who makes this hope both understandable and possible.



NO DATE in history affects the destiny of every living person so much as the year 1914. That year marked the turning point in the affairs of men. World conditions since 1914 have taken a turn for the worse. War has ravaged the earth, inflation has strangled the world. Countries once prosperous are now plagued with poverty and revolutions. Great empires have collapsed, whole nations and islands hardly known before 1914 have become world problems. Mankind lives in the soul-chilling shadow of atomic annihilation. All this, grimly true as it is, does not explain why world conditions are exactly as they are. It does not explain why 1914 is a turning point. Nor does it explain why 1914 affects your everlasting destiny. What, then, explains the matter? This: in 1914 mankind entered the long-foretold "time of the end."

Only one book tells of the "time of the end." That is the Bible. Its prophecies, for the most part, have their major fulfillment in the "time of the end." Then an understanding of the prophecies would be available to truth seekers: "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." (Dan. 12:4, AS) Lack of knowledge con-

"The turning point in our time," "a dividing line in history," an "age of violence"—these are terms used by modern historians to describe the epoch that began with the outbreak of World War I. What startling significance lies in their observation? The answer affects your life.

cerning the "time of the end" leads to death. How vital, then, to have the

right answers to certain questions! What is to end? When will it end? How will it end? Who will end it?

Jehovah God has decreed that this earth must eventually become a global paradise, with its inhabitants enjoying everlasting life in perfect health and happiness. So what is to end could not be this literal earth, for the Bible plainly declares: "The earth abideth for ever." What is to end is this evil system or state of things. This means that the world that mankind has known ever since the days of the Noachian flood will soon be blotted out; a righteous new world will take its place. So the news that 1914 brought the beginning of the end for what the Bible calls the "present wicked system of things" should be a source of great joy for all right-hearted persons.—Eccl. 1:4; Gal. 1:4, NW.

CONSUMMATION OF A SYSTEM OF THINGS

Christ Jesus, the greatest Prophet that ever lived, pointed forward to the "time of the end." He called it the "consummation of a system of things." The word "consummation" (Greek, *synteleia*) is interesting. This is because *synteleia* combines the

preposition "with" (*syn*) with the noun "end" (*tel'os*). So the word indicates that several things work together or with one another to terminate in a complete end. The consummation (*syntéleia*) about which the disciples asked is the same as the "time of the end." It is a period that has a beginning and a completion (*tel'os*).—Matt. 13:39; 24:3, NW.

How does the "time of the end" come to its completion? It closes with the mighty battle of Armageddon, "the war of the great day of God the Almighty." This war results in the destruction of all the nations of the earth and the abyssing of the Devil and his demons. Since 1914 the Devil has learned he has only "a short period of time."—Rev. 16:14; 12:12, NW.

But now, how do we know for a certainty that 1914 marks the beginning of the "time of the end"? Because the "Gentile times" or "appointed times of the nations" ended A.D. 1914. Why, as far back as 1880 the *Watchtower* magazine declared that 1914 would mark the end of the "Gentile times." Briefly, these "appointed times of the nations" refer to a period when no representative government of Jehovah would exist on earth, but the Gentile nations would dominate the earth. Jesus had said: "Jerusalem will be trampled on by the nations, until the appointed times of the nations are fulfilled." (Luke 21:24, NW) With the overthrow of Jehovah's typical theocratic government, the nation of Israel, in 607 B.C., theocratic rule in the earth ended. "Seven times," or a period of 2,520 years, must pass before a new theocratic government toward our earth could begin operation. This new government would be a heavenly kingdom under Christ Jesus. The King would rule from heaven while the Devil's world was still a going concern. So there was need for a sign. True to prophecy, when the 2,520 years of Gentile dom-

ination ended in 1914, the great sign of the times made its appearance. In 1914 World War I broke out and the "consummation" or "time of the end" began.

DANIEL AND JESUS FORETELL WORLD WAR

That World War I pointed up the "time of the end" is clear from Daniel's prophecy. Likening the democratic powers to the "king of the south" and the autocratic powers to the "king of the north," the prophet wrote: "And at the time of the end shall the king of the south contend with him; and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass through." (Dan. 11: 40, AS) These military movements, affecting the earth from north to south, could not begin, as Daniel says, until the "time of the end."

Now, from Jesus' words, we also know that World War I marked the beginning of the "time of the end." He spoke of the close of the "time of the end" by using the word "*tel'os*," meaning "an accomplished end." Why does not the "accomplished end" occur immediately in 1914, at the close of the "appointed times of the nations"? Jesus explains: "For nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be food shortages and earthquakes in one place after another. All these things are a beginning of pangs of distress."—Matt. 24:7, 8, NW.

"PANGS OF DISTRESS" UPON THE NATIONS

The "pangs of distress" began in 1914 with total warfare, an all-out war for global domination, the like of which had never occurred before in history. In explaining further what the "pangs of distress" include, Jesus said there would be "on the earth anguish of nations, not knowing the way out because of the roaring of the sea

and its agitation, while men become faint out of fear and expectation of the things coming upon the inhabited earth." Today any observing person can perceive the "pangs of distress" upon all the nations of the earth. Yet the masses of people fail to find any significance in it. Oh, they are quick to say that times are worse than ever before. But when they are told of Jesus' prophecy concerning the "time of the end" they scoff and ridicule. Strange? No, because the ridiculers of the great sign of the times were to be so numerous in the "time of the end" or "last days" that they in themselves would constitute part of the sign: "In the last days there will come ridiculers with their ridicule, proceeding according to their own desires and saying: 'Where is this promised presence of his? Why, from the day our forefathers fell asleep in death, all things are continuing exactly as from creation's beginning.'"

—Luke 21:25, 26; 2 Pet. 3:3, 4, NW.

Why do the scoffers scoff? Because "their own desires" are selfish. They want to hang on to this present system of things for their own selfish gain. So they willingly refuse to see the "pangs of distress" foretold by Jesus. They claim that "all things are continuing exactly as from creation's beginning" because 'we have always had wars, famines and earthquakes.' The scoffers fail to realize that the sign Jesus gave is not comprised of an isolated earthquake here or a war there. But rather all the happenings must occur concurrently upon one generation in intensified doses. Now if we carefully analyze the "pangs of distress" that Jesus foretold at Matthew 24 and Luke 21, can we honestly say that since 1914 "all things are continuing exactly as from creation's beginning"? No!

It is interesting to note that many of the "intellectuals" of the world—the philosophers, the scientists, the sages and the historians—are quick to admit that since

1914 there has been a striking change. Bertrand Russell, the philosopher, not long ago declared: "Ever since 1914 the world has been reeling drunkenly toward disaster." An editorial in the *Washington Times-Herald* for March 13, 1945, stated: "The last completely 'normal' year in history was 1913, the year before World War I began." Dr. Harold C. Urey, one of the world's leading creators of the atom bomb, said: "We have not had a peaceful world since 1914." (Cleveland *Plain Dealer*, December 9, 1951) Declared an editorial writer in the *Pittsburgh Sun-Telegram*, August 1, 1954: "Forty years ago the world overnight goose-stepped from the 'golden age' into a volcanic epoch marked by bloody wars."

An editorial in the *Edmonton Journal* of Alberta, Canada, dated August 7, 1954, explains further: "It seems likely that when the history of the twentieth century is written, August 4, 1914, the day hostilities became general in Europe, will loom larger than even the date of the outbreak of the Second World War or the dropping of the first atomic bomb. That August day, we are beginning to realize, marked a dividing line in history. An era of peace, progress and security ended, and an age of war and revolution began." This same observation was made by an associate professor of history at Columbia University's Barnard College, who wrote in *The Scientific Monthly* of July, 1951: "It is indeed the year 1914 rather than that of Hiroshima which marks the turning point in our time, for by now we can see that, whatever the future may hold in store, it was the first world war that ushered in the era of confused transition in the midst of which we are floundering."

And, when making a comparison of the two world wars, the *New York Times Magazine* of August 1, 1954, came to this conclusion: "The first war marked a far

greater change in history. It closed a long era of general peace and began a new age of violence in which the second war is simply an episode. Since 1914 the world has had a new character: a character of international anarchy.... Thus the first World War marks a turning point in modern history."

A DESTINY-MAKING TIME

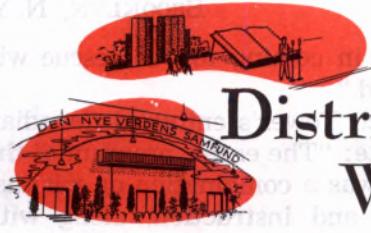
Such terms as "a turning point in modern history," an "age of violence," "an age of war and revolution" and "a volcanic epoch," used by leading authorities, ought to jar scoffers into some sensible thinking! For, of a certainty, things are not continuing exactly as from creation's beginning. The "time of the end" has come. The sign of the "last days" is visible evidence. Never before in history, prior to 1914, have all these things occurred at once upon one generation:

Sign	Scripture Proof
1. World wars	Matt. 24:7
2. Widespread food shortages	Matt. 24:7
3. Unusual number of earthquakes	Matt. 24:7
4. Sore pestilence and disease	Luke 21:11
5. Persecution of Christians	Luke 21:12-15
6. Many forsaking Christianity	Matt. 24:12, 13
7. Formation of the League of Nations and United Nations	Rev. 13:14, 15: 17:11
8. Nations perplexed	Luke 21:25
9. Increased lawlessness	Matt. 24:12
10. Sleepy condition of the world despite the sign	1 Thess. 5:2, 6
11. Moral breakdown in public and private life	2 Tim. 3:1-4
12. Widespread juvenile delinquency	2 Tim. 3:2
13. People overly engaging in everyday affairs of life	Matt. 24:37-39
14. World-wide preaching of the established kingdom as good news.	Matt. 24:14

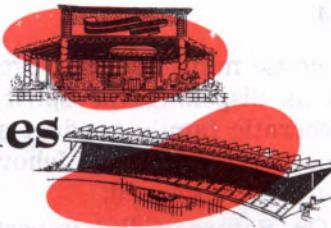
Before the "time of the end" closes the people must be warned. So Jesus foretold: "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for the purpose of a witness to all the nations, and then the accomplished end will come." To people who are heartsick because of this present wicked world, the news of God's established kingdom and the "time of the end" is indeed good. Jehovah's witnesses have been diligent to bring this good news to peoples of all the earth. When the preaching work is finished the "accom-

plished end" comes. This does not mean that when the "time of the end" closes the mass of mankind will have decided for God's kingdom. No, the mass will stick with the old world, even though the warning witness has been given earth-wide. Thus multitudes will be abandoned to their self-chosen destiny of destruction. Said Jesus: "I tell you, In that night two men will be in one bed; the one will be taken along, but the other will be abandoned. There will be two women grinding at the same mill; the one will be taken along, but the other will be abandoned." To be taken into Jehovah's protection at Armageddon depends not on any family or friendship ties; it depends on a clear-cut decision for God's new world. Those who choose to go along with the old world will, as Jesus showed, be abandoned to destruction, just as the preflood people were left to their watery death when "the world of that time suffered destruction when it was deluged with water."—Matt. 24:14; Luke 17:34, 35; 2 Pet. 3:6, NW.

"Truly I say to you," declared Jesus, "that this generation will by no means pass away until all these things occur." So "this generation" from 1914 shall not pass till the "time of the end" closes with the "great tribulation such as has not occurred since the world's beginning until now, no, nor will occur again." Those who are left to their self-chosen destiny of destruction pay the penalty of everlasting death. So since we are living in a destiny-making time, do not wait until face to face with "the accomplished end" of this system of things. That will be too late. Decide now for the new world. Give proof of your decision by associating with the already formed New World society. Share in the warning witness now being given. Then you will be in line to survive this world's "accomplished end" and inherit everlasting life in a perfect new world.—Matt. 24:34, 21, NW.



1954



District Assemblies World-wide

An outstanding series of more than 80 gatherings this year

JEHOVAH'S witnesses were on their way. All over the world they were getting together. By air liners and chartered trains, by private automobiles, by boats and in some places even by bicycle and on foot, they were assembling for a world-wide series of more than 80 district and national assemblies, which had a total attendance of over 427,000 persons.

These assemblies were held in many places, and therefore under vastly different circumstances. In large cities there was often the convenience of a fine auditorium; in places in the South African "bush" they were held right out in the open. Ball parks were made into "hall" parks and great stadiums were converted to theocratic use. There was the floor-level cafeteria in Japan, the warm-water baptism in Puerto Rico, the assembly in four major languages in Honolulu (English, Ilocano, Korean and Japanese), and the beautiful weather at Villach, Austria, where some of the brothers chose to sit outside the hall on the bank of the river to listen to the talks.

In some places transportation was a problem. In Northern Rhodesia the Society's van carried sound equipment to the assemblies in the "bush," driving 2,000 miles over dirt roads through wild territory, and, in one instance, being only the second vehicle over that particular road this year! In order to get to the assembly in Seoul, many Korean witnesses, some with babies strapped on their backs, rode

all day or all night standing all the way in hot, humid coaches. A ship was hired at half the regular cost by the Bergen, Norway, congregations to transport 300 of the brothers to the Stavanger district assembly. These instances illustrate the great effort that was put forth to get to the assemblies, but, as a brother of 65 years, who reported having walked a hundred miles in three days to get to one Northern Rhodesian assembly, said: "It was worth it!"

THE VALUABLE PROGRAM

Yes, the program was rich. It was made up of practical, Scriptural, theocratic discussions that heightened the hearers' already great appreciation for Jehovah's provisions through the New World society. At most assemblies the program was basically the same. On Thursday afternoon the chairman's address of welcome showed the importance of proper appreciation for what was to be heard, of proper deportment at the assembly, and served to remind the conventioners that the welcome at such gatherings actually comes from God. Other Thursday talks outlined the practicalness of showing the principle of love by loyalty, showed the importance of helping new interest to mature, and of being mature oneself through regular participation in all the congregation meetings. On Friday practical advice was given on the best ways to reach the people of good will by means of the magazines, through expanding our service and by using the Bible in our house-

to-house ministry. That evening such topics as dispelling the spirit of complaint, theocratic family conduct and the importance of recognizing Jehovah's organization were discussed.

On Saturday the importance of daily blessing Jehovah, of keeping integrity and of showing true love was stressed. The vigorous fight for freedom to preach worldwide was recounted, and in the talks "Lies Lead to Loss of Life" and "Christians Live the Truth" the need for Christians to be honest and upright in all their dealings was stressed.

Sunday morning the necessity of speeding up the flight of an ever-growing multitude of persons into Jehovah's organization was outlined in the discourse "Speeding Up the Flight to the Mountains," and, through tape recording at many assemblies, the Watch Tower Society's vice-president and president spoke on "The Sacredness of Our Warfare" and "Sanctity of Christian Warriors Guarantees Victory."

Then came the climax, the widely advertised public lecture "God's Love to the Rescue in Man's Crisis." Did the public respond to the invitation to attend? Indeed they did! More than a quarter of the attendance at Brebach in the Saar were people of good will. The 13,800 in Denmark were nearly 6,000 more persons than there are Jehovah's witnesses in that entire land. And in the tiny Caribbean republic of Haiti the excellent attendance of 1,679 was eleven times the approximately 150 brothers who were present!

This public lecture related the ways Jehovah has proved his love, which ways include his provision of a ransom and of a righteous Government and of the opportunity of everlasting life for man. It concluded with an appeal to the audience to band together with the New World society to receive everlasting life, and so that

"God's love in coming to our rescue will be vindicated."

The Watch Tower's enthused Canadian branch wrote: "The entire program of the convention was a combination of spiritual explanation and instruction, along with logical, practical advice of the best way of reaching the people of good will with the wonderful message that Jehovah has entrusted to his people to deliver."

UNITED STATES ASSEMBLIES

Seventeen of the year's district assemblies were held in the United States. The largest of these was in Boston, Massachusetts, in the thickly settled East; the smallest were in the sparsely settled areas of the West. Yet all had the same spirit of love and Christian brotherhood that is always manifested at assemblies of Jehovah's witnesses. The Boston assembly was held in comfortable Fenway Park, home of the local baseball team, and it had a peak attendance of 17,910. There were three other assemblies near the east coast, one at Mooers Field in Richmond, Virginia, another at the large Johnson-Hagood Memorial Stadium in Charleston, South Carolina, and the southernmost assembly was in Plant Field at the fairgrounds in Tampa, on the west side of Florida.

The nation's second-largest assembly (attendance 17,588) was held in the convenient Cincinnati Gardens arena in Cincinnati, Ohio. In Milwaukee, Wisconsin, the city put a large electric-lighted sign on the City Hall tower. Visible over a considerable area of the city, it proclaimed: "Welcome Jehovah's Witnesses." The New Orleans, Louisiana, meeting was in Pelican Stadium, a place of considerable local pride, being the home of the city's victorious baseball club.

Assemblies at Sioux City, Iowa, and Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, were held in modern, air-conditioned municipal audi-

toriums, with stage settings appropriate for New World society gatherings. The San Antonio, Texas, district assembly had a Latin-American touch, with discourses on Friday, Saturday and Sunday in the Spanish language, and 1,637 in attendance at the Spanish public meeting.

It was a hot but happy group that assembled along the Mexico-United States border in the El Paso, Texas, Coliseum. The Pueblo, Colorado, meeting, held in the grandstand at the state fairgrounds, suffered some difficulty with regular afternoon windstorms, sometimes accompanied by rain, but none of the program was missed, for the speakers continued their talks from the press box located across from the stands.

Billings, Montana, is in an area that is mostly just wide-open space, and here there was a true cross section of western brothers: ranchers, sheepherders, farmers, miners, oil men and business people—all zealous servants of Jehovah. Salt Lake City, Utah, is the capital and headquarters of the "Latter-day Saints" or Mormon church, which practically controls all the large places of assembly. However, the Utah State Fairgrounds Coliseum was obtained. Two Hopi Indians from Arizona, who recently accepted the truth and have been actively spreading the good news of the Kingdom among their tribesmen on the reservation, were among those baptized here.

The three remaining United States assemblies were held on the west coast, in San Diego and Oakland, California, and in Portland, Oregon. The Portland assembly was held at Portland Meadows, which is

a race track. The acting mayor, who extended the city's wishes for a most successful convention, said he was glad to see these facilities being used for such purpose.

GILEAD GRADUATION

The largest Canadian assembly was in Toronto, Ontario. Here the meeting was for five days, rather than four, so that the graduation of the 116 students of the twenty-third class of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead could be held on the assembly's third day.

After song, prayer and reading of telegrams from many parts of the world, Gilead's five instructors briefly gave parting words of counsel. It was pointed out that trials reveal whether one is truly dedicated or serving out of selfishness, that something is wrong when one seeks social contacts outside the New World society, that for safety we must 'hold fast to the organization,' never losing sight of or acting independent of it, that we must be kind,

for sheep may need a rod at times but never a kick, that we radiate spiritual good health by sticking close to God's Word and his visible instrument, and that by 'holding fast to quality service' quotas would take care of themselves.

Next F. W. Franz, the Society's vice-president, developed the theme of the missionaries' happy lot, for they are "taking the lead in showing men how to love." We need love to be happy, and by giving generously—missionaries have so many opportunities to give—we shall be loved spontaneously. Then the Society's president, N. H. Knorr, gave admonition on "Think on These Things." He pointed out



City Hall tower
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

that failure to think on right things will cause one to lose the truth, and contrasted the fruits of old-world thinking with those of right thinking. Stressed also were the need of keeping clean in thought and conduct and the importance of going to God's Word and to God in prayer in forming proper mental habits.

Four other assemblies were held in Canada, in the extreme east in St. John's, Newfoundland, and Halifax, Nova Scotia; out in the prairie provinces in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan; and on the Pacific Coast in beautiful flower-decked Queens Park in New Westminster, British Columbia. This latter meeting served brothers from as far north as the Arctic Circle.

BRITAIN

Four assemblies were held in Britain. One was in an ice rink in Dunfermline, Scotland, across the well-known Firth of Forth from Edinburgh. The rink was made into such a cozy Kingdom Hall and the brothers had such a friendly atmosphere that one landlady said that nowhere had she seen religious instruction given under such natural conditions of fellowship, and added: "I intend getting in among these people." A generous sprinkling of local people who had been impressed with the organization came to hear the message. A school headmaster, seeing a fellow teacher in the crowd on the way out, remarked: "We are always learning, aren't we!"

The second British assembly was in Belfast, Northern Ireland. Here, where the deep-rooted feud between the Protestants and Catholics flares up periodically into open conflict, the orderliness, dignity and courtesy of the New World society were characteristics that could be noted both out in the field and at Ulster Hall where the assembly was located.

The assemblies at Nottingham, in the Midlands, and at Luton, some thirty miles north of London, were held in athletic grounds. In Britain these are built to house an active and often boisterous crowd for an hour or so, therefore only limited seating is needed and provided. But there are plenty of concrete terraces for standing. Volunteers built enough benches at Nottingham to more than double the seating capacity, and newspapers throughout the area commented on the transformation that had taken place at Luton. A national newspaper added: "Just a ball of string kept the thousands to the three-foot cinder path and not one foot was placed on the pitch."

PUBLICITY

Assembly publicity was tremendous. Many radio and television stations carried quarter-hour or even half-hour interviews with the visiting speakers. One Cincinnati radio station alone broadcast five interviews. A number of television stations showed parts of the descriptive film "The New World Society in Action." A Toronto broadcaster said: "If you want to know about Jehovah's witnesses it won't cost you anything to go down to the Grandstand and find out."

Newspapers of all sizes and descriptions reported on the assemblies. In the Boston, Massachusetts, area alone 120 newspapers carried assembly reports. In Sioux City, Iowa, the assembly's best coverage was in a two-and-a-half-pound Centennial issue of the Sioux City *Journal*—a souvenir item that was sent all over the country. The local newspaper in Billings, Montana, carried assembly information into a wide area that is normally off the beaten path, helping to acquaint people in unassigned territory with the activity of Jehovah's witnesses.

In Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia, the paper carried front-page photographs and a

write-up. From Cuba comes the report: "The newspaper publicity included a splendid interview with the Society's vice-president." From Puerto Rico: "The principal newspapers of the island carried information concerning Jehovah's witnesses and the assembly. A radio station broadcast the entire public lecture free of charge although it lasted one hour and twelve minutes." The conventioners in Denmark were waiting anxiously to see if moving into the Forum, Denmark's largest indoor hall, would make a difference with that conservative land's newspapers that had ignored former Danish assemblies. Indeed it did! They carried nearly 1,500 column inches of material and fifty pictures. One article speaking of the tremendous crowds, proclaimed: "Billy Graham Can't Hold a Candle to This."

Assembly publicity in Luton, England, goaded the Anglican bishop to write a letter to the churches calling the witnesses heretics and schismatics and generally trying to minimize the effect of this Christian gathering. The local press carried the text of the bishop's letter, together with the Witnesses' reply, and it also published a good report on the assembly.

Assembly publicity in the Netherlands was the best the press had ever given in that land, though the local clergy apparently thought that curbing the preconvention activity would be as easy as writing a smear article or two in their religious papers. However, some Dutch Reformed people became so indignant over these articles that they volunteered to provide conventioners with rooms, some even offering them free.

In the United States many brothers were thrilled to see the Berlin assembly brought right into their own living rooms through means of television newscasts on the Thursday following that assembly. Movies showed the immersion, including close-up

shots of sisters being lowered under the water. The announcer mentioned that more than twenty thousand witnesses were in attendance, and that two thirds of them came from the East Zone of Germany at the risk of their lives. This he referred to as a real demonstration of faith.

CHRISTIAN DEPORTMENT

Proper Christian behavior is easily recognized and makes a good impression. The sergeant of police of Fenway Park in Boston said that Jehovah's witnesses were the most orderly crowd in the park in his eighteen years there. The practice of applying the principle of love to everyday living was being explained by one of the witnesses to a group of Naples policemen on duty at the theater where the Italian assembly was being held, when one of the officers admitted: "We are here only to increase the attendance. I can't understand why other religions don't teach what you do." The explanation came from another policeman: "That's simple. They have the truth and follow it, while the other religions engage in politics."

An example of this Christian love was shown in Copenhagen, Denmark. The Forum was packed to the doors a half hour before the public talk was to start. At twenty minutes to three it was requested that some of the brothers wearing lapel badges vacate their seats so as to make room for the good-will persons still outside. The response? Almost two thousand brothers and sisters lovingly stood up en masse and quickly moved out into the streets, allowing many guests to find a place and to hear the high point of the assembly.

After the assembly was over, the Oakland, California, *Tribune* said: "Lindsley Lueddeke, director of Oakland Auditorium and Exposition buildings, will welcome Jehovah's witnesses with open arms should

they decide to hold another district assembly in Oakland. . . . There were no problems of any kind, and when the assembly ended the buildings were left spotlessly clean, largely because a committee of 50, moving about the arena, picked up every discarded scrap of paper almost the instant it hit the floor. 'Be REALLY glad to see them come back,' says Lueddeke."

OFFICIAL ATTITUDE

An unusual aspect of this year's assemblies was the warm attitude of city officials. In the United States it started off at Cincinnati, one of the earlier assemblies. When the speakers from Brooklyn arrived at the airport, Dorothy N. Dolbey, the acting mayor, was present to extend an official welcome and to drive them into town. The mayor or one of his aids also came out to welcome the assembly officials in Charleston, South Carolina; Sioux City, Iowa, and Portland, Oregon. In Toronto, Ontario, a member of the City Council said they were "proud to have this Christian organization coming to Toronto," and mentioned especially its good work among young people.

In a number of cities the officials granted permission for large advertising banners to be put up across principal streets, and police escorts were frequently provided for car-sign parades through the heart of the city, each car bearing an overhead sign announcing the public talk.

The assembly chairman at Tampa, Florida, asked: "Why the change in attitude toward Jehovah's witnesses since former days? Undoubtedly the two record-breaking assemblies in 1950 and 1953 at Yankee Stadium, New York city, where demonstrations of law and order, peace and Christian unity rocked the religious world, contributed much to this changed attitude."

The effect of this truthful publicity was specifically evident at Tampere, Finland, where reports in their Finnish newspapers about the 1953 Yankee Stadium assembly prompted the directors of the Tampere Hippos to volunteer it for assembly rental. It was used for this summer's meeting.

BAPTISM

The total number baptized at the district assemblies was 14,509!

In Seoul, Korea, the baptism was held in the swimming pool at the school that was rented for the assembly. However, since the war this pool had been filled with rubble and debris. The brothers cleaned out the bricks, stones and mortar and then got a sister's husband to haul several fire truckloads of water to fill the pool. The school and the children of the community are grateful to Jehovah's witnesses for holding their baptism there and restoring the pool for them. When the baptismal candidates were asked to stand at this Seoul assembly, everyone was astonished to see almost a third of the audience rise!

In Copenhagen, Denmark, the police would not give permission for one continual car parade from the assembly hall to the immersion pool, but they broke it down into groups of ten and fifteen cars, then provided a police escort for each group. This arrangement merely called additional attention to the assembly, because every three minutes a new group of cars would pass the amazed sidewalk onlookers. Each car carried a sign identifying it as part of Jehovah's witnesses' baptism.

Perhaps the most unusual baptism, though, was in the Luapula River at Kasiba, Northern Rhodesia. It is infested with crocodiles, so a number of brothers first went out in their boats (which are hollowed-out tree trunks) and formed a ring around the immersion place. The

crocodiles kept away and the immersion of 580 brothers went ahead smoothly.

ASSEMBLY PREPARATIONS

To hold assemblies of such size, many rooming accommodations must be obtained, not only from hotels, but also from private homes. Almost everywhere this year sufficient accommodations were obtained in good time and the rooming work was completed well ahead of schedule. In New Westminster, British Columbia, the chief of police had asked where the thousands of conventioners would stay, since all the available rooms would be taken by the visitors who came to the widely advertised British Empire Games, which were to be held at the same time as the assembly. It was discovered, however, that the landladies had become room-renting conscious and were happy to have Jehovah's witnesses stay with them, while the other visitors did not have such a good reputation. The rooming work was finished in just ten days, and many more offers of accommodations had to be turned down.

In Kyoto, Japan, another source of accommodations was found—Buddhist temples. One temple provided accommodations for ninety brothers, and received a good witness. One brother who stayed at a temple talked two and a half hours with his host, the Buddhist priest, who is a *Watchtower* subscriber and who came to the assembly and said that if he can gain faith in Jehovah he will abandon his Buddhist religion.

Assembly places of the right size are often difficult to find, and to make them satisfactory considerable work is sometimes necessary. In Salt Lake City, Utah, more than a hundred brothers and sisters spent several days cleaning the auditorium and converting it into a suitable assembly location. The manager was dumfounded. Never in all the thirty years that he could remember had the place been so clean.

Mooers Field in Richmond, Virginia, is now generally used for midget auto racing, and was pretty well run down. Preassembly work included painting the main entrance building and the boards surrounding the field. By assembly time it looked very nice.

In Honolulu the brothers could not move into the school building where the assembly was to be held until 9 p.m. on the day immediately preceding the assembly. The Adventists were using it up until that time. Brothers were notified of this and about 400 of them moved in as soon as the Adventists moved out. First came the sweeping compound, then about a hundred with brooms and mops. In a very short time the auditorium was spick-and-span, chairs were being set up, flowers were arranged on the stage, the yeartext appeared, sound equipment was installed, and in less than four hours this volunteer labor had transformed the place into a large Kingdom Hall. This proved to be a good witness to those watching and an encouragement to new ones who saw the unity of Jehovah's witnesses and the evidence of His spirit upon the organization.

In Lahore, Pakistan, an outstanding impression was made on the Moslems by the sight of Europeans, who, in these lands, never stoop to menial tasks, working side by side with their darker brothers in the kitchen of the cafeteria and in street advertising work. Street work, which was done for the first time in this strongly Moslem town, forced many to take notice. Said one high-placed Moslem official who attended the public lecture: "You can sense the spirit of God with these people. You find a restful and happy atmosphere where they are and you always feel welcome."

RESULTS

The final chapter of the assemblies cannot yet be written, because their real success will depend upon how the conventioners apply to their own personal and congre-

gational activity the things they learned and the suggestions that were made at these assemblies. Weak points were stressed. The importance of meeting attendance was driven home. All were encouraged to more zealous service. From Indonesia comes the report of a new peak in publishers the following month. From Puerto Rico it was reported that attendance at the congregation meetings has increased considerably, sometimes as much as twenty-five per cent.

Also, Jehovah's witnesses are thinking of next year, when brothers from many parts of the globe will assemble in conventions in North America, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Sweden and the Nether-

lands. When the Italian branch servant at the Naples district assembly enthusiastically announced that one 1955 international assembly would be in Rome, tears of joy were a common sight. Although many of Jehovah's witnesses in Italy are very poor materially, yet the thought of having brothers from other lands come to associate with them in Christian assembly has made them determine to be in Rome next year to praise Jehovah and to enjoy the sweet fellowship of their brothers who are coming from overseas.

Now all eyes are turned to 1955 and the witnessing work ahead, with the international assemblies just seven months away!

1954 DISTRICT ASSEMBLY FIGURES

This chart does not include all the assemblies, because some in the Southern Hemisphere were held later in the year, after this chart went to press. (Totals are given for the country if it had four or more assemblies.)

	Attend-	Bap-	Attend-	Bap-	Attend-	Bap-		
	ance	tized	ance	tized	ance	tized		
AUSTRALIA			BREMEN	6,534	292	SOUTH AFRICA		
Broken Hill, N.S.W.	401	8	Cologne	8,567	315	Bloemfontein (African)	718	33
Kalgoorlie, W. Aus.	945	42	Freiburg	6,070	184	Bloemfontein (European)	1,520	75
Rockhampton, Qld.	340	16	Hof	3,780	197	Durban (African)	1,903	122
Toowoomba, Qld.	1,520	58	Munich	8,149	283	Durban (Non-European)	141	13
(More assemblies later)			Neumünster	4,709	152	East London (African)	607	47
			Wiesbaden	7,750	220	East London (Non-European)	87	3
AUSTRIA			Total	74,557	2,854	Johannesburg (African)	5,641	280
Bregenz	776	29	GUATEMALA	751	59	Cape Town (African)	420	40
Linz	1,217	49	Guatemala City			Cape Town (Non-European)	414	21
Villach	1,166	68	HAITI			Total	11,451	634
BELGIUM			Port-au-Prince	1,679	3	SOUTHERN RHODESIA		
Ghent	1,998	59	HAWAII , Honolulu	1,120	38	Bulawayo	8,025	153
Liège	2,464	96	HONG KONG	190	7	Salisbury (African)	3,370	280
BRITAIN			ITALY, Naples	1,260	106	Salisbury (European)	371	17
Belfast, N. Ireland	1,055	20	JAPAN , Kyoto	536	22	SWITZERLAND		
Dunfermline, Scotland	2,672	47	KOREA, Seoul	1,245	284	St. Gallen	3,120	62
Luton	11,839	305	LUXEMBOURG	252	1	Vevey	746	13
Nottingham	9,620	171	NETHERLANDS			THAILAND , Bangkok	231	10
Total	25,186	543	The Hague	11,800	283	UNITED STATES		
CANADA			NORTHERN RHODESIA			Billings, Mont.	1,796	75
Halifax, N. S.	1,801	60	Broken Hill (African)	11,069	466	Boston, Mass.	17,910	424
New Westminster,			Chingola (African)	8,678	317	Charleston, S. C.	4,351	88
B. C.	9,632	205	Kashiba (African)	7,121	580	Cincinnati, Ohio	17,588	440
Saint John's, Newf.	436	33	Luanshya (African)	15,000	589	El Paso, Tex.	1,279	32
Saskatoon, Sask.	6,232	125	Mankoya (African)	1,017	126	Milwaukee, Wis.	12,618	368
Toronto, Ont.	22,201	564	Mulilo (African)	2,375	339	New Orleans, La.	5,482	134
Total	40,302	987	Mwanza (African)	2,779	200	Oakland, Calif.	11,460	387
CUBA			Nkana-Kitwe (European)	133	6	Oklahoma City, Okla.	5,389	136
Havana	4,212	50	Total	48,172	2,623	Portland, Oreg.	9,439	330
Holguin	1,761	35	NORWAY			Pueblo, Colo.	4,761	120
DENMARK			Hamar	1,327	43	Richmond, Va.	11,460	247
Copenhagen	13,800	523	Narvik	326	26	Salt Lake City, Utah	1,573	73
ETHIOPIA			Stavanger	632	17	San Antonio, Tex.	7,543	180
Kuopio	2,000	44	Vardø	50	0	San Diego, Calif.	14,538	414
Tampere	4,750	118	Total	2,335	86	Sioux City, Iowa	5,257	142
FRANCE			PAKISTAN, Lahore	335	9	Tampa, Fla.	6,764	170
Amiens	4,317	69	PUERTO RICO, Arecibo	777	24	Total	139,208	3,760
Lyons	1,584	96	SAAR, Brebach	1,058	20	VENEZUELA , Caracas	829	62
Nancy	960	67			TOTAL AT THE ASSEMBLIES LISTED HERE			
Paris	3,300	124			427,057	14,509		
Total	10,161	356						
GERMANY								
Berlin	22,500	1,022						
Bielefeld	6,498	189						



The Fight for Freedom to Preach World-wide

"The king granted the Jews . . . to stand for their life."—Esther 8: 11, AS.



JEHOVAH God commands that this good news shall be preached in all the world. (Matt. 24:14) Jesus warned: "You will be hated by all the nations on account of my name." (Matt. 24:9, NW) David declared: "Why do the nations rage, . . . and the rulers take counsel together, against Jehovah, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their cords from us." (Ps. 2:1-3, AS) This means a fight to preach world-wide.

¹ This world-wide fight today finds a parallel in ancient times. In the fifth century B.C. the Persian Empire was the world power. It was ruled over by Ahasuerus, who is commonly known in history as Xerxes. God's people were in captivity and scattered throughout that world. The wicked prime minister, Haman, sought to destroy all of God's people throughout the empire. (Esther 3:6) He tricked the king into signing an unchangeable decree of death for them. Jehovah then used the king's new wife, Esther. At the instance of Mordecai she intervened. A request was made for relief from the death sentence that had been ordered by the king. The

king granted Esther's request. He did not change the decree, but he ordered that all the Jews in each of the provinces and in every city should stand and fight for their lives. (Esther 8:11, 12) Jehovah's people gathered together in all the cities and provinces. They fought throughout that empire for their lives.—Esther 9:16.

² Are not the modern-day witnesses of Jehovah in the same position as those ancient servants of God? Yes, exactly! We must fight world-wide for our lives. Since our lives are at stake we fight for freedom to preach. Jehovah has commanded us to preach the good news. Our lives depend on faithfully preaching it! In fact, necessity to do it is laid upon all of us. Woe is to every last one of us if we do not publicly and fearlessly declare the good news. (1 Cor. 9:16; Ezek. 3:20) Jehovah has stated: "If I say to the wicked, 'O wicked man, you shall surely die,' and you say nothing to warn the wicked man from his way, that wicked man shall die for his iniquity, but his blood will I require at your hand." (Ezek. 33:8, AT) The only way we can expect to save ourselves is to

1. What prophecies indicate a fight for freedom to preach world-wide?
2. Our fight for freedom to preach has what ancient parallel?

- 3, 4. (a) Why is it so vital that we fight for freedom to preach? (b) Who is the chief enemy of our freedom to preach, and what tactics does he use?

preach and to declare the good news for the salvation of others.—1 Tim. 4:16.

⁴ The Devil is the invisible ruler of this present evil system of things. (2 Cor. 4:4) Does not Satan know the Scriptures? Surely he does! Did he not quote them to Jesus? (Matt. 4:6) He knows that the only way he can destroy Jehovah's witnesses, according to Ezekiel 33:8, 9, is to force us to stop preaching in all the nations as commanded by Jehovah. He knows that if we do we shall suffer death. To attempt to stop us he, therefore, frames mischief by law against us throughout the world. Jehovah's revealed Word shows that we must, therefore, fight for freedom. Let us call it "The Fight for Freedom to Preach World-wide"!

⁵ Where does our freedom come from? Is it from the nations of this world and their rulers? No! Jehovah God is the author of freedom. With us there is liberty and freedom. As it is written at 2 Corinthians 3:17 (NW): "Now Jehovah is the spirit; and where the spirit of Jehovah is, there is freedom." We have been set free by the Son of God, Jesus Christ. "If you remain in my word, you are really my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free. Therefore if the Son sets you free, you will be actually free." (John 8:31, 32, 36, NW) We are blessed with that treasured liberty. But we must fight to hold it. It is knowing and talking the truth accurately that keeps us free.

⁶ Who was the first to possess this freedom? Jesus was the first to claim it. He was persecuted. He had to fight for his right to preach. He did this by carrying on without any protection from the Roman government. He declared the God-given right to preach. He gave this freedom to others. (Gal. 5:1) Did he claim any

guarantee as a citizen? No, he had no Roman citizenship. His citizenship was in heaven. He claimed the fundamental freedom to preach given by God. Was he afraid because he did not have any protection from Caesar's government? No! He declared his freedom with a boldness that was frightening. He showed his confidence in the power of Jehovah, the Giver of freedom. He said: "And do not become fearful of those who kill the body but can not kill the soul; but rather be in fear of him that can destroy both soul and body in Gehenna."—Matt. 10:28, NW.

⁷ Does this not show us that Jesus expected to be persecuted by the rulers because of his claiming the freedom given by Jehovah God? Yes! And Jesus also knew that the persecution would not spend itself on him or end with his death. He knew that every one of his followers would be persecuted even as he had been. Did he indicate that it would be confined to only a few nations? No! He showed that this persecution would come from all, every nation! He gave the reason. It would be because we bear his name. Jesus said: "If they have persecuted me, they will persecute you also; . . . But they will do all these things against you on account of my name."—John 15:20, 21, NW; Matt. 24:9.

⁸ The mistreatment we receive is no surprise to us. It is not as though it were unexpected. (1 Pet. 4:12) Does it discourage us? No, it really encourages us. It proves to us that we are the ones worthy to bear his name. Jesus also mentioned our persecution as a sign of the approaching end of this wicked system of things. So we lift up our heads and rejoice. Persecution is a sure sign that our complete deliverance from the present evil system of things is rapidly approaching. "But as these things start to occur, raise yourselves erect and

5, 6. (a) Who is freedom's Author and whom does he use to set us free? (b) How only can we keep free, and what example did Jesus set for us in this regard?

7, 8. Why should persecution not surprise us? Instead, how should it affect us?

lift your heads up, because your deliverance is getting near." (Luke 21:28, NW) This gives us courage to push on in "the fight for freedom to preach world-wide."

FIGHTING WITHOUT GUARANTEE AGAINST PERSECUTION

⁹ Did the early followers such as the apostles and disciples give up the fight to preach the gospel world-wide because they did not have a license or guarantee against persecution from Caesar? Only one apostle was a Roman citizen. That was Paul. The others were Jews living under military occupation by Rome without any rights of Roman citizenship. They all kept on preaching boldly, as did Jesus, even though their rights were not guaranteed by Caesar. Paul's rights as a Roman citizen did not stop his persecution. Apparently he was persecuted more than some of the other apostles. They all had to fight for freedom to preach. The apostles could not be stopped by the absence of a license or guarantee from Caesar. They continued preaching. Many even gave up their lives for the good news.

¹⁰ They fought for freedom to preach the Word of God. Because they claimed the Jehovah-given freedom the early apostles were mobbed, arrested, persecuted, imprisoned and whipped with lashes. (Acts 4:3; 5:17-27) The false religionists could not bear to hear their cutting and piercing message. The apostles were accused of turning the world upside down. (Acts 17:6) They were commanded by the high priest not to preach any more in the name of Jesus. Peter and the apostles declared their bill of rights, their God-given freedom! They said: "We must obey God as ruler rather than men." (Acts 5:29, NW) The hatred of their preaching and freedom did not stop in courts. When they won their

cases before the judges and were discharged they were followed by the mob that attended the trial. Their persecutors beat them. (Acts 5:40) Did not justice done in the law courts drive the enemy mad?

¹¹ What else happened because of the bold fight of the early church to preserve their freedom? It is commonly known that, after Jesus, Stephen was the first Christian martyr. He was forcibly brought by a mob to the Sanhedrin. There he gave an eloquent public witness. He was seized by the mob. They then dragged him to the edge of the city. They threw him out of town! There he was stoned to death outside the city limits. Saul (later to become the apostle Paul) was present and conspired with the killers of Stephen. (Acts 6:11-8:1) Do not forget, also, that King Herod had James beheaded with the sword.—Acts 12:2, AT.

¹² The apostle Paul himself was stoned. They mobbed him and dragged him outside the city limits of Lystra. They left him there, thinking they had killed him. (Acts 14:8-19) The prosperity of the missionary work of Paul and Silas stirred up another mob of false religionists in Philippi. They mobbed them, had them arrested, placed in jail and locked in stocks. An earthquake in the middle of the night released them. (Acts 16:16-26) The frightened authorities wanted those Jehovah's witnesses to leave the city secretly. Did Paul and Silas accept the compromise? No! They made them dispose of the case openly. Paul claimed his Roman citizenship. This astonished his accusers. His boldness of speech frightened them. (Acts 16:37, 38) Did not Paul use his citizenship to fight to preach? When before Festus he unhesitatingly appealed to Caesar, a right which the Jews did not have. (Acts 25:10-

9, 10. (a) In spite of persecution and lack of legal guarantees what course did the apostles pursue? (b) What was their position regarding the right to preach?

11, 12. (a) Who suffered, and how, because of fighting for freedom to preach? (b) Of what legal instrument did Paul make use in his fight for freedom to preach?

12) Paul could not have appealed his case to Caesar and gone to Rome for a hearing had he not been a Roman citizen.¹³

¹³ Paul fought for freedom to preach the good news world-wide. He was ever ready with an answer. He was always vigilant in fighting for freedom to preach world-wide. He wrote: "It is altogether right for me to think this regarding all of you, on account of my having you in my heart, all of you being sharers with me in the undeserved kindness both in my prison bonds and in the defending and legally establishing of the good news." (Phil. 1:7, NW) He fought for the right to preach with boldness, even when in chains. (Eph. 6:19, 20) Even Paul, while a prisoner in Rome awaiting trial before Caesar, did not fail to preach. While under constant guard of a soldier for two years in Rome he preached the good news. He preached to great numbers that came to see him, and this he did "with the greatest freeness of speech, without hindrance."—Acts 28:30, 31, NW.

¹⁴ Likely Paul was in prison more often than any other apostle. He was beaten with stripes to an excess and often near death. Did he ever let any of these things turn him back? No! These and many other dangers he met and overcame in his fight for freedom to preach world-wide. (2 Cor. 11:21-27) Did he leave us any advice to follow? Note his words to Timothy. By means of these he tells us all to be fighters for freedom to preach: "Contend for victory in the right contest of the faith."—1 Tim. 6:12, NW.

¹⁵ Paul definitely identified our real enemies. Were they said to be flesh and blood? No! He showed that they cannot be reached by carnal weapons of this evil world. Who are they? They are the unseen demons that control and rule this old world

13, 14. What was Paul's record as a fighter for freedom to preach, and what advice did he leave for us to follow? 15. Who are our real enemies, and what is our only weapon of attack?

with their leader the Devil. (John 14:30; 2 Cor. 4:4; Eph. 6:12) We do not, therefore, become excited or fearful when we see the hordes of alienated mankind against us. We see clearly that the weapons of warfare of this old world do no good in the world-wide fight for freedom to preach. The only weapon that we can use in the fight is the two-edged sword of the spirit, which is the Word of God. Is it not mighty for pulling down the strongholds of error and power in this world? It is the most powerful of all weapons of warfare. (Eph. 6:17) The apostle Paul wrote: "For the word of God is alive and exerts power and is sharper than any two-edged sword and pierces even to the dividing of the soul and spirit, and of the joints and their marrow, and is able to discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart." (Heb. 4:12, NW) That is a fact! Never forget it!

IDENTIFIED BY PERSECUTION

¹⁶ What proof have we that Jehovah God is using us to fulfill prophecy uttered by Jesus? The uncontradicted evidence is that we are being persecuted as was Jesus, and for the same reason! He uses our persecution to identify definitely the time where we now are. (Matt. 24:9) He identified his job when before Pilate: "For this purpose I have been born and for this purpose I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth." (John 18:37, NW) We follow in his footsteps with the same assignment from Jehovah, to bear witness to the truth! As a result we are persecuted world-wide. We are hated world-wide for the sake of his name.

¹⁷ It is a familiar story about the fight for freedom fought by Jehovah's witnesses to preach in Nazi- and Fascist-dominated

16. By following Jesus, in what respect shall we be like him, and in what way?

17, 18. (a) What record did Jehovah's witnesses make in the fight for freedom to preach from 1933 to 1945? (b) Since then what has been their experience in Communist-dominated lands?

lands from 1933 to 1945. Thousands were thrown into the concentration camps. Many were tortured and killed. Countless numbers died because of their loyalty to Jehovah God. They could have lived had they chosen to renounce the name of Jehovah God. Every well-informed person knows of the intense persecution of Jehovah's witnesses in the United States and Canada during 1933 to 1945. Witness the court cases by the thousands and the mobs by the hundreds! More than seventy countries at one time or another during the past forty years have made restrictive decrees and have persecuted Jehovah's witnesses.

¹⁸ Did the fall of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy and Japan at the end of World War II stop our persecution? No, it did not! In lands taken over by the Communist rulers in eastern Europe we have been banned because of our refusal to stop preaching. Jehovah's witnesses have been thrown into dungeons and concentration camps by the thousands. Look at what has happened in East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia and other countries. Thousands are in prison and forced labor camps! Today in all communistic countries

Jehovah's witnesses are stalked and pursued like wild beasts by hunters, the secret police. Restrictive bans are imposed to prohibit the preaching of the gospel completely in those communistic lands. Our brothers there have been jailed and given mock trials. Many have been killed.

¹⁹ No other religious organization on the earth has been persecuted for the name

19. In what way do the arrests of Jehovah's witnesses differ from those of the clergy?

of Jehovah God, for which also the name Jesus stands. True, some religious clergymen have been jailed in these Communist lands. But these were not for righteousness' sake. (1 Pet. 3:14) They were imprisoned because of political reasons. They were not imprisoned because of witnessing for Jehovah God or for bearing the name of Jesus. Today the Catholic and Protestant churches are still free to hold open church services in places such as Poland, Czechoslovakia, East Germany and in other Communist countries. In these countries Jehovah's witnesses cannot worship God openly.

²⁰ In other lands persecution continues. Do you know that recently, January, 1954, a ban was imposed against Jehovah's witnesses by the legislature of Quebec, Canada? It provided for treatment of the witnesses of Jehovah similar to that ordered by Adolph Hitler in Nazi Germany. This was done at the instance of Quebec's Catholic Premier Duplessis. Do not forget that the ban against Jehovah's witnesses continues in the Dominican Republic, in Argentina and in other countries. Let us call to mind the mobbings and ambush-shooting of our brothers at assemblies in the Philippines during the last two years. Consider the multitude of other cases of persecution world-wide that appears in the reports in each *Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses*.

Witnesses during the last nine years. Look at the democratic countries of Europe: Italy, France, Switzerland and the Scandinavian lands! In fact, in every part of the



20. (a) During the past two years in what other lands particularly have Jehovah's witnesses suffered violent persecution? (b) What have the *Yearbook* reports of the past nine years shown?

world, Africa, Asia and the isles of the sea, a hard and good fight has been fought for freedom to preach. We, by Jehovah's help, will hold to this freedom world-wide. While it is a fight in many courts of the land and it means persecution to Jehovah's faithful servants, we cling to this glorious treasure of service, preaching world-wide.

²¹ Surely this testimony from many lands, standing high as the mountains, proves persecution continues. What Christian group is identified by the modern-day world-wide fulfillment of the words of Jesus? Here is the proof as plain as it can possibly be made. The facts speak for themselves. It is not necessary for more to be said to prove it. It is indisputable. Who is this group? You, the faithful witnesses of Jehovah. You are the ones identified by Jesus. You are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake in all the nations. (Matt. 24:9; 2 Cor. 1:7; Col. 1:24) Are you sad? No! You are happy to be such a favored people! (Jas. 1:12) Peter said: "Indeed, who is the man that will harm you if you become zealous for what is good? But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are happy."

—1 Pet. 3:13, 14, NW.

²² This world-wide persecution puts us to a variety of tests. It forces us to use every possible method in the fight for freedom to preach world-wide. Our method of fighting must of necessity vary in different countries. This is so because our fight must be legal. The procedure established by laws for legally fighting in all of the nations of the world differ. It is impossible for all the procedure to be the same everywhere.

²³ Democratic countries such as the United States, the British Commonwealth

of Nations, and some countries of Europe, are liberal in giving us procedure to fight with. They permit us to appeal to "Caesar" by defending ourselves in the courts. In such countries do we make use of the courts? Yes! We freely and unhesitatingly appeal to the courts for the defense of the right to preach. Jehovah has used the judges to help us legally establish the good news. They have stacked up a great heap of victories. These stand up as a bastion. Cases by the hundreds and by the thousands have been piled high as a mountain in the world-wide fight for freedom to preach. They stand as a mighty bulwark.

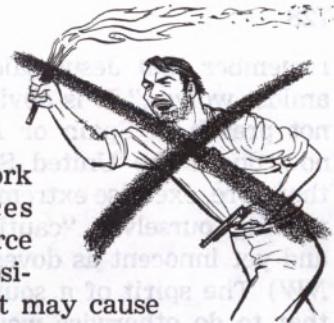
²⁴ Other nations do not allow appeals to the courts to protect our preaching. We must appeal to "Caesar," namely, to the head of the state, such as the prime minister, president or premier. This we do. We claim our rights and argue before them as did Moses before Pharaoh. When the authority to protect and defend the right to preach is placed by "Caesar" in the hands of some state, provincial, city or local officials we freely appeal to such officials. We petition to all of them to make orders to protect our rights to do our work. Have we not time and again appealed to authorities to lift bans in some countries? Remember the mountain of cablegrams sent to Adolph Hitler! Witness the petitions to lift the ban and for a Bill of Rights in Canada! Recall the large petitions to Congress against the Roman Catholic boycott of radio stations in the United States broadcasting programs of Jehovah's witnesses. We have petitioned the authorities to make orders permitting the importation of literature. We have in many countries appealed to the officials to allow missionaries sent from the Society's headquarters to enter the country and preach there. We have never neglected any opportunity to fight legally for the world-wide right to preach.

21. What Christian group alone fulfills Matthew 24:9, and how do they feel about it?

22. Circumstances indicate that we do what in our world-wide fight for freedom to preach?

23, 24. (a) How is the fight for freedom to preach carried on in such democratic lands as the United States and the British Commonwealth of Nations? (b) Where such recourse is not available how is it carried on?

Never Fighting Illegally or Quitting World-wide Preaching



JEHOVAH'S witnesses never resort to any illegal or unlawful means in the fight for freedom to preach world-wide. Do we, His witnesses, take the law into our own hands? No! We do not gang up on the government officials. We do not force our way through the Iron Curtain! We do not harm officials, and we do not arm ourselves to oppose them. We do not advocate the overthrow of government by force or violence through men or groups of men. This is true even when that government oppresses our God-given work of preaching the good news of the Kingdom. We make use only of those instruments of fighting that are available according to the law of the particular country. Suppose the law of a country does not have any procedure wherewith we can fight legally. We then do not attempt to make the government over or change it or rebel against it.

² In some countries the governments are so unstable, or the opposition to the truth is so great, that it is unwise to preach publicly or openly. In such countries the courts cannot be resorted to and the officials will not protect our rights. We know that commotion or trouble there may result in a speedy ban. The reason is that there is Catholic control or totalitarian government. In some countries it is only by the favor of the officials that the work is permitted to be carried on from house to house. Street preaching is prohibited. In such a situation the right to preach on the streets is not insisted upon. The Society determines this. This policy is never fixed by the local brothers. To demand the right

to do street work in such places would merely force the speedy imposition of a ban. It may cause the officials to stop the door-to-door preaching of the good news. In such countries we pray "concerning kings and all those who are in high station, in order that we may go on leading a calm and quiet life with full godly devotion and seriousness."—1 Tim. 2:1, 2, NW.

³ In some countries it is not legal to work openly from door to door with the literature. In order to avoid contest with the authorities and total banning, the Society may direct that the witnessing be confined to oral preaching with the Bible. People of good will are thus identified or marked. They are later called back on and given the opportunity to receive the publications revealing God's Word. This is at a convenient time. This is in the privacy of their homes and out of view of the enemy. Is it not much wiser that public distribution of the literature be avoided in some countries, especially when to insist on open distribution means a speedy end of the freedom to do the work? The asking of the question proves an affirmative answer to it!

⁴ There are sound Scriptural reasons for altering the methods of work in different countries. We are not sent into the world to go to jail. We do not choose to be dead martyrs. Our purpose is to get the message preached. To do so we must be free and be alive. (Eccl. 9:10) To get the gospel preached world-wide we should, therefore,

1. What will we do and what will we not do in our fight for freedom to preach?
2. What course of action may be pursued in certain lands, why, and who determines such policy?

- 3, 4. (a) Where it is not legal to go from door to door, how is the preaching work carried on? (b) What reasons and Scriptural support are there for pursuing such a course?

remember that Jesus said we are "sheep amidst wolves." It is obvious that we cannot preach in Spain or Argentina as we now do in the United States. We must, therefore, exercise extreme theocratic tact, proving ourselves "cautious as serpents and yet innocent as doves." (Matt. 10:16, NW) The spirit of a sound mind dictates that to do otherwise would be folly. The proverb says: "A prudent man sees danger and hides himself; but the simple go on, and suffer for it." (Prov. 27:12, RS) A common expression is appropriate: "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread." What good would it do to fight a losing battle in some countries for wide-open preaching? Suppose that, as a result of the fight, no witness work at all was allowed. Everything was banned. Then what? That would not keep the work going. Can we not do better by acting a little less conspicuous in the preaching of the gospel in such nations? (2 Tim. 1:7) Such a course will keep the work going in those countries. That is what we want, to keep the work open so that our brothers and the people of good will can be supplied and fed with spiritual food from the headquarters of the Society.

⁵ What happens when a nation completely bans our work? The direct supply lines for spiritual food from the earthly headquarters are cut off! But—Jehovah's witnesses are still in the country. They cannot stop preaching. (Jer. 26:14, 15) The ban merely prevents their public or open preaching. They cannot carry on their work legally aboveground. Consequently by oppressive decrees they are driven underground to continue their preaching. They follow the same course taken by the Christians at Rome. There they and their preaching were driven to the catacombs.

5. What course do Jehovah's witnesses pursue when a nation completely bans their work?

PREACHING FEARLESS DESPITE OPPPOSITION

⁶ The facts of record reveal that bans do not stop the preaching. Rather, they show that, sometimes, preaching underground flourishes better than above ground. The hotter the persecution the quicker the seeds of truth come up where there is "good soil." They grow fast and spread widely in such hot climates. It is as impossible to ban people of good will from rising up and coming into the truth as it is to try to effectively command a blade of grass not to come up out of the ground. It cannot be done! Our brothers, in such countries where there are bans, do not leave or quit like the unfaithful fleeing prophet Uriah did. (Jer. 26:21) They are like Jeremiah. He was under a ban and faced death threats. (Jer. 26:8) He refused to flee the land. He was thrown into a dungeon. (Jer. 38:6) Jehovah delivered him. (Jer. 38:10-13) As with Jeremiah, the truth is like fire in the bones of modern witnesses in such lands. (Jer. 20:9) Can it be stopped? No! It cannot be stifled! It just has to come out! Regardless of the consequences of a ban they cannot stop preaching. It is ordered by Jehovah God. To preach means life. To stop means death.

⁷ We all have the promise of Jehovah. He will keep it! It is that Jehovah will continue to cover all of us under the shadow of his hand and wings. (Isa. 51:16; Ps. 17:8) This promise holds true in communistic lands as well as in democratic nations. He will deliver every one who calls upon the name of Jehovah. (Joel 2:32; Prov. 18:10) Is there need, therefore, for us to fear communistic dictators or big politicians or the rulers of any nation? The answer is, No! Never! Fear only Jehovah the Almighty God. "Say ye not, A conspiracy, concerning all whereof this people shall say, A conspiracy; neither

6. What do the facts show regarding the effect of bans on the preaching work, and why is this so?

7. In view of what promises whom only should we fear?

fear ye their fear, nor be in dread thereof. Jehovah of hosts, him shall ye sanctify; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread." (Isa. 8:12, 13, AS) We can depend on the safety of obedience to this command of God regardless of whether the government of the land wherein we dwell is liberal or oppressive.

⁸ We shall not give up our fight for freedom to preach, even in the face of death. We shall rely upon Jehovah God at all times. There is no danger or trouble too great for him to preserve us in or deliver us from. We know his record. We remember what Jehovah, the Almighty God, our Father, says: "'Fear not, for I have redeemed you, I have called you by your name—you are mine! When you pass through the waters, I will be with you, and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through the fire, you shall not be scorched, or through the flame, it will not burn you; for I the LORD [Jehovah] am your God, I the Holy One of Israel am your savior. Egypt I give as your ransom, Ethiopia and Seba in exchange for you; because you are precious in my sight, honored and loved by me, lands I give in exchange for you, and peoples instead of you. Fear not, for I am with you.' . . . 'and you are my witnesses,' is the oracle of the LORD. 'I am God from of old, and from now onward the same. There is none that can deliver out of my hand; when I work, who can reverse it?'"—Isa. 43:1-5, 12, 13, AT.

⁹ Have we as Christians, followers of Christ Jesus, a navy, an army or an atom-bomb stockpile? No! We want none! We need none! Our protection is stated by Zephaniah, who wrote: "Jehovah thy God is in the midst of thee, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love; he will joy

8. What is our determination because of what assurance?
9. In what do we place our confidence, as shown by what prophetic drama?

over thee with singing." (Zeph. 3:17, AS) All we need to do for our protection is simple to state. It is to do what the faithful Israelites of old did in some of their battles. They merely sang the praises of Jehovah. They used no weapons of warfare. When the mightily armed allied forces of Moab, Ammon and Mount Seir came against Judah, Jehovah had Jehoshaphat set singers before the army to give praise in holy array. Do not you know the outcome? Surely! It was one of the greatest military defeats in history! (2 Chronicles 20) Jehovah also fought the battle for King Asa. He, not the Israelites, destroyed the Ethiopian army of one million. (2 Chron. 14:9-15) It was not Gideon's superior strength that defeated Midian. The mere handful of three hundred was many times outnumbered. By the direction of Jehovah they threw terror into the host of Midian. All they did was to break their pitchers and let their light shine, blow their trumpets, and shout, 'for Jehovah and for Gideon.'—Judges 7.

¹⁰ We sing the song by telling the praises of Jehovah. By preaching we open wide the gate of liberty for people of good will to flow in to the cities of refuge. (Josh. 21:13, 21, 32, 38; Isa. 26:2) His word contains hope for freedom and liberation for those who know him. "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of Jehovah shall be delivered; for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those that escape, as Jehovah hath said, and among the remnant those whom Jehovah doth call." (Joel 2:32, AS) The Word of Jehovah which we declare is powerful. It builds up what should be built up, but it tears down that which should be torn down. Paul said: "For the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly, but powerful by God for overturning strongly entrenched things." (2 Cor. 10:4, NW) Remember it

10. Why can it be said that the Word of Jehovah is powerful?

was the Word of Jehovah that brought about the flood of Noah's day. It is the same Word that will bring about the destruction of the present evil world at the battle of Armageddon. It is also the same Word that brings into existence the new heavens and new earth in which "righteousness is to dwell." (2 Pet. 3:5-7, 13, NW) It was by the Word of God that the preaching by Noah was done. Just as the cataclysm of Armageddon comes about by the Word of God, so also the preaching, which must be finished before the battle starts, will be done by the Word of God. (2 Pet. 3:9, 10; Matt. 24:14) So, too, by the Word of God we, his witnesses, shall stick faithfully to our assignment of proclaiming liberty to the captives.—Isa. 61:1, 2.

PROCLAIMING FREEDOM

¹¹ When America in 1776 declared her independence from the British Empire the bell in the tower of the Statehouse at Philadelphia in the British colony of Pennsylvania rang out for freedom. The toll of that bell was heard around the earth through the events that followed. On that bell were forged the words: "Proclaim liberty throughout all the land, to all the inhabitants thereof." These historic words were quoted from the greatest book of freedom, the Word of God, the Bible. Jehovah God used these words in his law for Israel when he provided for the jubilee year. That was the year for returning every man to his home and freeing him from debt. That was a hallowed year of freedom. The nation was to "proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof."—Lev. 25:10.



¹² The hopes that sprang into the hearts of those that heard that ring of freedom by the "Liberty Bell" at Philadelphia caused multitudes to take heart, make great sacrifices and fight a revolution that produced freedom and independence. After more than a century and a half the inhabitants of the "land of liberty" see liberty dwindling. Its future life is threatened not only in America but throughout the whole world. In this time of emergency Jehovah God has struck a mighty blow upon the great Bell of freedom, the Word of God. The great message of freedom rings out! We, his witnesses, hear the sound. We make extreme sacrifices in behalf of freedom. We are proclaiming "liberty throughout all the land." It is not done only in one land; but throughout the entire world we sound the trumpet of liberty. The message is that God's government is man's only hope or permanent guarantee of liberty and blessings of everlasting life. We, his witnesses, in clarion-clear tones preach freedom world-wide. We declare a message of liberation to the prisoners who are bound by the religious errors of this world of Satan the Devil. We, his witnesses, have proclaimed liberty throughout the land.

¹³ By singing the praises of Jehovah we proclaim the real Deliverer of the prisoners, Jehovah God. We say to the prisoners, "Go forth." (Isa. 49:9) Jehovah guarantees that they do not go back into captivity of the Devil, where Adam placed mankind. (Ezek. 39:28, 29) The great Deliverer and Warrior, Christ Jesus, took a course opposite to that taken by Adam. He made no deal with the Devil, as did Adam. He declared that Satan "has no hold on me." (John 14:30, NW) By our faithfully following in the steps of Jesus, Satan has no hold on us, and he will never get

11, 12. What pertinency did Leviticus 25:10 have in ancient times, in the United States in 1776, and what in our day?

13. To keep free from Satan what example of Jesus must we follow?

one of the faithful liberated prisoners or people of good will, either.

¹⁴ We carry tidings of peace to those of good will toward God. We utter a message of death and destruction to those who hate Jehovah. (Jer. 49:14) As ambassadors we are sent forth by Jesus to separate the people, as sheep are divided from goats. (Matt. 25:31) Jehovah stands ready to reward those of sheeplike qualities and execute his judgment against those who act like goats. The fire of his zeal will accomplish this. (Zeph. 3:8) We of the New World society have Jehovah as our God. Truly, "blessed is the nation whose God is Jehovah, the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance." (Ps. 33:12, AS) But this is the warning: "That nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted."—Isa. 60:12, AS; Ps. 145:20.

¹⁵ Let us return now to the report in the book of Esther about the fight of the captive Jews under the ancient empire of Persia. That world power had dominion of almost all of the then-known world. Truly, those ancient servants of Jehovah were fighting world-wide. As it was in their day so it is in our day. Their fight prophetically pictures the world-wide fight of Jehovah's witnesses to preach today. (1 Cor. 10:11; Rom. 15:4) The only difference in their fight and our fight is in the weapons used. They used carnal weapons. We do not fight with such. We, as Christian fighters for the right to preach world-wide, are armed only with the spirit of Jehovah God and his sword of the spirit, which is the Word of God. (Eph. 6:17) In addition to this Jehovah has given us a defensive armor. Paul describes it. In

14. What twofold work are we carrying on in line with what judgments of Jehovah?

15. How do the scope and nature of our warfare and weapons compare with that waged by the Jews in Esther's day?

part, it is (1) the breastplate of righteousness, (2) the shield of faith and (3) the helmet of salvation. He warns us to be awake in the use of it. He instructs us also to preach "with all freeness of speech to make known the sacred secret of the good news, for which I am acting as an ambassador in chains, that I may speak in connection with it with boldness as I ought to speak."—Eph. 6:14-17, 19, 20, NW.

¹⁶ The Jews in ancient Persia gained a great victory. What happened? After the decree of the king that the Jews should fight to save their lives was speedily circulated by couriers on horses throughout the land, a strange thing happened. The account states concerning the Jews that "no one could stand before them; for the fear of them had fallen upon all the peoples. Moreover all the princes of the provinces and the satraps and the governors and they who did the king's business aided the Jews, because the fear of Mordecai had fallen upon them. Likewise in every province and in every city, wherever the king's command and his decree came, there was gladness and joy for the Jews, a feast and a holiday, and many from among the peoples of the land became Jews; for the fear of the Jews had fallen upon them."—Esther 9:2, 3; 8:17, AT.

¹⁷ Are we, the modern-day servants of Jehovah, experiencing a similar feast and prosperity in our fight for freedom to preach world-wide? Look at the increase of our numbers: 1934: 41,000; 1940: 90,000; 1944: 110,000; 1946: 158,000; 1948: 230,000; 1950: 328,000; 1953: 500,000. We have multiplied twelve times in twenty years! See! And all this increase amidst world-wide persecution! Does not this prove that the fear of Jehovah has fallen upon these people and the fear of man has

16, 17. (a) Back there what was the result of the Jews' fighting for their lives? (b) What has been the result of our fight for freedom to preach world-wide, and by what power has it been accomplished?

left them? Truly it is exactly as Zechariah prophesied: "Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold, out of all the languages of the nations, they shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you." (Zech. 8:23, AS) The preaching world-wide to date is a great work. It is being done by the power of no man or group of men. It is Jehovah's spirit and the power of his Word that have accomplished this great world-wide harvest of preaching. (1 Cor. 3:7) Zechariah wrote: "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith Jehovah of hosts." —Zech. 4:6, AS.

THE REWARD FOR NOT COMPROMISING

¹⁸ Will the struggle for freedom to preach world-wide stop? No! It must continue. Whether we be in democratic lands where much freedom is granted, whether we be in countries where preaching is restricted, or whether we be in countries ruled by dictators who allow no freedom but jail all witnesses caught, the fight for freedom to preach world-wide must go on. The apostle Paul set the example for us to follow. He preached in prison and carried on his fight for freedom to preach from there. (Acts 28:30, 31) So, today we also when not at liberty to go from door to door must preach as prisoners in chains. There is no stopping in dictator countries. There is no silencing of us, his witnesses, even in Communist prisons or the prisons of others. We shall continue to preach both out of prison and in prison, and that we shall do with boldness. Remember what Paul wrote the Philippians. "In harmony with my eager expectation and hope that I shall not be ashamed in any respect, but that in all freeness of speech Christ will, as always

18. In keeping with Paul's example what is the determination of Jehovah's people regarding the struggle to preach world-wide?

before, so now be magnified by means of my body, whether through life or through death."—Phil. 1:20, NW.

¹⁹ Suppose those imprisoned for faithfulness had compromised and turned back. What would have happened? Joseph in ancient times would have lost the privilege of being used by Jehovah in Egypt to save from starvation his father, Jacob, together with his large family. The three Hebrews would have lost the distinction of having the angel of Jehovah walk with them and protect them in the fiery furnace. Jeremiah would have lost the honor of proclaiming the judgments of Jehovah against a wicked city. And Daniel would never have stopped the mouths of lions. This host of witnesses did not turn back. They were not cowards. Paul describes for us their faith and courage, in Hebrews, chapter eleven.

²⁰ Had Peter and Paul and the other apostles compromised and turned back they would have lost the blessing of expanding the early Christian congregation and of writing the Greek Scriptures. Also, the modern-day witnesses, unjustly imprisoned in many nations, would have lost their blessed privilege of opening up the work and rebuilding it in many totalitarian lands where the preaching was banned. They would not be enjoying the sight of the great ingathering of the great multitude of people of good will today. "For God gave us not a spirit of cowardice, but that of power and of love and of soundness of mind." (2 Tim. 1:7, NW) Concerning those who turn back, the Revelator says: "But as for the cowards and those without faith . . . their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulphur. This means the second death." (Rev. 21:8, NW) Thank Jehovah God that those faith-

19, 20. (a) What would have followed had Joseph, the three Hebrews and Daniel compromised? (b) And what if the early Christians and true Christians today had done so?

ful before us and those faithful among us here now have not, as cowards, fled the field of fighting for freedom to preach world-wide.

²¹ It is clear that Jehovah is permitting us to suffer and fight for freedom to preach world-wide for very good purposes. The main purpose is to vindicate his great and holy name and his Word. Another purpose is to select the right kind of people, obedient and courageous people, and with these he wants to populate the earth and have them live in the new world. (Matt. 5:5, 10; Rev. 2:10) There Jehovah will exterminate those that do not deserve living in the new world.

²² Still another purpose served by our fight for freedom is to lead the enemy on to Armageddon. Jehovah is using us, his witnesses, therefore, by our fighting for freedom to preach world-wide, as bait for the Devil, named Gog in the book of Ezekiel. In that book of prophecy it is pointed out that Gog will be led on to assault us, Jehovah's people. Jehovah shows

21, 22. (a) What is Jehovah's main purpose in permitting us to fight and suffer for freedom to preach? (b) What further purpose is served thereby in keeping with Ezekiel's prophecy?

in that prophecy how Gog, the Devil, will cause his forces, seen and unseen, to move against Jehovah's witnesses from every part of the earth. Jehovah declares that he will turn Gog, the Devil, about and put hooks in his jaws. Jehovah reveals that the visible and invisible forces of Gog will fall "upon the mountains of Israel," or Jehovah's organization. (Ezek. 38:4; 39:1, 2) Then Satan and his entire organization and all the people supporting the Devil will be destroyed. Their dead bodies will be thrown out for the ravenous birds and the wild beasts to feed upon. (Ezek. 39:4-7) Jehovah finally declares: "And my holy name will I make known in the midst of my people Israel; neither will I suffer my holy name to be profaned any more: and the nations shall know that I am Jehovah, the Holy One in Israel." (Ezek. 39:7, AS) Let us not take ourselves out of the fight. May Jehovah continue to bless you as you keep on waging the "fight for freedom to preach world-wide." "Praise ye Jehovah. Blessed is the man that feareth Jehovah, . . . Praise ye Jehovah."—Ps. 112:1; 113:1, AS.

European Assemblies in 1955

At the conclusion of the international assembly of Jehovah's witnesses in Yankee Stadium in New York city in 1953 announcement was made of a series of international assemblies to be held in Canada and the United States and Europe during 1955. Already many thousands outside Europe have indicated their intention of attending one or more of the European assemblies. Not only from the United States but from South America and Africa and other continents delegates will come, to make these assemblies truly international.

The locations and dates of the assemblies are as follows: London, England, July 27-31; Paris, France, August 3-7; Rome, Italy, August 5-7; Nuremberg, Germany, August 10-14; Stockholm, Sweden, August 17-21; and The Hague,

Netherlands, August 17-21. Many of the delegates from other lands will attend, not just one, but two or three of these assemblies, and some will even cover the entire series by spending some time at each of the assemblies.

At Yankee Stadium representatives from 97 countries attended and on the last day their numbers rocketed to more than 165,000! It was a tremendous witness not only to New York but to the nation and the world. It was a spectacle that is still remembered and commented on. Why not make the coming European assemblies equally noteworthy for their international flavor, showing the New World society knows no national barriers? Jehovah will surely bless those making the effort to attend. Will you be among the tens of thousands present?

Living Now as a New World Society

IN SPITE of two world wars since 1914, underneath its surface this old world has not changed: selfishness motivates and strife separates the nations, and the unseen wicked forces are still in control. However, since 1914 something new has emerged, a New World society, which is no part of this world and which was brought forth, not by political catch slogans, but by the wisdom and power of God and as a result of Jehovah's people preaching the good news of the Kingdom.—Matt. 24:14.*

This New World society, consisting of upward of a half million Christians, is to be found on all continents and in many islands of the sea, working together in a common work, meeting together regularly and worshiping the one true God.

Living now as a New World society requires not only that we keep separate from the world but also that we do not bring its wicked ways into our society. It also means giving our allegiance to God's kingdom, "We must obey God as ruler rather than men."—Acts 5:29, NW.

With the Kingdom's establishment in 1914 added responsibilities have come upon dedicated Christians: no longer may 'every man do what is right in his own eyes,' nor may we act independently or indulge in private interpretation, but we must be

theocratic in thought, in deed, in worship and in organization.

Living as a New World society also means that we show love and put up with our brothers in love, straightening out our difficulties in line with Matthew 18:15-17; for we did not leave the squabbles of the old world only to have new ones of our own making, did we? Dare we let Armageddon come down upon us as a thief with us in a provoked state against our brother?—Eph. 4:26, 27.

And living as a New World society means that we are to be a happy people. Rather than introvertedly dwelling on the mistakes of the past let us take joy in the fact that the Kingdom is established, the King is present, the great ingathering is taking place and the complete vindication of Jehovah's name is imminent. Yes, let us keep our minds on what Jehovah God has done, is doing and yet will do to his unfading glory and the blessing of his faithful people.

Truly, those of the New World society should be the most joyful, the most optimistic people on earth, for Jesus promised: "Everyone that has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands for the sake of my name will receive many times more and will inherit everlasting life."—Matt. 19:29, NW.

* For details see *The Watchtower*, August 15, 1953.



- The main article of the September 15, 1954, *Watchtower* told about one witness of Jehovah not speaking to another witness in the same

congregation, this going on for years because of a personal grievance, and the point was made that this showed a lack of true neighbor love. However, could this not be a case of a proper application of the counsel given at Matthew 18:15-17?—A. M., Canada.

No! We can hardly view this scripture as advising such a time-consuming process and possibly ending up in two members of the congregation not speaking and avoiding each other just because of some minor personal disagree-

ment or misunderstanding. It would be contrary to the requirement of love.

Matthew 18:15-17 (NW) reads: "Moreover, if your brother commits a sin, go lay bare his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take along with you one or two more, in order that at the mouth of two or three witnesses every matter may be established. If he does not listen to them, speak to the congregation. If he does not listen even to the congregation, let him be to you just as a man of the nations and as a tax collector."

How can we think this text means we should hold a grudge and not speak for days or weeks or years, when we are specifically told: "Let the sun not set with you in a provoked state," but rather be "freely forgiving one another"? Love "does not keep account of the injury." "Have intense love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins." And Jesus said: "Happy are the merciful, since they will be shown mercy. However, I say to you that everyone who continues angry with his brother will be accountable to the court of justice." Jehovah's Word would hardly give such advice that would allow for many personal snubs and feuds to continue in a congregation to mar its unity and fill it with internal strife.—Eph. 4:26, 32; 1 Cor. 13:5; 1 Pet. 4:8; Matt. 5:7, 22-24, NW.

Jehovah will preserve the oneness and loving spirit within his congregation, and he will cause to be put out any who would continually disrupt unity and make divisions within it. There are occasions when members of a congregation are to quit speaking and associating with others, but the causes must be very serious, much more so than mere personal differences of no congregational consequence. Brothers were to separate from those who were disorderly, creating strife and rebelling against the truth. A congregation was to put from its midst unclean ones: "Quit mixing in company with anyone called a brother that is a fornicator or a greedy person or an idolater or a reviler or a drunkard or an extortioner." (1 Cor. 5:11; Acts 19:9; 2 Thess. 3:6, NW) For such serious offenses brothers would disfellowship and treat as "a man of the nations" the guilty ones, but not for trivial personal offenses. Such minor things were to be forgiven, covered over

by love, mercifully dismissed, not being kept account of or being provoked over beyond sunset.

Hence we must view the sin mentioned at Matthew 18:15-17 as a serious one that must be terminated, and, if that is not possible, then the one so sinning is to be disfellowshipped from the congregation. If the sinning one cannot be made to see his grievous error by mature brothers of the congregation and cease his wrongdoing, then the matter is of such importance that it be brought before the congregation committee for congregational action. If the committee cannot induce the sinner to repent and reform he must be disfellowshipped from the congregation in order to preserve the cleanliness and oneness of the Christian congregation. If the wrongdoer is wicked enough to be shunned by one brother he merits such treatment by the entire congregation. If it is not that serious, then the matter should be cleared up and all unite in love and in service, with no foolish personal feuds persisting within the congregation. If the text was merely about a personal matter of no serious sin and which resulted in one's not speaking to another but both remaining in the congregation, then certainly Jesus would not have said one should view the other as a rank outsider, as "a man of the nations and as a tax collector." They would still have to recognize each other, not as an outsider, but as brothers in the congregation, even if they did not speak. The final rating of the unrepentant offender is too severe to mean anything less than a disfellowshipped standing, and since there is no provision for individuals' disfellowshipping other individuals in the congregation in what might be called a personal disfellowshipping, the disfellowshipping must mean it is a congregational matter.

Certainly Jesus was not here laying the foundation for a congregation split by internal personal quarrels and with a strained and tense atmosphere pervading it. So this text cannot be used to support individuals' refusing to speak to each other within the Christian congregation, and the position taken on this point by *The Watchtower* cited by the questioner remains unweakened.

✓✓ CHECK YOUR MEMORY ✓✓

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

- ✓ What proves the human soul is not immortal? P. 708, ¶2.
 - ✓ What God's eventual purpose for this earth is? P. 709, ¶4.
 - ✓ What about the year 1914 was foretold in this magazine back in 1880? P. 710, ¶2.
 - ✓ Why the good news of God's kingdom is being preached particularly now? P. 712, ¶2.
 - ✓ What a man of 65 said about walking a hundred miles to a Christian assembly? P. 713, ¶3.
 - ✓ At which district assembly baptism precautions had to be taken against crocodiles? P. 718, ¶7.
 - ✓ Upon what the real success of the 1954 district assemblies will depend? P. 719, ¶6.
 - ✓ Who the Christian's real enemies are today, and what our only weapon is? P. 724, ¶15.
 - ✓ What bulwark of freedom recently has been established in the democracies? P. 726, ¶23.
 - ✓ What effect totalitarian bans have had on the preaching work? P. 728, ¶6.
 - ✓ How great the increase in the preaching work has been since 1934? P. 731, ¶17.
 - ✓ Whether Matthew 18:15-17 allows us not to speak to a brother? P. 735, ¶2.