

The WATCHTOWER

Announcing
**JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM**

FEBRUARY 1, 1973

Semimonthly

ARE YOU LIVING FOR
WHAT YOU CAN GET
OUT OF LIFE NOW?

LIVING WITH LIFE IN GOD'S
NEW ORDER IN VIEW

WHY TRUST IN GOD?

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

THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER"

Every watchtower has its purpose. It serves as an elevated place for a wide-awake person with sharp vision. It enables him to see far ahead into the distance and tell those below for whom he is a watchman what is drawing near, whether it is a danger against which to prepare or it is something good over which to be glad with strong faith and hope.

Because of having the name "The Watchtower" this magazine justly has to render a similar useful service to the people of all nations. This is an international magazine and makes no racial distinctions, for we are all facing a common world danger; we are all hoping for a common good.

Ever since "The Watchtower" began to be published in July of 1879 it has looked ahead into the future, always striving to aid its readers to advance in knowledge and to gain a clearer picture of the glorious new order of things that is in store for righteous mankind. No, "The Watchtower" is no inspired prophet, but it follows and explains a Book of prophecy the predictions in which have proved to be unerring and unfailing till now. "The Watchtower" is therefore under safe guidance. It may be read with confidence, for its statements may be checked against that prophetic Book.

Among the many nations of today there are hundreds of differing religions. Which one does this magazine present? Not the confused religions of Christendom, but the religion of the oldest sacred Book on earth. Which Book? The Sacred Bible of the Holy Scriptures, written by inspiration in the name of the Creator of heaven and earth, the only living and true God.

The sacred, nonpolitical purpose of "The Watchtower" is accordingly to encourage and promote study of the Holy Bible and to give our many readers the needed unsectarian help to understand that Book of true religion and infallible prophecy. Thus this magazine will be helping them to prove worthy of perfect life and happiness in God's promised new order under His everlasting kingdom of righteousness.

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

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The WATCHTOWER

Vol. XCIV

Announcing
JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM

February 1, 1973

Number 3

Why HONEST-HEARTED PERSONS Want TO SERVE JEHOVAH

EACH year tens of thousands willingly take up the service of the God of the Bible, Jehovah. Often this means changing their whole way of life. Yet they are happy to do so. Why?

It is because they appreciate that Jehovah is the Supreme Sovereign and Creator of the universe. This vital reason has moved reverent men in all periods of human history to want to serve him.

One of these men, an inspired songwriter before the Christian Era, expressed his feelings as follows: "Jehovah is a great God and a great King over all other gods, he in whose hand are the inmost depths of the earth and to whom the peaks of the mountains belong; to whom the sea, which he himself made, belongs and whose own hands formed the dry land itself. O come in, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before Jehovah our Maker."—Ps. 95:3-6.

Centuries later, the Christian apostle John, in vision, heard twenty-four elders declare: "You are worthy, Jehovah, even our God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power, because you created all things, and because of your will they existed and were created." (Rev. 4:11)

Certainly if anyone in all the universe merits our worship and service, it is Jehovah God.

Another powerful reason why honest-hearted ones want to serve Jehovah is the merciful, compassionate and loving way in which he has dealt with imperfect, sinful mankind.

The first man, Adam, by choosing to disobey God's law sold himself and all his descendants into slavery to sin and death. The Bible says: "Through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men because they had all sinned."—Rom. 5:12.

No human, through his own efforts, could get released from this slavery. "Not one of them can by any means redeem even a brother, nor give to God a ransom for him; (and the redemption price of their soul is so precious that it has ceased to time indefinite) that he should still live forever and not see the pit."—Ps. 49:7-9.

Jehovah God could have turned his back on Adam's offspring, for he does not need anything from anyone. But in his boundless love for mankind, Jehovah provided the needed ransom at great cost to himself. He transferred the life of his dearest heavenly Son to the womb of the Jewish virgin Mary so that this one could be born as a perfect man and could sacrifice

his life in behalf of sinful, dying mankind. (Luke 1:26-37; John 1:14) Regarding this superlative expression of God's love, the apostle Paul wrote: "Indeed, Christ, while we were yet weak, died for ungodly men at the appointed time. For hardly will anyone die for a righteous man; indeed, for the good man, perhaps, someone even dares to die. But God recommends his own love to us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."—Rom. 5:6-8.

The way in which Jehovah God has exercised his rulership has also appealed to the hearts of honest-hearted men and women. He does not force people to serve him but wants them to do so willingly because of their deep love for him and their appreciation for the rightness of his commands.—Deut. 30:11-16; 1 John 5:2.

It should not be difficult for honest-hearted persons to discern that obedience to God's law is in man's best interests. Such obedience is not burdensome but refreshing. (1 John 5:3) This is because love, an unselfish concern and interest in others, is the basis for divine law governing all human relationships. Regarding the Mosaic law the apostle Paul wrote: "The law code, 'You must not commit adultery, You must not murder, You must not steal, You must not covet,' and whatever other commandment there is, is summed up in this word, namely, 'You must love your neighbor as yourself.' Love does not work evil to one's neighbor; therefore love is the law's fulfillment."—Rom. 13:9, 10.

Would not human relationships be improved if people everywhere and at all times sought to do the loving thing in behalf of fellowmen? Would this not put an end to injustices and oppression? Would this not make for happiness, contentment and security in life? Surely!

Accordingly, sincere people should be

able to see that those who adhere to the Bible's commands are enjoying the best way of life now. This very factor is prompting many today to begin serving Jehovah God as his dedicated witnesses. One man observed: "The main point that drew me was the international unity Jehovah's witnesses possessed among all races and finding out that this was possible only through strict adherence to Bible principles." Another commented: "I was moved by the friendliness and warmth among Jehovah's witnesses. I recognized that there should be peace, unity and love among those who knew the truth." Still another said: "The love I saw in the families of Jehovah's witnesses helped me to discern that these were true Christians."

Truly honest-hearted persons have many good reasons for serving Jehovah. His position as Creator and Supreme Sovereign makes him completely deserving of such service. His way of ruling has always reflected love and has definitely been in the best interests of all his intelligent creatures. Although not lacking in anything, Jehovah God has taken the initiative in showing love by opening up to sinful mankind the opportunity to be liberated from slavery to sin and death and forever to enjoy the blessings of his righteous rule.

Does what Jehovah God is and has done stir you to want to serve him with a complete heart? If this is the case, you doubtless want to associate with others who have the same desire. We therefore encourage you to go to the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses nearest your home this week, if possible, and see for yourself whether those in attendance give evidence of the love and unity that you would expect to find among persons who, though imperfect, are serving the true God.

LIFE! What a precious possession it is! The human mind and body are marvelously made.

No person in his right mind wants to end life, but to keep living, even in the face of increasing problems and pressures of the world today. There is such a strong desire to hold onto this precious gift of life, to keep learning about and enjoying things around us. Determined efforts are put forth to push death back and to have a good measure of health and happiness. Yet, death persistently and relentlessly stalks every man throughout his short life-span of approximately seventy years. The grave claims the righteous as well as the wicked, the ascetic as well as the profligate.—Ps. 89:48.

² Faced with the ironies of life and the grim reality of death's approach, from the standpoint of fleshly, human reasoning one might see a paradox: Living a morally good life would appear to be meaningless, unrewarding. To increasing numbers of persons, life after death is but a myth. If this life is all there is, then why not get all you can out of it while you are living? If better judgment says, 'Control yourself and abstain from harmful, though very pleasurable things,' fleshly reasoning counters with the argument that it is better to enjoy these and let your emotions have full expression rather than live a life of self-denial and frustration, because you will only suffer death, decay and a passing from memory of future generations like everyone else. What value is there in self-denial? Oh, yes, there may be certain health benefits, and some problems may be avoided if you practice what is morally good. There are reminders, too, that the already short lifetime may be

1. How do human creatures show they value the possession of life, yet what eventually faces all the living?

2. What attitude have many adopted, and how is this reflected in how they conduct themselves?

Are You LIVING for WHAT YOU CAN GET OUT of LIFE NOW?

"If the dead are not to be raised up, let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we are to die. Do not be misled. Bad associations spoil useful habits."—1 Cor. 15:32, 33.

cut still shorter by the vices indulged in; but better to enjoy these while you can, it is reasoned by many, than living a few more decrepit and miserable years in old age.

³ In the face of all this, the Bible says: "A man of faithful acts will get many blessings." (Prov. 28:20) Is this really true? Is the Bible realistic in setting forth high moral standards to govern the conduct of man? If one does one's best to measure up to these, will it actually benefit one? Moreover, when death comes, can one confidently hope for a better life afterward because of one's faithful acts? If man were merely a product of evolution, answering to no one except the society of which he was a part as to how he conducted himself, then criticism of the Bible's standards and promises would have some weight. That is the point that the apostle Paul is making in writing to Chris-

3. (a) What questions present themselves in view of the conflict between the philosophy of this world and the Bible? (b) How does Paul set matters straight on living just for selfish pleasures?

tians at Corinth: "If the dead are not to be raised up, 'let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we are to die.'" Paul quickly follows up reference to this purely selfish concept with the warning: "Do not be misled. Bad associations spoil useful habits. Wake up to soberness in a righteous way and do not practice sin, for some are without knowledge of God. I am speaking to move you to shame."—1 Cor. 15:32-34.

⁴ While in Greece, Paul came up against this philosophy of the Epicureans, who believed that one should live in such a way as to get the greatest amount of pleasure out of life, yet doing so with some moderation in order to avoid the suffering that comes with overindulgence. They did not concern themselves with the future except to keep on enjoying pleasure until death. But that is not how faithful men like Abraham felt about it. Of these, Paul wrote: "In faith all these died, although they did not get the fulfillment of the promises, but they saw them afar off and welcomed them and publicly declared that they were strangers and temporary residents in the land." They did not lose faith and get involved in the corrupt practices around them. In God's memory they are very much alive and soon God will resurrect them to real life on a paradise earth under his Kingdom rule.—Heb. 11:13; Matt. 22:31, 32; John 6:39, 40.

⁵ It is easy to deceive ourselves if we have built up a desire at heart to do what is wrong or lack the will to discipline ourselves in order to get the lasting benefits of a right course of action. Rationalizing is a common practice. Again Paul counsels with the words, "Do not be misled," and then adds: "God is not one to be mocked. For whatever a man is sowing, this he

4. (a) What was the philosophy of the Epicureans? (b) How did Abraham and other faithful men show they did not have this attitude toward life and the future?

5. How does the Bible contrast the results of living to satisfy the flesh with living with a view to the spirit?

will also reap; because he who is sowing with a view to his flesh will reap corruption from his flesh, but he who is sowing with a view to the spirit will reap everlasting life from the spirit." (Gal. 6:7, 8) Those who have become associated with Jehovah's witnesses and who have conformed their lives to what the Bible teaches can testify that they have been richly blessed even now. Because they do not live an unrestrained life, they avoid the terrible consequences of such a course, which consequences often include an early death. More than this, life everlasting is in store for them as they faithfully continue in this course.—Rom. 6:23.

⁶ As we compare Scripture with the physical facts around us, there can be no doubt that we are deep into the time of the end of this ungodly system. Christians can affirm that the Bible is correct in telling us that it would be even more difficult during this time to stay in the narrow way that leads to life. The modern-day attractions of the world are strong and the Devil has not lost his cunning in deceiving and drawing away the unwary. There is an ever-present danger of slipping back into old patterns of thinking and conduct or of letting new desires develop that are displeasing to Jehovah. The heart is deceitful, the flesh is weak, self-discipline is not easy. In his prophecy on the end of this system, Jesus warned: "But pay attention to yourselves that your hearts never become weighed down with overeating and heavy drinking and anxieties of life, and suddenly that day be instantly upon you as a snare. For it will come in upon all those dwelling upon the face of all the earth."—Luke 21:34, 35.

⁷ To make sure we are not misled or caught as if in a snare, we have to ask our-

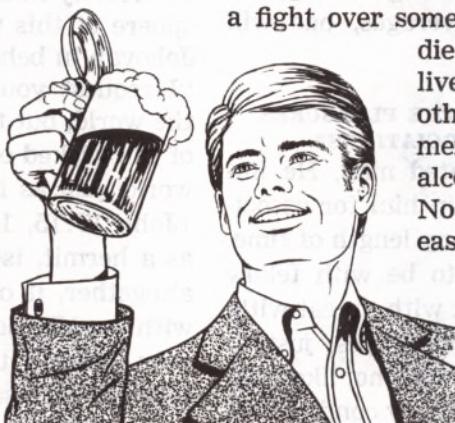
6. Why has it become even more urgent today to be alert and watch our course of action?

7. How can the thinking and attitudes of this world subtly begin to influence a Christian? Of what should we continually remind ourselves?

selves searching questions to test out our deeper motives, our secret desires, our hidden affections. For what are we living? It is one thing to say we are living with a view to life in God's new order, but it is another thing to be *actually living* in harmony with God's requirements every day. Christians cannot let the subtle Epicurean philosophy of this world deceive them and, before they know it, begin to live for the pleasures of today, for fear that tomorrow they might die. Or, having doubts about making it into the New Order, they may start to savor the pleasures of this world, not wanting to miss out on them altogether. We have to ask ourselves continually: For what are we living? The pleasures of this world or "the real life" in God's new order?
—1 Tim. 6:17-19.

ARE YOU LIVING FOR THE PLEASURES OF DRINK?

⁸ Millions of modern-day Epicureans have gone beyond drinking in moderation to the point of drunkenness. They have tasted the effects of excessive amounts of alcohol, and these are what they want regardless of the costs or hazards to health, employment and family. Inhibitions and frustrations vanish, to bring a strange freedom from care. Harsh reality gives way to a world of dreams. Cares vanish. Nagging is nullified; responsibility is shelved. One, in effect, goes on a "trip," a vacation away from the burdensome cares of life. But, is this really living? Considering the stupor one has been in, the shameful conduct



Many live for the pleasures of drink. For what are you living?

and speech one may have been guilty of, the terrible ache of the body in sobering up and the damage to one's relationships with others, the logical answer would have to be a resounding, No!—Prov. 20:1; 23:20-35.

⁹ It is only reasonable that God would prohibit drunkenness. In a drunken condition the mind does not function right and one often does disgraceful things. There is an exaggerated concept of what he is able to do, whereas the truth is that his reflexes and judgment are greatly impaired. Tens of thousands die each year because a drunk thought he was sober enough to drive his car home or got into a fight over some trivial matter. Millions

die from cirrhosis of the liver, delirium tremens and other alcohol-related ailments. In many countries, alcoholism is ranked as the No. 3 killer, after heart disease and cancer.

¹⁰ But, while one may not be getting drunk, one may, in fact, still be overindulging, and here is the big danger for Christians. Not all alcoholics are drunks.

Alcoholism is a morbid craving for alcohol. A good test is to ask oneself, Am I living for this pleasure and longing day by day for the nice relaxed feeling I get as a result of drinking alcoholic beverages? While drinking is a personal matter as long as one does not become intoxicated, yet there is the possibility that alcohol will become a psychological crutch on which to lean, a seeming necessity one cannot do without. Moreover, there is the

10. (a) Why do many indulge to the point of drunkenness? (b) What bad effects have come from drunkenness?

possibility of stumbling others by indiscreet use of alcohol. When friends stop by for an evening, do you insist they share a drink with you, even though they may prefer not to do so? This can be mistaken hospitality and may be, deep down, an attempt to have others join you in indulging a weakness. None should ever be compelled or cajoled into drinking if they do not wish to do so. (Rom. 14:17-21) Get-togethers do not have to be boring if drinks of this nature are not served. Certainly if one drinks only in moderation, if one chooses to drink at all, and is not living with a view to getting undue pleasure from alcoholic beverages, one will have many blessings.

ARE YOU LIVING FOR THE PLEASURES OF WORLDLY ASSOCIATIONS?

¹¹ When Jehovah created man, He implanted a strong desire in him for association. If by himself for any length of time, man by nature craves to be with fellow human creatures, to talk with, to eat with, to play with, to work with, yes, just to be in the presence of others who, like himself, need association. Solitary confinement is an inhuman punishment. Christians,

11. What desire as to association did Jehovah implant within man, and what should we have in mind in satisfying this desire?



Entertaining worldlings for business reasons poses subtle danger. Such associations may appear desirable to the heart

however, must be selective as to their associates. It was not by chance that Paul injected the words, "Bad associations spoil useful habits," when arguing against the popular Epicurean philosophy of the day: "Eat and drink, for tomorrow we are to die." Where would a Christian pick up such thinking except in association with those who believed it and practiced it? Christians must recognize that there are two distinct spheres of influence today—The Godly, theocratic, Christian sphere, and the one that is worldly, mundane and unchristian.

¹² Christians, of course, are surrounded by worldly minded persons and the atmosphere of this world. Jesus, in praying to Jehovah in behalf of his followers, stated: "I request you, not to take them out of the world, but to watch over them because of the wicked one. They are no part of the world, just as I am no part of the world." (John 17:15, 16) One would have to live as a hermit, isolated from human society altogether, if one would avoid all contact with worldly people. (1 Cor. 5:9-13) However, beyond the association that is absolutely necessary at our secular jobs, at school, while one is in the field ministry, or at other times, there should not be any desire to expose ourselves to the corrosive thinking and often perverted conduct of worldly people.—Deut. 7:3, 4.

¹³ To the mind this is logical and sound advice, but the danger arises when situations present themselves wherein worldly associations appear desirable to the heart. For instance, a brother may have a secu-

12. What is recognized as to association with the world, but where is it necessary to draw the line in associating with worldly people?

13. (a) How might a brother reason if he has a business requiring some contact with worldly people? (b) How might a sister reason if an unbelieving man shows an interest in her? (c) Why is the Bible's counsel to marry 'only in the Lord' sound?

lar business and feel it necessary to associate freely with worldlings, entertaining them, and so forth. He may rationalize that such association is essential to conducting his business, which, in turn, is used to support himself and family. Consider, too, the situation of a sister in the congregation who may wish to get married. There may not be many brothers in her circle of Christian friends who are marriageable. She is quite conscious that she is getting older. A man she has known for some months at her place of secular employment may express an interest in her. If she is attracted to him, immediately the mind and heart begin to rationalize. He may be a nice, clean-cut man. He does not drink or smoke. He is tolerant when it comes to religion. You might even hear it said that he is nicer than some of the Christian brothers that she knows. Or reference is made to an isolated instance where another sister married an unbeliever and in time he was helped to become a Christian. Perhaps the same can be done in this instance. However, the hard experience of many agrees with the Bible here in proving that the chances of this taking place are slim. Rather, there is the strong possibility that the unbeliever will cause the Christian to compromise and lose out on life. One's obeying the Bible command to marry 'only in the Lord' may require self-control and patience, but we can always be assured that Jehovah knows what is good for his people. He not only wants to safeguard them from the many pains of following an unwise course but also wants his people to be happy.

—1 Cor. 7:39, 40.

¹⁴ Young people have a great temptation to associate with worldly youths of their own age. They are often pressured into joining sports teams, clubs and groups.

14. What worldly attractions face young folks particularly?

There is a desire to be accepted and often, to be accepted, one must show that one will do daring and even unscriptural things. It is easy to succumb to worldly fads in grooming and dress, or to be tempted into picking up a paperback novel from a bookstand with an eye-catching cover that appeals to fleshly desires. There is also the lure of television or movies that feature violence, highlight sadism or glorify sex. There are authors, too, of books on philosophy, higher criticism, and so forth, with whom we do not wish to associate. If we read these books, it is tantamount to sitting down before them and letting them fill our minds with their ideas on life.—1 Cor. 3:18-20; 1 Tim. 6:20, 21.

¹⁵ Faithful Christians believe the Bible when it says: "Whoever, therefore, wants to be a friend of the world is constituting himself an enemy of God." (Jas. 4:4) They see the sound logic in the command: "Do not become unevenly yoked with unbelievers. For what fellowship do righteousness and lawlessness have? Or what sharing does light have with darkness? Further, what harmony is there between Christ and Belial [or Satan]? Or what portion does a faithful person have with an unbeliever? 'Therefore get out from among them, and separate yourselves,' says Jehovah, 'and quit touching the unclean thing'; 'and I will take you in.'" (2 Cor. 6:14, 15, 17) Heeding this advice, they do not allow themselves to be lured into close association with unbelievers and are spared many sorrows. They take delight in associating with their Christian brothers and in building enduring, trustful friendships with them. Here association builds up rather than tearing down. It helps one on to one's goal of "the real life" in God's new order.—Heb. 11:24, 25.

15. What sound advice is given in the Scriptures on association, and how is heeding this a benefit and a protection for Christians?

**ARE YOU LIVING FOR
OPPORTUNITIES TO TOY WITH
OR COMMIT SEXUAL
IMMORALITY?**

¹⁶ 'To toy with' means to amuse oneself, as with a plaything; to while away time in sport or play. Toying with sexual immorality is playing with it without actually committing fornication or adultery. The sex organs are not playthings, but are given by Jehovah for procreation, for use by married people with their mates. The Bible condemns loose conduct, and it is clear that toying with sexual immorality is loose conduct, which can result in disfellowshipping. (Gal. 5:19; Mark 7:21-23) A person is merely fooling himself if he thinks such unclean conduct is acceptable as long as intercourse is avoided. Dating one of the opposite sex is not mere recreation but should have marriage in view. If a person does not have marriage in view or is too young to take on marriage responsibilities, then he ought to examine his motives as to why he wishes to have dates with one of the opposite sex. In what direction is he proceeding, or, stated another way, for what is he beginning to live?

¹⁷ Toying with sexual immorality often begins by wrong association. This practice is common among worldlings. Temptation while in their midst is all around you. Their conversation, the movies, books, pornographic literature, obscene jokes, tight or revealing clothes, all contribute to creating and nursing wrong desire in the heart. Flirting with someone else's mate

16. (a) What is meant by 'toying with immorality'?
 (b) Why is dating one of the opposite sex not mere recreation?
 17. What things, to be avoided by Christians, contribute to toying with sexual immorality?



**Teen-age dating
may seem innocent,
but it can easily
lead to immorality**

may appear to be innocent, but this often leads to serious consequences.—Eph. 5:3-5.

¹⁸ Here are some questions for each one to consider in weighing out his motives, but not requiring the Watch Tower Society to rule on: Though not married, do you hold hands because you get a thrilling feeling? Do you dance because you enjoy having the body of one of the opposite sex in contact with your body? Do you kiss goodnight because you find it stimulating, even though you are not married? Correspondence received by the Society indicates that toying with sexual immorality often started in such ways.

¹⁹ The Bible is very frank in stating: "It is well for a man not to touch a woman." (1 Cor. 7:1) We cannot blame the sex organs God has put within man and woman if they are used to sin. They are so constructed that they remain calm until impulses are received from the mind and heart to excite them. If a man and woman choose to marry and have entered into marriage, it is entirely proper that they enjoy being with each other, touching each other in acts of endearment. This brings them both pleasure, and such love play may, as they choose, lead to their having sexual intercourse. However, a single man or woman cannot expect to start this chain reaction without serious consequences. The capacity for response is there in the body. It is dormant until stimulated. Rather than satisfying, the thrill of touching can easily create a desire for

18. What questions are presented for each one to consider in weighing out his or her motives in association with the opposite sex?

19. Why cannot one blame God for creating man and woman with sex organs when these are used to sin against Him?

closer contact: kissing, toying with private parts of the body and going all the way to committing fornication or adultery. All of this may not develop on one occasion, but desire can build in intensity as one thinks on the pleasure received and looks forward to another occasion to receive it, even scheming and maneuvering to bring about the occasion.

²⁰ Wisely, the Bible counsels Christians: "Deaden, therefore, your body members that are upon the earth as respects fornication, uncleanness, sexual appetite, hurtful desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of those things the wrath of God is coming." (Col. 3:5, 6) The doctor gives you a shot of pain-killer to deaden the nerves when he is about to operate on a particular part of the body. We can deaden our body members with respect to wrong desires and impulses by the way we neutralize and nullify wrong desires in the heart and mind, and by the way we cultivate the right desires, chief of which

should be to do the will of God.—1 Thess. 4:3-7; 1 Pet. 4:2-5.

²¹ Let the modern-day Epicureans say that the Christian course is impractical and unrealistic, if they want to, but to us it is not impractical when the applying of Bible principles in our lives produces happiness in the home, spares us from the death-dealing effects of venereal disease and alcoholism, keeps us close to those who provide upbuilding association and helps us to have a clear conscience and right standing before God. We appreciate the gift of life and want to enjoy it forever in peace and happiness. We do not wish to throw it away for a few fleeting moments of fleshly gratification. We have complete trust that God will give us everlasting life in his new order as a reward for our faithfulness. Love for our fellowman motivates us to tell others of this grand hope as we keep putting forth determined efforts to live with God's new order in view.

20. How can a person "deaden" his body members with respect to wrong practices?

21. What should Christians be determined to do in the face of the attitudes and practices of this world?

Living

WITH LIFE IN GOD'S NEW ORDER IN VIEW

"Fight the fine fight of the faith, get a firm hold on the everlasting life for which you were called."—1 Tim. 6:12.

FROM what we have considered in the previous article, how foolish, how insensible we would be if we began to live our lives for worldly associations, pleasure of drink, opportunities to toy with sexual immorality or the illicit satisfaction of fornication and adultery! Why should we displease Jehovah when, by our conduct,

we can honor him and prove the Devil a liar? Why cause debilitation of health by these abuses, possibly contracting some loathsome disease that may bring early death, when we can contribute to our physical and mental health by clean living? Why risk being cut off from the Christian congregation and even everlasting cutting off in death, for a few moments of ill-gotten selfish pleasure, when we have be-

1. Why would it be foolish to begin living for the pleasures of this world?

fore us everlasting life in God's new order as the reward for those who maintain integrity?

² Yes, why? There is no sensible reason for us to do so, no matter how we look at it. It depends upon what we want. The Bible is very clear: What we sow is what we reap. If we sow to the flesh, we will have to reap the pains and sorrows that come with the momentary fleshly satisfaction, and in the end, death. In contrast, if we sow with a view to the spirit, we have the benefits of a clean life now and everlasting life as our sure hope ahead. (Gal. 6:7, 8) The question before each of us is: For what are we living? If we want life in God's new order, we must live for it now!

³ Paul, at Philippians 3:17-19, encouraged fellow Christians to imitate him and others who were following a faithful course, but then, in warning, stated: "For there are many, I used to mention them often but now I mention them also with weeping, who are walking as the enemies of the torture stake of the Christ, and their finish is destruction, and their god is their belly, and their glory consists in their shame, and they have their minds upon things on the earth."

⁴ The point is, Where are our minds? Where are the interests of our hearts? What are we pursuing? We must be realistic. Paul, at 1 Timothy 6:19, gave orders to those who were pursuing earthly interests and desires, that they should 'safely treasure up for themselves a fine foundation for the future, in order that they may get a firm hold on the real life.' Yes, the *real life!* That is what we want to get a firm hold on! This means living for God's new order and not for the satisfaction of

2. What Scriptural principle governs how our conduct turns out, and what must we do if we want life in God's new order?

3. How does Paul describe some in his day who turned aside from the Christian course?

4. If we want life in God's new order, on what should our minds be focused?

fleshly desires. Romans 8:6 puts it well: "For the minding of the flesh means death, but the minding of the spirit means life and peace."

⁵ Moses set a fine example in living with God's new order in view. He chose "to be ill-treated with the people of God rather than to have the temporary enjoyment of sin, because he esteemed the reproach of the Christ as riches greater than the treasures of Egypt; for he looked intently toward the payment of the reward." (Heb. 11:25, 26) Do we, like Moses, reject the "temporary enjoyment of sin," but, rather, look "intently toward the payment of the reward" in God's new order, even though at times we are reproached and looked down upon? Even though we have to discipline our bodies and bring our fleshly desires into subjection? Yes, even though we have to exert ourselves vigorously to keep strong spiritually?

⁶ Of course, being a Christian and keeping oneself free from the practices of this world will make one unpopular with the world. Others may say we are depriving ourselves, denying ourselves needlessly. But, are we really losing out on anything of real value? No, we are actually gaining everything! We are not depriving ourselves of anything we really need in order to have true happiness. The Christian way of life is not a sad, unhappy life. Our greatest joy comes in pleasing our heavenly Father. Moreover, when we serve Jehovah, we spare ourselves the awful pain and sorrow that come with disobedience. Why should we go through life looking for "kicks" and thrills, only to suffer tormenting pains of conscience, knowing full well that such things do not bring real happiness, but only lead to death. Even

5. How did Moses set the right example in living for the New Order?

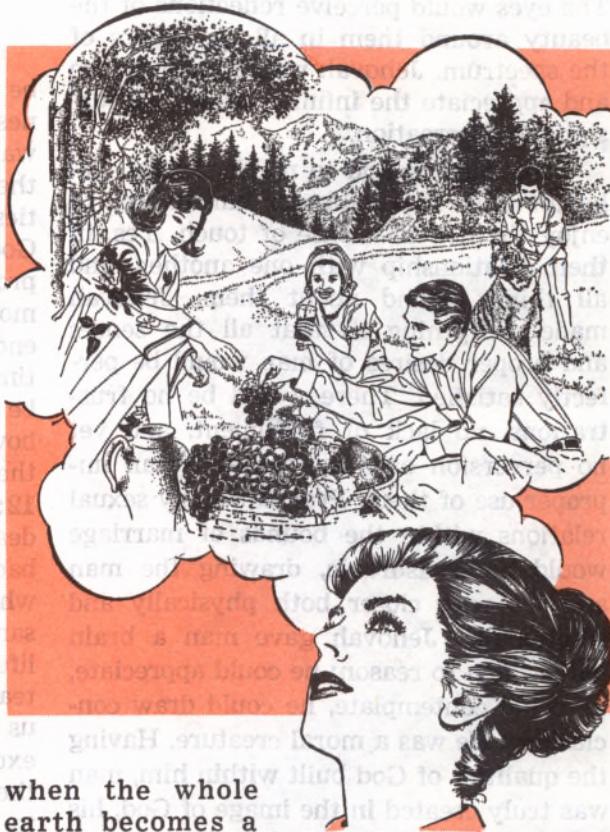
6. In keeping free from the practices of this world, are we as Christians really depriving ourselves of anything of value?

retribution pays off with many hard experiences while we still live.

⁷ When you get right down to it, What can compare with life in God's new order? At present we can get only mental glimpses of what life will be like then, but how these create within us a longing to be there! The question is, Do you see yourself there? If you do, in faith, this will be a great help in resisting the desires of the flesh. You will not want anything to jeopardize your prospects of being there in reality. Remember, faith is defined as "the evident demonstration of realities though not beheld." Consider, too, that faith involves belief not only that God is, but "that he becomes the rewarder of those earnestly seeking him." (Heb. 11:1, 6) Our hope of living in God's new order should be so strong in our minds that we can picture ourselves being right there, not presumptuously, but certainly with a strong, fervent hope to be there by Jehovah's undeserved kindness. But, again, what do we want? For what are we living? If it is with God's new order in view, there is just no comparison with the frills and thrills of this empty world.

MAN CREATED TO ENJOY LIFE

⁸ When Jehovah created man and his helpmate woman, he did not purpose that they should live austere lives without pleasure. To the contrary, God purposed that Adam and Eve, as well as all their descendants, should enjoy living, and that is what God has purposed to be the case



when the whole earth becomes a paradise under his kingdom. Consider for a moment the grand conditions and surroundings in the Garden of Eden

that contributed to the pleasure and contentment of the first human pair. Their bodies were so constructed as to perceive sensations transmitted by the nervous system. Food from the plants of the ground were created with great variety of tastes and smells, and the tongue and nose were designed to be able to savor these. Eating to satisfaction would be thoroughly enjoyable and not just a thrice daily chore to fill the belly. The ears would receive the melodious sounds of the earth, including the words of communication produced by the organs of speech from fellow human creatures.

Keeping your mind on the hope of living in God's new order helps you to resist fleshly desires and to get a firm hold on everlasting life

7. How will faith in God's promises help us in living for God's new order?

8. Why can it be said that God created human creatures to enjoy life?

The eyes would perceive reflections of the beauty around them in all the colors of the spectrum. Jehovah wanted man to see and appreciate the infinite beauty and design of his creation.

⁹ And then to add to man's delight, Jehovah made it possible for him to feel, to enjoy the delicate sense of touch. Yes, in their relationship with one another, and all things round about them, Jehovah made everything so that all the senses and proper desires of man would be perfectly satisfied. There would be no frustrations, no lack of fulfillment, and yet no perversion of these senses by an improper use of them. Procreation by sexual relations within the bounds of marriage would be pleasurable, drawing the man and his wife closer both physically and emotionally. Jehovah gave man a brain with which to reason; he could appreciate, he could contemplate, he could draw conclusions. He was a moral creature. Having the qualities of God built within him, man was truly created in the image of God, his Creator.—Gen. 1:26-31; 2:7-15.

¹⁰ But while human creatures today are far from those perfect conditions and that perfect setting into which the first human pair was placed when created, we must remember that God's purpose for the earth did not change because some of his spirit and earthly sons rebelled against his sovereignty. Jehovah has arranged through his Son Christ Jesus to restore paradise to this earth and to give life therein to any of Adam's offspring who show that they would be obedient there and would not be misfits. Jesus said: "I have come that they might have life and might have it in abundance."—John 10:10.

9. Why would man not need to venture beyond the limits set for him in satisfying all proper desires?
10. While the first man and woman lost the right to live in paradise, what has God purposed for the earth?

SEEING GOD'S NEW ORDER BY THE EYE OF FAITH

¹¹ What an indescribable free gift it will be to have perfect health and true happiness in God's new order! No more will sin war against our hearts and minds. Instead, there will be perfect control of our faculties, both physical and mental; and yet God will see to it that every normal and proper desire of man will be satisfied. No more will our strength, mental agility and endurance ebb away. No more will a lifetime of knowledge, skills and experiences be poured out in death, when the "golden bowl" of the brain gets crushed back to the dust and the person is no more. (Eccl. 12:6) Instead of our seeing people go into death, what a thrill it will be to welcome back from the grave our dead loved ones who are in God's memory, yes, the thousands of millions who will stand up to life again! What a pleasure it will be to teach them God's purposes, as they tell us of their ancient experiences! Would you exchange the privilege of associating with these, including all the faithful men back to Abel, for worldly associations now? Never may that happen!

¹² In God's new order, what a delight it will be to worship and serve our God in spirit and in truth, to learn of him every day, to sing praises to his name, to marvel at his creation, to see his purposes fulfilled, to see his principles in action to accomplish good! There will be no end of things to learn as he instructs us. By his Son Christ Jesus he has already established a perfect government for the blessing of all mankind. Under its rule our hunger and thirst for righteousness will be fully satisfied. No more injustices and inequities. (Isa. 9:6, 7) What a pleasure it will be to take another step each day

11. In God's new order, what will the elimination of human imperfection and death make possible?
12, 13. What provision has Jehovah already made, and what blessings can we confidently expect in God's new order?

not only in developing our minds and abilities, but also in using these to perfect this earth and to turn it into a wonderful paradise home!

¹³ Yes, the earth itself will be given to the children of men for their inheritance. Look where you will then, from east to west, from north to south, you will see that the earth is but one grand paradise. Its plains, its valleys, its hills and mountains, yes, its seas will all be under the supervision of man. Under God's guidance, what a delight it will be to work with our hands and mental faculties to make this earth into the grand home the Creator purposed for man! Would you trade this happy prospect for a night of drunken carousing? How foolish one would be if one did!

¹⁴ What enormous possibilities are ahead! See with your mind's eye what these are. How wonderful it will be to look after the plants and animals, as God originally assigned man to do! The vast variety of plants will provide man with the choicest food, fibers for clothing, building materials and other beneficial products. There will be unending things of interest to learn about the earth's plant life. How fascinating it is to watch the plants grow, to see the different ways they propagate, how the seeds are scattered! We marvel at how Jehovah has made each one.

¹⁵ And the animals—what a pleasure it will be to look after them, to study them, to work with them, to enjoy them! How natural it is from the days of one's youth to like the animals! We go to zoos or special parks to see them today, but then we will be able to see them in their natural habitats. We will know their ways. We will not want to abuse or misuse them. As we see them at play and building their dens or nests, as we see them raising their

young, how we will marvel at the handiwork of Jehovah, the great Creator!

¹⁶ And, as you develop your own inheritance, your neighbors will be doing the same. In fact, all the inhabitants of the earth will be your neighbors. And what opportunities you will have to love your neighbor as yourself! Love will be the motivating force and thus there will not be any desire to do harm to others, rather, to bestow a blessing. So many good things will be going on in the new system of things that there just will not be any room for monotony. No one will be lazy. As we teach others, there will be unending new things to learn and to enjoy. (Isa. 11:9) Think of the fields to explore. Advanced knowledge of physics and chemistry will enable man to utilize fully the resources of this earth, and this without the pollution and disposal problems that face this present generation. Architects, planners and builders will be able to use their talents to the full. There will be time, too, to perfect skills in what today are termed the fine arts, and to enjoy these fully: The finest music, with no taints of immorality, Babylonish religion or mythology; paintings or sculptures that have meaning and reflect skill, rather than products of twisted minds. But, now, would we forfeit all this for a night of fornication or toying with sexual immorality? Some have! But that is not what the faithful servant of God wants! He knows that Jehovah God will not be mocked, and to live in God's new order there must be a hating of what is bad as well as a loving of what is good and righteous.

¹⁷ We must keep proving our love and devotion to Jehovah in the face of all

16. What are some fields of knowledge that can be explored, and what must we do in order to share this inheritance?

17, 18. (a) Why can we not relax our vigilance even for a moment in pursuing our goal of life in God's new order? (b) What did Jesus mean when advising that a part of the body should be torn away from us if it makes us stumble?

14, 15. What fine privileges will man enjoy with respect to the plants and animals on earth?

that the Devil can bring upon us, and this despite the weaknesses of the flesh. We must keep walking in the narrow and cramped way that leads to everlasting life. We cannot afford for one moment to get off this road and on to the broad road with all the millions who are walking on it to their death.—Matt. 7:13, 14.

¹⁸ What does it matter if we have to tear out an eye or cut off a hand, symbolically speaking, if they are making us stumble, in order to reap everlasting life in the New Order? Jesus warned that anyone married who kept on looking at a woman, so as to have passion for her, had really committed adultery with her in his heart. After that he said that one should tear out an eye if this eye made him stumble or that the hand should be cut off if the hand caused one to stumble. Better that this be done, arriving in the new system without these offending members, as it were, if they would cause the whole body to be pitched into Gehenna to be forever destroyed. Hence, do our eyes at times gravitate in the direction of immoral ways and attitudes? Is there an appetite for immoral information, whether from books or movies, or do we look at those of the opposite sex with immoral motives? Then drastic changes have to be made, comparable to tearing the eye out of the body and throwing it away. Does the hand incline to get into the wrong places at times, doing wrong things? Then it should be immobilized when faced with temptation, just as though a surgeon had severed it from the body.—Matt. 5:27-30.

¹⁹ Paul put it another way at 1 Corinthians 9:24-27: "Do you not know that the runners in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may attain it. Moreover, every

man taking part in a contest exercises self-control in all things. Now they, of course, do it that they may get a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible one. Therefore, the way I am running is not uncertainly; the way I am directing my blows is so as not to be striking the air; but I pummel my body and lead it as a slave, that, after I have preached to others, I myself should not become disapproved somehow."

²⁰ If we are truly reaching out for life in God's new order, we must prove our sincerity by learning the divine law now and living by it. We cannot fool God, and it does no good to fool ourselves. We must follow through without hypocrisy. We should watch ourselves and the company we keep. Our associates should be those who are also working to be in the New Order with us. We should prove our sincerity by our devotion in the preaching of the good news, by our personal study, by our attendance at the meetings. Yes, the service of God should fill our whole life, and then we will not be diverting any energy, any machinations of heart, to satisfying the desires of the flesh. We will indeed be living for God's new order.—Col. 3:23-25.

ENDURANCE AND PERSEVERANCE

NECESSARY

²¹ We, of course, have not as yet arrived there, but we know it is very near. We know, too, that the times in which we are living now are very difficult. Not only do we have to put up a hard fight today, but tomorrow will require the same. In other words, it requires endurance. Jesus said: "By endurance on your part you will acquire your souls." James comforts us with these words: "Happy is the man

20. What provisions are made to help us keep pressing forward to our goal of life in God's new order?
 21, 22. (a) Why is endurance important if we are to reach our goal? (b) Why should we not feel discouraged if the obstacles are many? Who will help us?

19. How did Paul set the example in running the race for everlasting life?

that keeps on enduring trial, because on becoming approved he will receive the crown of life, which Jehovah promised to those who continue loving him.”—Luke 21:19; Jas. 1:12.

²² At times we may feel it is impossible. The odds may seem overwhelming. We have temptations, we have opposition, we have troubles, we have sicknesses, we have all the things common to imperfect men, and occasionally all these seem to cross our path, even coming all at once, so we feel that we just cannot make it. From the human standpoint, we would be helpless, yes, hopeless. But notice how Jesus answered his apostles when it became apparent to them that getting into the Kingdom would be very difficult, seemingly impossible: “They became still more astounded and said to him: ‘Who, in fact, can be saved?’ Looking straight at them Jesus said: ‘With men it is impossible, but not so with God, for all things are possible with God.’”

²³ It was then that Peter was moved to state: “‘Look! we left all things and have been following you.’ Jesus said: ‘Truly I say to you men, No one has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for my sake and for the sake of the good news who will not get a hundredfold now in this period of time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and fields, with persecutions, and in the coming system of things everlasting life.’” (Mark 10:26-30) Yes, with men it is impossible, but all things are possible with God. We can make it, we will make it into the New Order

with God’s help! We can reap the reward of everlasting life, if we want to. But, he will not force us; he will not lead us against our will; neither will he put his spirit upon us to bless us if we are inclined toward doing what is wrong. We must be heading in the right direction for his spirit to boost us along. We must keep studying his Word in order that we might know

how to direct our steps if we are to walk in the way that leads to life. Note the admonition at Psalm 119: 144: “The righteousness of your reminders is to time indefinite. Make me understand, that I may keep living.” Like David we can have full confidence in Jehovah. He said at Psalm 16:8: “I have placed Jehovah in front of me constantly. Because he is at my right hand, I shall not be made to totter.”

²⁴ Let us not lose out in the race for life in God’s new order. Let us not sell our birthright, as it were, for a mess of pottage. (Heb. 12:16, 17) For what are we living? Worldly friends? None of these can help us to gain life, but they can bring us into death! Are we living for the pleasures of drink? Alcohol, or, for that matter, drugs or other stimulants, can help us to escape everyday reality, but not the reality of Armageddon! Are we living for opportunities to toy with immorality, to commit fornication and adultery? Remember, it is the harlot who tempts with the words: “Stolen waters themselves are sweet,” but the proverb concludes by saying that the one who succumbs to her “has not come to know that those impotent in death are there.”—Prov. 9:13-18.

23. (a) What did Jesus have to say about the reward to those who keep following his steps closely? (b) For God to help us, what must we be doing?

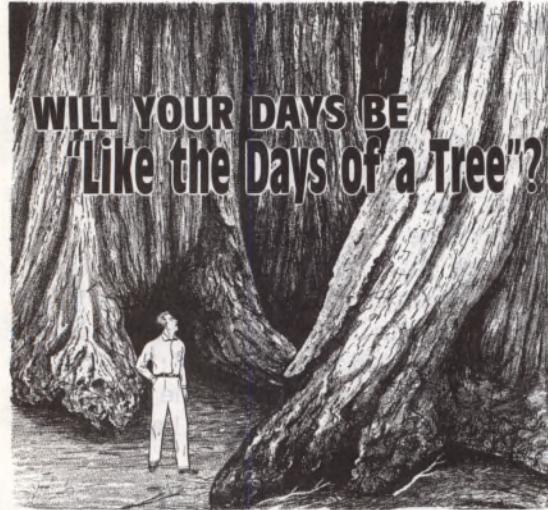
24. In summary, what can we not live for, if we want life in God’s new order?

THE NEXT ISSUE

- God Cherishes the Lowly Ones.
- “Become Imitators of God.”
- Why Does “Faith in the Name” of Jesus Christ Bring Life?

²⁵ How clear it is, then, that we cannot live for those things condemned by Jehovah if we want to get a firm hold on the "real life"! We must live for God's new order *now*, if we expect to live in God's

^{25.} Why is it important to live now for God's new order?



AMONG the restoration prophecies of Isaiah is one promising: "No more will there come to be a suckling a few days old from that place, neither an old man that does not fulfill his days . . . For like the days of a tree will the days of my people be."—Isa. 65:20, 22.

Here a long life is promised. However, to grasp clearly the meaning of this text and its application to *our* lives, it is helpful to understand the illustration "like the days of a tree." Just how long *do* trees live? How accurate are the ages attached to many trees by men? Is there some reliable method of determining exactly how old a tree is? Did some trees alive today live before the flood of Noah's day?

It should be remembered that trees and other vegetation have been on earth much

new order *then*, to enjoy everlastingly the blessings that Jehovah our God has in store for those who truly love him. Yes, with every vigilant and diligent care, live your life now as if your future life depended upon it—because it truly does!

longer than man. Man did not put in his appearance until immediately before the seventh "day" of the creative "week," or nearly 6,000 years ago. However, "fruit trees yielding fruit according to their kinds" were created in the third creative epoch.—Gen. 1:9-13.

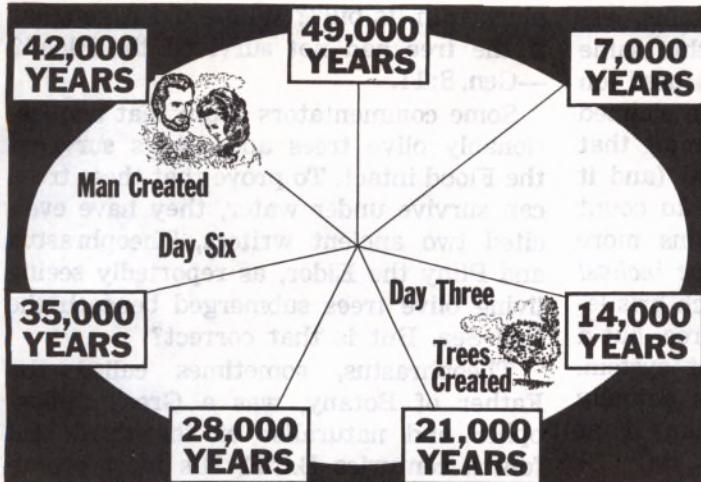
Since each of the creative "days" or periods was evidently seven thousand years long, the whole creative "week" takes in 49,000 years. If that period is likened to a twelve-hour clock, then trees and other vegetation appeared between about three-thirty and five-fifteen. And man? Much later—sometime after ten o'clock! Yes, trees on earth for between twenty-seven thousand and thirty-four thousand years far outdate man's nearly six-thousand-year tenure.

DETERMINING THE "DAYS OF A TREE"

Aside from the existence of trees in general, *individual* trees live to be very old too. Just how old exactly?

Gnarled olive trees, said to be one to two thousand years old, still bear fruit, making them possibly the longest lived orchard species. Certain white-barked pines (*Pinus bungeana*) indigenous to north China are said to fall within the same age category. The baobab tree of central Africa attains great ages.

But in all these cases, no one can say exactly how old such trees really are, age estimates being based on oral tradition. Yet there are written records claiming



to document the ages of some trees.

The bo (bodhi) tree of Anuradhapura, Ceylon, is sometimes called "the oldest historical tree in the world." According to *The Mahāvamsa (The Great Chronicle of Ceylon)*, compiled in the fifth century C.E., this tree was planted in the eighteenth year of King Devānampiyatissa, a year calculated by some as 288 B.C.E. Even assuming that the present tree is the original one, however, this chronology's accuracy and the account itself are highly suspect. Notice what is supposed to have taken place when the tree was planted:

"Hardly had he [the king] let it leave his hands but it rose up eighty cubits into the air, and floating thus it sent forth glorious rays of six colours . . . When the great Bodhi-tree at sunset was come down from (its place in the air) . . . Then did the earth quake. [And then a week or so later:] Amid this great assembly, plunged into amazement by this miracle, there grew out of the east branch, even as they gazed, a faultless fruit. . . . And while they all yet gazed, there grew springing from it, eight shoots; and they stood there, young Bodhi-trees four cubits high."

That hardly sounds like an authoritative account by which to date "the oldest historical tree in the world," does it?

But is there any scientific way to number "the days of a tree"? What about tree rings?

Many think that all trees add a new 'ring' to their trunk each year and that simply by counting the rings a tree's age can be determined. So it may come as a surprise to them to read that this method actually is uncertain, often inaccurate and, most obviously, incomplete. Why do we say that?

For one thing, it is not unusual for *two* rings to be added in *one* year. Thus, an expert in tree-ring studies, A. E. Douglass, observed that for this reason, "10 out of 16 yellow pines from the lower levels of the Santa Rita Mountains south of Tucson have had to be discarded [in tree-ring study], and the junipers of northern Arizona have so many suspicious rings that it is almost impossible to work with them. Cypress trees also give much trouble."

Additionally, rings are usually clearly discernible only on wood that grows quickly and in certain places. Thus Bertram Husch, a United Nations forestry officer in Chile, comments: "In tropical regions this growth characteristic is useless for determining the age of a tree, since periods of growth may not follow a regularly recurring cycle." Other trees grow so slowly that rings are not noticeable.

Nevertheless, this method is somewhat helpful in *approximating* the "days" of certain trees. The General Sherman sequoia, still growing in the High Sierras of California, is an example. Tree expert Douglass said, in the *Tree Ring Bulletin*, that evidence in this tree "supplied an estimate of the age of the tree of 3500 years." But he added, "plus or minus 500 years."—July 1946, page 5; *italics ours*.

Similarly, in the White Mountains, less than a hundred miles away, this same method of age determining is used on bristlecone pines. At least one is claimed to be 4,600 years old. Even assuming that ring structure is fully understood (and it is not), extreme care is needed to count the rings. One specimen contains more than 1,100 rings in less than five inches! Also, it should be noted, that each bristlecone is in a sense not a single tree, but a "grove" of trees with one root system. The ancient-appearing base has actually had different trunks grow from it at different times.

The bristlecone and sequoia are currently considered the oldest trees on earth. Still, who can say that others are not equally old? H. D. Tiemann, writing in *Selected Botanical Papers* (1969), allows this possibility: "No doubt some of the immense kauri trees of New Zealand (*Agathis australis*), with their barrel-like trunks and cabbage heads, are as old as the sequoias."

DID WHOLE TREES SURVIVE THE FLOOD?

So we see that the exact age of such trees cannot be determined, but all the evidence indicates that they are indeed very old. This, however, raises the question: Since the flood of Noah's day was some 4,300 years ago, are we to believe that some trees now standing, like the bristlecone pine that is said to be 4,600 years old, survived that event intact?

The possibility cannot be entirely dismissed. However, in view of the enormity of the Flood and the destructive effect of water, it seems rather unlikely. (Compare Psalm 104:6-8.) This, too, adds to the doubtfulness of the accuracy of tree-ring dating methods.

But does not the Bible say that soon after the flood a dove released by Noah returned with an "olive leaf freshly

plucked in its bill"? Where did it get that if the tree had not survived the Flood? —Gen. 8:11.

Some commentators claim that unquestionably olive trees and others survived the Flood intact. To prove that these trees can survive under water, they have even cited two ancient writers, Theophrastus and Pliny the Elder, as reportedly seeing living olive trees submerged beneath the Red Sea. But is that correct?

Theophrastus, sometimes called the Father of Botany, was a Greek philosopher and naturalist of the third and fourth centuries B.C.E. His most prominent surviving work includes *Enquiry into Plants*. When describing the Red Sea it also says: "But there are plants in the sea, which they call 'bay' and 'olive.' "

The plant called "olive" that he goes on to describe is not the real olive tree at all but, it is believed, the white mangrove. This latter plant does indeed grow, as he says, "in"—though not, as commentators have wrongly implied, *under*—the water. Theophrastus' standard for describing plants was the shape of their leaves. Thus he may have used the term "olive" to describe the plant he was here referring to because its leaf structure was similar to that of the natural olive.

Several centuries later, Pliny the Elder, the Roman, depended on Theophrastus for his information, repeating the earlier writer. Pliny, it is said, "had neither the temperament for original investigation, nor the leisure necessary for the purpose." —*The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th Ed., under "Pliny."

Therefore, we must conclude that neither of those ancient writers was speaking of genuine olive trees growing under the waters of the Red Sea.

Well, if it appears unlikely that whole trees survived the Flood, how else could tree life have continued? Modern experi-

ments with flooding give us some indications.

For example, scientists have found that seeds of certain plants and trees survive being submerged in water up to thirty months. Additionally, it should be noted that the extent of disastrous effects that various environmental stresses have on seedlings and cuttings is not fully understood. An authority, Jacob Levitt of the University of Missouri, notes:

"It must be admitted that despite the great deal of information accumulated by investigators of freezing, drought, and heat stresses, neither the mechanism of the stress injury nor that of the stress resistance is fully understood. In the case of other stresses [including what he calls 'flooding injury'] even less is known."

Emphasizing this unknown factor is the Russian work *Wintering of Plants* by I. M. Vasil'yev (1956):

"Excessive water in itself is not harmful . . . in the event of flooding during the winter or early spring thaws before growth starts and respiration is comparatively weak—plants may remain a long time under water without any visible harmful aftereffects because their oxygen requirement is small and can be completely covered by the oxygen from the water surrounding the plants, especially if it is flowing."

All such evidence is admittedly limited. But does it not show the tremendous potential that various tree seeds, seedlings and cuttings have to survive flooding?

Of course, after the Flood, once trees and other plant life started to grow again, many would grow quickly. Teak reaches a height of sixty feet in only fifteen years and musanga may be eighty feet in fourteen years. Tiny Krakatau island, laid bare by a volcanic eruption in 1883, was, less than fifty years later, reforested similar to the rest of the surrounding Malayan region. As for the olive leaf carried by the dove to Noah, it could have been taken from a fairly young sprout that came up after the flood.

UNDERSTANDING ISAIAH'S ILLUSTRATION

In any event this brief examination shows that trees, by their longevity and hardiness, make a fitting illustration of "the days" of godly people, at Isaiah 65:22.

Those prophetic words, as the context shows, had fulfillment to a certain extent in the faithful Jews who returned from Babylonian exile in 537 B.C.E. Under the "new heavens" (or the rulership of Governor Zerubbabel and High Priest Joshua), a restored society, or "new earth," had reason to exult in their manifold blessings. (Isa. 65:17-25) Among these was the promise of longevity. Because they adhered to the high standards of the Mosaic law, God's Word to them was carried out: "I shall make the number of your days full." Yes, God assured them, "Your days may prove long upon the ground." In their case, such 'fullness' and 'length' of days were aptly compared to that which, in man's estimation, thrives very long, a tree.—Ex. 23:26; 20:12; compare Psalm 92:13-15.

But this prophecy about the "days of a tree" has an application today. The apostles Peter and John allude to Isaiah's words, saying that Christians await 'new heavens and a new earth where righteousness will dwell.' Soon, under God's heavenly kingdom, after wickedness has been destroyed, a cleansed human society or "new earth" will thrive. "Death will be no more."—2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1-4.

Do you want to be alive then? If so, Peter's further words should interest you: "Do your utmost to be found finally by him spotless and unblemished and in peace." Yes, right now action is required on your part.

Diligent application of Scriptural principles in your life will assure you God's protection through the "great tribulation" into his new order. But, also, it will spare you much suffering and possibly a need-

lessly shortened life in the present system.

For instance, by avoiding apostates you will not be led astray by their twisted ideas. Similarly, by shunning wrong and immoral association and bad practices you are not likely to fall victim to syphilis, gonorrhea or certain other forms of disease. Yes, the right course set forth in God's Word has already aided many to

realize their maximum potential in years.—2 Pet. 3:14-18.

In addition to this, there is the marvelous prospect of living in God's new order. When that new order is a reality, trees will, of course, continue to die. But the unending lives of righteous men will be measured "like the days of a tree," in the thousands of years.



THE change from boyhood to manhood is a gradual process. No young boy goes to bed one night to wake up the next morning and find he is now a man. The transition takes years. It is not the easiest time in a young person's life, but it is a very, very important period. This transitional period is a proving ground for your future responsibilities.

This transition period from childhood to adulthood is marked by the onset of "puberty," a term that comes from a Latin word meaning "adult." In boys, this stage of life begins around the age of fourteen or thereabouts, and "adolescence," or the maturing process, generally continues until somewhere between the ages of twenty and twenty-three.

PROBLEMS OF PUBERTY

What are some of the problems you can expect in this stage of puberty? For one thing, you probably will go through a time when you seem to be rather awkward, even

clumsy. You may incline to stumble, trip over furniture, knock over glasses on the table. This can be embarrassing. Why does it happen?

It is because your body is getting taller (and probably broader at the shoulders and chest). Your bones lengthen and the muscles have to stretch along with them. But in this expansion some parts of the body seem to progress rapidly, while others may lag. This can create some lack of coordination. So, for the first part of this transition a youth may have some clumsiness. But this passes and is no cause for great concern—though extra care is certainly worth while, as it could save you from possible harm through some accident. It is not a time for taking risks. Nor is the period of awkwardness the best time for one to learn to drive an automobile, as

a lack of coordination at a critical moment could bring disaster.

Among the body parts that are stretching out are the vocal cords. The extra length makes the voice deepen. But during the lengthening process your voice may often "crack," suddenly hitting a high note when you least expect it. Again, this is part of the "growing pains" of adolescence. So, when it happens and others are amused, just smile along with them and any embarrassment will fade.

At the root of these body changes are your glands, including the thyroid, the adrenals and the gonads (sex glands). They produce yet other changes. One of them is the growth of pubic hair—around the organs of procreation, also under your armpits and on your chest. The amount varies from person to person and is no indicator whatsoever of how 'manly' you are. Hair also begins to appear on the face, usually beginning with your upper lip. Yes, though as yet there is but a mere "fuzz," your encounter with the experience of shaving is steadily drawing near.

Frequently the oil glands serving the facial skin fail to function as well as they should during adolescence. That is why you may go through some unpleasantness due to complexion problems. Skin blemishes may seem to you to destroy your appearance and you may be painfully aware of them. But you should realize that others do not pay nearly as much attention to them as you do and, realizing the stage of life you are going through, they will probably incline to take them pretty much for granted. The best way to care for these complexion problems is (1) to have a balanced diet, including ample quantities of vegetables and fruits, along with lots of drinking water, (2) use plenty of soap and water—not just for your face but for keeping your whole head and body clean, and then (3) *keep your*

hands off, not squeezing or picking at your face. That should at least keep the problems within bounds. If not, then you may need to seek the advice of a doctor.

SEXUAL DEVELOPMENT

Perhaps the change that most often is a source of disturbance for boys growing toward manhood is that involving the organs of procreation, the genitals. During puberty these not only attain their full size but also begin to function. The Bible, at Leviticus 15:16, 17, refers to 'emissions of semen.' If his parents have thoughtlessly failed to discuss the matter with him beforehand, a youth's first seminal emission may be an upsetting experience. What causes such emission?

A young man's body, on reaching puberty, begins to produce sperm cells and also a fluid that serves to transport these outside the body. More or less periodically the body relieves itself of such sperm cells or semen, an emission taking place while the person sleeps and is dreaming.

What does all this mean? It means that your body is now capable of fathering children. This is the Creator's arrangement and is to be exercised, of course, in his provided way, by honorable marriage.

A point may here be noted, however. While such emissions are normal, to some extent you can control the frequency of their occurrence. What you think about, particularly your thoughts prior to going off to sleep, can affect this considerably. If you let your thoughts dwell on sexual matters, this will likely reflect itself in your dreams and lead to frequent emissions, perhaps several in the course of a month. By exercising self-control you can turn your thoughts away from sensual things and thus go for a considerable period of time without having your sleep interrupted by such an emission and the measure of discomfort that naturally follows it. (Ps. 119:9; Phil. 4:8) Incidentally,

while the requirement of the Mosaic law that a man should bathe after any such emission is not in force religiously for Christians, it is still a good hygienic practice to wash oneself as soon as practical.

HOW WILL YOU REACT?

The fact that your body is developing in this way may create in you a certain feeling of wonderment and also curiosity. How should you satisfy that curiosity? By experimenting with your sexual organs? Or by questioning other boys of your own age or somewhat older? Many take such a course, but very often with undesirable results. Why?

Well, what they do reminds one of a small child who is given as a gift some rather complex article, such as a watch. Curious, the boy wants to know what makes the watch tick, what makes the hands move. So he pries off the back and starts tinkering. What is the result? A damaged watch, for, while he may be able to figure out how to open it up or even to take it apart, he does not have the necessary knowledge to put it back together again. Nor is another child of his age likely to know either.

Even though you may bring no actual physical damage to yourself by experimenting, you certainly could get yourself mentally, emotionally *and* physically upset. Worse, you could get into bad habits that could take you years to break and that could damage your future happiness. And, even though initial excitement at feeling the effects of these body changes can make you feel an urge to talk with other boys and compare experiences, it is good to realize that these discussions can easily lead to engaging in unwholesome acts, to masturbation, or even to homosexual practices.—Rom. 1:27, 28.

The best way to get satisfying answers to your questions about sexual develop-

ment is to ask your parents, particularly your father. You, and other boys in your age group, are just beginning to reach the state of being a fully formed man. But your father has already gone through everything you have and lots more. Also, whereas other boys might give you information that is only half right—a little bit of facts and a lot of wild ideas—your father can be approached with the confidence that he will give you good information, facts that will help you and work for your happiness. If your father is not in a position to give you information or counsel based on God's Word, it would be valuable for you to know what God's Word says. You will find that any of the elders in a congregation of Jehovah's witnesses will be glad to be of help to you.—Prov. 4:1; 13:20; Matt. 7:9, 10.

PROVING YOURSELF RESPONSIBLE

Your Creator has endowed you with a wonderful gift in giving you the capacity to become a father. But it is now up to you to care for that gift in a responsible way, not like a child that cannot be trusted with something precious. And this is true of many other things. As you approach manhood it is natural that you feel a desire for self-identity—to feel you are a distinct person—and also a desire for a measure of independence. Your parents will likely begin preparing you for the time when you can be independent. How? By gradually giving you more responsibility and the privilege of sharing in making certain decisions as to things you will do. They may invite you to express your preference as to certain subjects you will take at school or let you take on a part-time job. You may be allowed to do your own buying of some of your personal items. But whatever your parents see fit to do in this regard, it will then be up to you to show you merit that responsibility. If you act in a childish way or get "big-

headed," then they may have to reduce your privileges again until you show yourself more of a man.

This desire for greater self-identity and a measure of independence is accompanied by other natural desires. You will feel a need to be appreciated by others for what you are and what you can do. If these desires are not directed properly, they lead to the forming of "gangs," where many boys satisfy their desire to have a 'sense of belonging.' But such gangs generally form their own code of conduct, and the facts show that this almost always leads to wrongdoing, at times even to serious crimes. Probably more than any other single factor, bad companionship is to be found at the root of the problem when young men get into trouble.—1 Cor. 15:33.

During this period of life you begin to get some idea of what you are going to look like physically as a grown man. But you should also start thinking more and more about what you are going to be like inside, what the Bible calls "the secret person of the heart." (1 Pet. 3:4) This

stage of your life is not the time to let a desire for increased independence somehow divide you off from your parents and the rest of the family. The changes you are experiencing during puberty, and the new urges you feel and have to learn to control, actually increase your need for their love and steady influence. Instead of drawing away from your parents and letting a gap develop, draw closer to them and learn all you can from them as you now approach adulthood. You will never regret this and you will bring them real happiness too, making them proud to have you as their son. (Prov. 23:24, 25) Then, too, the sensation of 'belonging' can be satisfied not only by sharing in family activities, recreation and trips but also by association with genuine Christians, congregating with them and offering your growing abilities and strength to perform needed services within the congregation. Thus you will be growing and developing not only physically, but also spiritually, and your sense of personal worth will grow accordingly.

proval and blessing. God's Word says: "Cursed is the able-bodied man who puts his trust in earthling man and actually makes flesh his arm, and whose heart turns away from Jehovah himself."—Jer. 17:5.

Surely we do not want to be among the cursed ones. Since Jehovah God does not change, whatever led to people's being blessed or cursed in the past will lead to the same consequences today. (Mal. 3:6) It is therefore wisdom on our part to take to heart the lessons of the ancient past as found in the Bible.

AN ANCIENT ALLEGORY

One such lesson is presented as an allegory in Ezekiel chapter 23. The allegory

Why TRUST in GOD?

THE Supreme One, the Sovereign of the universe, Jehovah God, wants as his servants only those who trust him fully. Any claiming to be his people but proving false to him in attitude, word and action cannot expect to receive his ap-

involves two sisters who failed to trust in God and looked elsewhere for blessing and protection. The older sister was Oholah and the younger one, Oholibah. Oholah is identified as representing Samaria, the final capital of the northern or ten-tribe kingdom of Israel, and Oholibah as representing Jerusalem, the capital of the southern kingdom of Judah. The capitals being representative of kingdoms, the sisters stand for two kingdoms. So their "mother" is the one national organization of Israel fathered by Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Jacob's twelve sons.—Ezek. 23:2, 4.

From the start the record of the two sisters was not the best. "They began to prostitute themselves in Egypt. In their youth they committed prostitution." (Ezek. 23:3) How was this? The descendants of Jacob, once settled in Egypt, failed to resist the snare of the idolatrous worship carried on in that land. Apparently they began to believe that something was to be gained by venerating the Egyptian deities. They ceased looking to Jehovah as the Source of real blessing and protection, and so became guilty of committing *spiritual prostitution*.

Of course, at the time the older sister Oholah and the younger sister Oholibah began prostituting themselves in Egypt, the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah had not come into existence. But the tribes of Israel that eventually made up those kingdoms did exist. The tribes that formed the northern kingdom, or Oholah, included those that descended from Jacob's two oldest sons, Reuben and Simeon, and also from Jacob's firstborn son by Rachel, namely, Joseph, whose two sons Ephraim and Manasseh became two distinct tribes. Hence Oholah could rightly be called the "older" sister.

"They came to be mine," said Jehovah after describing the Egyptian experience of the two symbolic women. This occurred

in 1513 B.C.E., when Jehovah delivered the Israelites and brought them formally into a covenant at Mount Sinai. Having entered into a covenant with Jehovah, the nation was "married" to him like a wife to a husband. The individual members of the nation became Jehovah's organizational children and therefore Oholah and Oholibah could be spoken of as beginning to "give birth to sons and daughters" from that time onward.—Ezek. 23:4.

OHOLAH'S FAILURE TO TRUST IN JEHOVAH

It was not until 997 B.C.E., however, that the symbolic Oholah and Oholibah took definite form. In that year ten tribes of Israel refused further allegiance to the royal house of David and set up their own kingdom. This revolt did not cancel the covenant the entire nation had entered into with Jehovah at Mount Sinai. Both of the new kingdoms were still in this covenant and were therefore still subject to Jehovah as to a spiritual Husband. (1 Ki. 11:29-39) But the ten-tribe kingdom, Oholah, refused wifelike subjection to Jehovah and became idolatrous. Oholah (meaning "Her Tent") set up her own tent for carrying on religious worship. She forgot Jehovah, for the northern kingdom went over to the worship of the golden calf and later adopted Baal worship. Oholah also lost her trust in Jehovah as her Protector and played politics with pagan nations, especially Assyria.—2 Ki. 15:17-22; Ezek. 23:5-8; Hos. 5:13; 12:1.

Oholah's failure to trust in Jehovah and to remain faithful to him proved to be calamitous. Ezekiel 23:9, 10 states: "[Jehovah] gave her into the hand of those passionately loving her, into the hand of the sons of Assyria, toward whom she had lusted. They were the ones that uncovered her nakedness. Her sons and her daughters they took, and her they killed even with sword. And she came to be infamy

to women, and acts of judgment were what they executed upon her." Yes, Jehovah abandoned the northern kingdom to the brutal Assyrians who had passionately loved to force a worldly alliance upon it. The Assyrians acted as executioners of divine judgment, giving symbolic Oholah the treatment that an adulterous wife deserved. They "uncovered her nakedness" by stripping the land of her Israelite children, deporting them far off. And with the sword of war they killed her as a political nation, destroying her national capital Samaria, in 740 B.C.E. Oholah indeed became "infamy to women," that is, to pagan kingdoms of that time. They looked down upon her as a nation that had gained shameful infamy for herself and they shuddered at her fate.

OHOLIBAH DOES NOT PROFIT FROM OHLAH'S WARNING EXAMPLE

Oholibah, symbolizing the kingdom of Judah, had good reason to contemplate the fate of her sister kingdom. In keeping with the meaning of her name ("My Tent Is in Her"), Oholibah was favored in having Jehovah's tent or temple in her capital city Jerusalem. But she failed to appreciate this. She defied the warning example of Oholah and carried on her spiritual prostitution in an even more extreme fashion.—Ezek. 23:11-17.

Forgetting Jehovah and her marriage-like covenant with him, Oholibah, the southern kingdom, also played politics with Assyria. This was notoriously so in the days of Judean king Ahaz. Contrary to the counsel of Jehovah by the prophet Isaiah, Ahaz called the Assyrian conqueror Tiglath-pileser to his aid against the allied kingdoms of Syria and Israel. (Isa. 7:1-20; 2 Ki. 16:5-10, 17, 18) King Hezekiah, successor to Ahaz, saw how disastrously Oholah's courting the political favor of Assyria ended in the year 740

B.C.E., with the destruction of Samaria and its kingdom. Yet he, though delivered from the Assyrian king Sennacherib, entertained the friendly advances made by the Babylonians.—Isa. 37:36-39:7; 2 Ki. 19:35-20:18.

It was particularly toward the close of the seventh century B.C.E., when Jehoakim and Zedekiah ruled as kings tributary to Babylon, that Oholibah "exercised her sensual desire more ruinously" than did her sister Oholah by courting the political favor of the Babylonian World Power. (Ezek. 23:11-16) This international intercourse kept up during the reigns of both kings until Oholibah tired of the domination of Babylon. So "her soul began to turn away disgusted" from the Babylonians by rebelling against the king of Babylon. (Ezek. 23:17) At that time Oholibah began "calling to mind the days of her youth, when she prostituted herself in the land of Egypt," that is, she began looking southward to Egypt for military aid to support her rebellion.—Ezek. 23:19.

Oholibah's course, like that of her sister, was bound to lead to calamity. Jehovah was disgusted with the kingdom of Judah. This meant that, as in the case of the northern kingdom, Jehovah would abandon the symbolic Oholibah into the hands of her passionate lovers. (Ezek. 23:18-23) So wicked was Oholibah that Jehovah could speak of her former lover, the Babylonians, as "righteous men," that is, comparatively "righteous men." They were also "righteous men" in the sense that they would execute Jehovah's righteous judgment. (Ezek. 23:43-49) Through his prophet Ezekiel, Jehovah foretold what these lovers would do to Oholibah:

"They will set themselves against you all around, and I will give judgment over to them, and they must judge you with their judgments. And I will express my ardor against you, and they must take action against you in rage. Your nose and your

ears they will remove, and the remainder of you will fall even by the sword. Your sons and your daughters they themselves will take, and the remainder of you will be devoured by the fire. And they will certainly strip off you your garments and take away your beautiful articles. And I shall actually cause your loose conduct to cease from you, and your prostitution carried from the land of Egypt; and you will not raise your eyes to them, and Egypt you will remember no more."—Ezek. 23:24-27.

Accordingly, Jehovah God would allow Oholibah's lovers to apply his judicial decisions according to their own cruel way. They would ruin Oholibah's beautiful face or national appearance. Her anointed king and other prominent officials, who were like the "very breath of [her] nostrils," would be taken away. (Lam. 4:20) Her priests, judges and literary men, who were like ears to listen and give balance to the headship of the nation, would also be removed violently. What was remaining of adulterous Oholibah would fall by the executional sword of the victorious Babylonians. Those of her sons and daughters surviving would be taken captive and enslaved. The remainder of her, in the way of nonportable material properties, would be "devoured by the fire." Oholibah would thus be stripped of her garments and beautiful articles with which she practiced her allurements as a nation.

Oholibah may have thought that she could escape this calamity by regretting her association with Babylon and turning away in disgust. The Babylonians, however, would not forget her engagements with them. And her turning away from the Babylonians and coming to hate them did not clear her record with Jehovah God. Oholibah was not repenting over her spiritual adultery. She was still inclined to violate her covenant with Jehovah and adulterously enter alliances with pagan nations, such as Egypt, to ensure her safety. Hence Jehovah would expose her na-

kedness by laying bare her record as a shameless prostitute. Like her sister Oholah, she would be forced to drink a cupful of national destruction and deportation from her land. Oholibah would be forced to pay to the full the divine penalty for her unfaithfulness to God, as if having to gnaw and crunch the "earthenware fragments" of her cup in order to imbibe every last drop of moisture that had soaked into them. To the maliciously minded nations round about, Oholibah would become an "object of laughter and derision." All these things came upon her in 607 B.C.E. when Jerusalem was destroyed in fulfillment of Jehovah's judgment.—Ezek. 23:28-35.

CHRISTENDOM'S FAILURE

Manifestly Oholah and Oholibah, the northern and southern Israelite kingdoms, paid a terrible price for failing to trust in God and proving unfaithful to their covenant relationship with him. This should serve as a warning example to Christendom and all her adherents. Why? Because, like Oholah and Oholibah, Christendom claims to be in a covenant relationship with God. But does Christendom really trust in God? Has she not, rather, allied herself with the political systems of this world and does she not trust in military might for protection? Surely! Hence Christendom is guilty of spiritual prostitution. God's Word declares: "Adulteresses, do you not know that the friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever, therefore, wants to be a friend of the world is constituting himself an enemy of God." (Jas. 4:4) There is a tremendous record of guilt against Christendom. It is a record that parallels the bad records of Oholah and Oholibah, concerning whom the following indictment was made:

"They have committed adultery and there is blood on their hands, and with their dungy idols they have committed adultery. And, besides that, their sons whom they had borne

to me they made pass through the fire to them as food. What is more, this is what they have done to me: They have defiled my sanctuary in that day, and my sabbaths they have profaned. And when they had slaughtered their sons to their dungy idols they even proceeded to come into my sanctuary on that day to profane it, and, look! that is what they have done in the midst of my house."—Ezek. 23:37-39.

The spiritual adultery of which Christendom has made herself guilty cannot be denied. Her perpetual friendliness with politicians, military forces and big business profiteers is a public scandal. The religious sects of Christendom have committed spiritual adultery also with "dungy idols." Instead of pointing mankind to God's kingdom as the only hope for earth's inhabitants, Christendom today idolizes the United Nations as man's best and only hope for peace. Christendom has sacrificed her sons and daughters to the god of war. Her hands are stained with blood. She has shed blood in religious crusades, in wars between Catholics and Protestants, in inquisitions and in two horrible world wars in this century, during which Catholics fought Catholics and Protestants fought Protestants. Though having blood-drenched hands, Christendom's adherents enter what they call God's sanctuary on their so-called "sabbath day."

The description of Oholah's and Oholibah's acting like professional harlots also fits Christendom. This description reads:

"When they began to send to the men coming from far away, to whom there was sent a messenger, then, look! they came, for whom you had washed yourself, painted your eyes and decked yourself with ornaments. And you sat down upon a glorious couch, with a table set in order before it, and my incense and my oil you put upon it. And the sound of a crowd at ease was in her, and to the men out of the mass of mankind there were drunkards being brought in . . . and they proceeded to put bracelets on the hands of the women and beautiful crowns upon their heads."—Ezek. 23:40-42.

Like a professional harlot, Christendom has tried to make herself as attractive as possible to the world, in fact, even to the most debased persons, like 'drunkards from the wilderness.' Her sects have made religion easy for such worldlings. They can join her as church members and at the same time continue to be a part of this selfish, idolatrous, bloodstained world. As payment for whatever religious favors that bring them sensual pleasure, they glorify Christendom. As it were, to beautify her blood-reddened hands they put bracelets on her wrists, and set crowns upon the heads of her sects, giving the clergy religious headship over them.

The record of Christendom being like that of ancient Oholah and Oholibah, she cannot escape calamity. Just as the former lovers of Oholah and Oholibah brought them to ruin, Christendom will likewise suffer destruction at the hands of her former lovers. Jehovah God will see to that. This is confirmed in the last book of the Bible, where the world empire of false religion, "Babylon the Great," is portrayed as a prostitute. (Rev. 17:3-6) Regarding what former political lovers will do to "Babylon the Great," Revelation 17:16 states: "These will hate the harlot and will make her devastated and naked, and will eat up her fleshy parts and will completely burn her with fire."

If you desire to escape suffering with "Babylon the Great," trust in Jehovah God and render him exclusive devotion. You cannot do this by remaining in any of the religious organizations of Christendom, which form a dominant part of "Babylon the Great." God's Word commands: "Get out of her, my people, if you do not want to share with her in her sins, and if you do not want to receive part of her plagues." (Rev. 18:4) After separating yourself from her, associate with those who truly trust in God and remain faithful to him.

"DIVINE VICTORY" INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY

DIvine Victory" is the theme for the International Assembly of Jehovah's Witnesses for 1973. In view of the time in which we live, so close to the "great tribulation," the theme "Divine Victory" is stirring indeed! The assembly holds promise of being an outstanding spiritual banquet. Will you be in attendance?

If you are interested in divine victory and the blessings it can mean for you, we encourage you to make plans now to attend every session of the assembly. This will doubtless mean that you will have to arrange your vacation period soon.

In most cases the assemblies are five days long. The daily programs at all the assemblies will begin at 10 a.m. and continue for three hours. Starting at 1 p.m. there will be a two-hour intermission for refreshments or cafeteria lunch. The last session of each day will begin at 3 p.m. and run until 5:30 p.m. With perhaps few exceptions in the case of unforeseen circumstances, no night sessions will be held.

Assembly delegates will therefore be able to get home early for a good night's rest and be ready for the next morning's session. No one will have to worry about traveling at night in large cities, especially in areas where night travel is not advisable. There will be

time in the evening to review assembly highlights and to fellowship with others where you have your accommodations. While no special meetings for field service will be held at the assembly cities during the assembly dates, many delegates may wish to use part of the early evening to distribute handbills inviting the public to attend the assembly. Others may want to do so in the morning, on their way to the convention site.

So that you can select an assembly convenient for you, we are setting forth here the dates and places for the "Divine Victory" International Assembly of Jehovah's Witnesses. Wherever a full assembly program will be presented in a language other than that spoken locally, this is indicated. Doubtless you will want to attend an assembly where you understand the language and thus can get the full benefit from the program. Because of the international aspect of the conventions, however, many witnesses of Jehovah will be traveling to other countries. Also, other readers of *The Watchtower* may be vacationing in some of these countries and may find it of great interest to attend an assembly in another land. For their benefit, in non-English-speaking countries, there will be some sessions from 8 to 9:30 a.m. in English.

UNITED STATES

- June 20-24: Detroit, Mich., Tiger Stadium.
June 27-July 1: Chicago, Ill., White Sox Ball Park.
Hallandale, Fla., Gulfstream Racetrack. Hammond, Ind., Hammond Civic Center (Spanish only). Inglewood, Calif., The Forum (Spanish only). Jersey City, N.J., Roosevelt Stadium (Spanish only). Los Angeles, Calif., Dodger Stadium. Miami, Fla., Dinner Key Auditorium (Spanish only).
July 4-8: Albuquerque, N. Mex., New Mexico State Fair Grandstand (Spanish only). Houston, Tex., Astrodome. New York, N.Y., Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses (French only). Pittsburgh, Pa., Three Rivers Stadium.
July 6-10: New York, N.Y., Yankee Stadium.
July 11-15: Kansas City, Mo., Royals Stadium. Oakland, Calif., Oakland-Alameda County Stadium.
July 18-22: Los Angeles, Calif., Dodger Stadium. Philadelphia, Pa., Veterans Stadium.
July 25-29: Atlanta, Ga., Atlanta Stadium. Houston, Tex., Sam Houston Coliseum (Spanish only).
October 1-5: Honolulu, Hawaii, Honolulu International Center.

CANADA

- July 4-8: Vancouver, B.C., Empire Stadium. Winnipeg, Man., Winnipeg Stadium.
July 11-15: Halifax, N.S., Halifax Forum.
July 25-29: Montreal, Que., Parc Jarry Park (English and French). Toronto, Ont., Woodbine Race Track (English, Italian and Greek).

EUROPE

- July 11-15: Dublin, Ireland, Main Hall and Annex. Helsinki, Finland, Olympic Stadium, Messuhalli (Finnish and Swedish).
July 18-22: Copenhagen, Denmark, Copenhagen Sports Park (Danish and Norwegian).

- July 25-29: Düsseldorf, Germany, Sportstadion (German, English and Italian). Nicosia, Cyprus (Greek). August 1-5: Edinburgh, Scotland, Murrayfield. London, England, Twickenham. Munich, Germany, Olympic Stadium (German and Greek). Paris, France, Stade de Colombes.
August 8-12: Brussels, Belgium, Palais du Centenaire-Heyssel (French, Flemish, Portuguese and Spanish). Rome, Italy, Flaminio Stadium. Utrecht, Netherlands, Jaarbeurs Auditorium, Jaarbeursplein.

ASIA

- July 25-29: Osaka, Japan, Festival Plaza of Expo '70. August 1-5: Seoul, Korea, Soccer Field, Kyunghee University.
August 6-8: Taipei, Taiwan.
August 8-12: Hong Kong.
August 13-15: Manila, Philippines.

MIDDLE AND SOUTH AMERICA

- September 12-16: San Juan, Puerto Rico, Hiram Bithorn Stadium (Spanish and English).
October 31-November 4: Mexico City, Mexico, Arena Mexico.
November 7-11: Guatemala, Guatemala.
December 19-23: Managua, Nicaragua(?). San José, Costa Rica (tentative).
December 26-30: São Paulo, Brazil, Estadio Municipal do Pacaembu. Panama, Panama. Caracas, Venezuela.
January 2-6, 1974: Asunción, Paraguay. Montevideo, Uruguay, Palacio Pefaro.
January 9-13, 1974: Buenos Aires, Argentina, Concha de Los Andes, Lomas de Zamora. Córdoba, Argentina, Festirama, Rio Ceballos.
January 16-20, 1974: La Paz, Bolivia, Coliseo Cerrado. Santiago, Chile (tentative).
January 23-27, 1974: Bogotá, Colombia, El Campín.

QUITO, ECUADOR, Auditorium. **LIMA, PERU**, La Feria Internacional del Pacífico.

SOUTH PACIFIC

December 5-9: Nandi, Fiji, Utulei Convention Grounds.
December 12-16: Christchurch, New Zealand, Lancaster Park.
December 17-21: Melbourne, Australia.

AFRICA

December 5-9: Monrovia, Liberia, Providence Island.
Dakar, Senegal, La Maison de Jeunes.
December 12-16: Abidjan, Ivory Coast, Boxing Club.
Freetown, Sierra Leone, Brookfield Stadium.
December 19-23: Cotonou, Dahomey, Accra, Ghana.
December 26-30: Nairobi, Kenya, Nairobi City Stadium.
Lagos, Nigeria (tentative).

A Letter From Nicaragua

SHORTLY after the earthquake that devastated Managua late in December, the following letter was received from Brother Witherspoon, the Watch Tower Society's branch overseer there. Many readers of *The Watchtower* are deeply concerned about the welfare of their Christian brothers in Managua, and they will find this report, dated December 25, to be of great interest. It was addressed to N. H. Knorr, president of the Watch Tower Society:

"I was able to hear you clearly in our telephone conversation this morning. Thank you, Brother Knorr, for your love and concern for us, and we thank Jehovah for the formation of such an organization of love that he has raised up in this critical period of time. The assistance that we received after the earthquake was swift.

"The first and most severe shock hit Managua about 12:40 in the early part of the new day of December 23. All the missionaries were in bed. When it stopped, we quickly went to the center of the street outside. Two more shocks struck in a short period of time afterward. Houses were falling all around us. We did not receive even so much as a cut, however. The city was blanketed in a thick cover of dust. After it cleared to allow a three-quarter moon to shine through, we obtained our first glimpse of the neighborhood. We did not know then that the devastation was the same all over Managua.

"Our neighbors were stunned and silent. Then, after a short period of time, cries of despair and wailing broke out. One half block away twelve people had been buried alive in one *colonia*. Rescue work was difficult due to a lack of tools. In surrounding blocks the story was the same: Three buried here, one there, twenty more three blocks over. Death surrounded us. A red glow over the downtown section informed us that fire was also following in the wake of the earthquake. As a chilly dawn broke over a devastated city we began to see the horror that had been produced.

"Our concern was for our Christian brothers, and their concern was for us too. The missionaries that were overseers set off to see about the brothers. I stayed at the branch waiting for reports and to see what would be needed. Anxious moments seemed like hours as slowly the reports came in. But, almost unbelievably, no deaths of brothers were reported. However, some of their parents or relatives did lose their

lives, and one person who was to be baptized at our district assembly this week lost four of her children.

"In case after case the story of the brothers was the same. The house just collapsed on top of them and they had to dig out as best they could. Many were cut and bruised, but so far no one has reported having so much as a bone broken. What was uppermost in the minds of these brothers?

"Well, after inquiring first of all about us and the other brothers, they would ask in dismay how this would affect the forthcoming district assembly, fearing that it would be canceled—this to them was the greatest tragedy, missing the assembly. No thoughts about the loss of their homes or material possessions. Believe me, Brother Knorr, that leaves a large lump in one's throat.

"At ten o'clock in the evening of this same day of the earthquake, less than twenty-two hours afterward, the first material help arrived from the brothers in Honduras. This was Saturday evening. All of us spent the night in the street; in fact, everyone in Managua did. The shocks continued all night, some heavy, some light, but nothing to compare with the length or force of the first one on Saturday morning. We passed a very restless night. At 7 a.m. on Sunday, Brother Shepp (branch overseer) arrived from Costa Rica with more assistance. He also wanted to know what was needed so he could return immediately and set up arrangements for additional help. After we decided on the basic needs we took a two-and-a-half-hour tour of the city. We were shocked at what we saw. Managua has been destroyed! The Society's branch office, in my opinion, was the least damaged building in the entire city.

"Before noon on Sunday more supplies arrived from El Salvador. They were also anxious to know what was needed, so a list was provided. The borders were being kept open for emergency relief vehicles to enter. No visas are required, so the brothers are able to make quick round trips. Yesterday, Sunday morning, we had the relief arrangements set up in the branch Kingdom Hall. The brothers were notified and started to arrive. As yesterday drew to a close we had been able to provide 578 brothers with enough food for two days. We were also able to provide sufficient water for this same amount by having it brought in by truck from areas outside Managua. Medical supplies are

not needed. We have enough or will be able to obtain them.

"About 80 percent of the brothers have lost their homes. Nine Kingdom Halls have been nearly or totally destroyed. Managua is being evacuated. Work is under way to raze the entire downtown area, taking a strip fifteen blocks wide. Many bodies are still being discovered in this section. The stench is becoming quite strong. Due to contamination dangers, all are encouraged to avoid this area. The general hospital was so badly damaged that the patients were removed to the grounds outside. Earthquake victims were thus unable to be attended there and many were just turned away. We understand that tent units are now being set up outside the hospital to give more attention. The government has been under a heavy strain to provide for such an enormous undertaking.

"We will just have to wait to see what will be the most practical course to follow. But the brothers are calm and wait for instructions before acting.

"We have some funds on hand, but most of our money is in the bank, and the banks are not open. It may be days before they do so. But if we do need financial assistance that we cannot obtain here to aid the brothers, and it appears that this will be the case, then I will send word to Brother Allinger (branch over-

seer) in Honduras and to Brother Shepp in Costa Rica to buy supplies for us with their monies, send them to us and charge this to our branch until such time as our funds are released and/or we can arrange the situation in a more satisfactory way. Or if we can buy what is needed here, then perhaps they could send us just the money. But as it is too early to know just what will develop, we will wait to see and do the best we can under the prevailing circumstances.

"We are encouraging all to keep active in the preaching work, to remain strong spiritually and to trust in Jehovah. As for the material assistance they are receiving, well, they can hardly hold back the tears. They appreciate so much the love and concern of the brothers in other parts of the world."

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

March 4: Are You Living for What You Can Get Out of Life Now? Page 69. Songs to Be Used: 71, 55.

March 11: Living with Life in God's New Order in View. Page 75. Songs to Be Used: 17, 69.