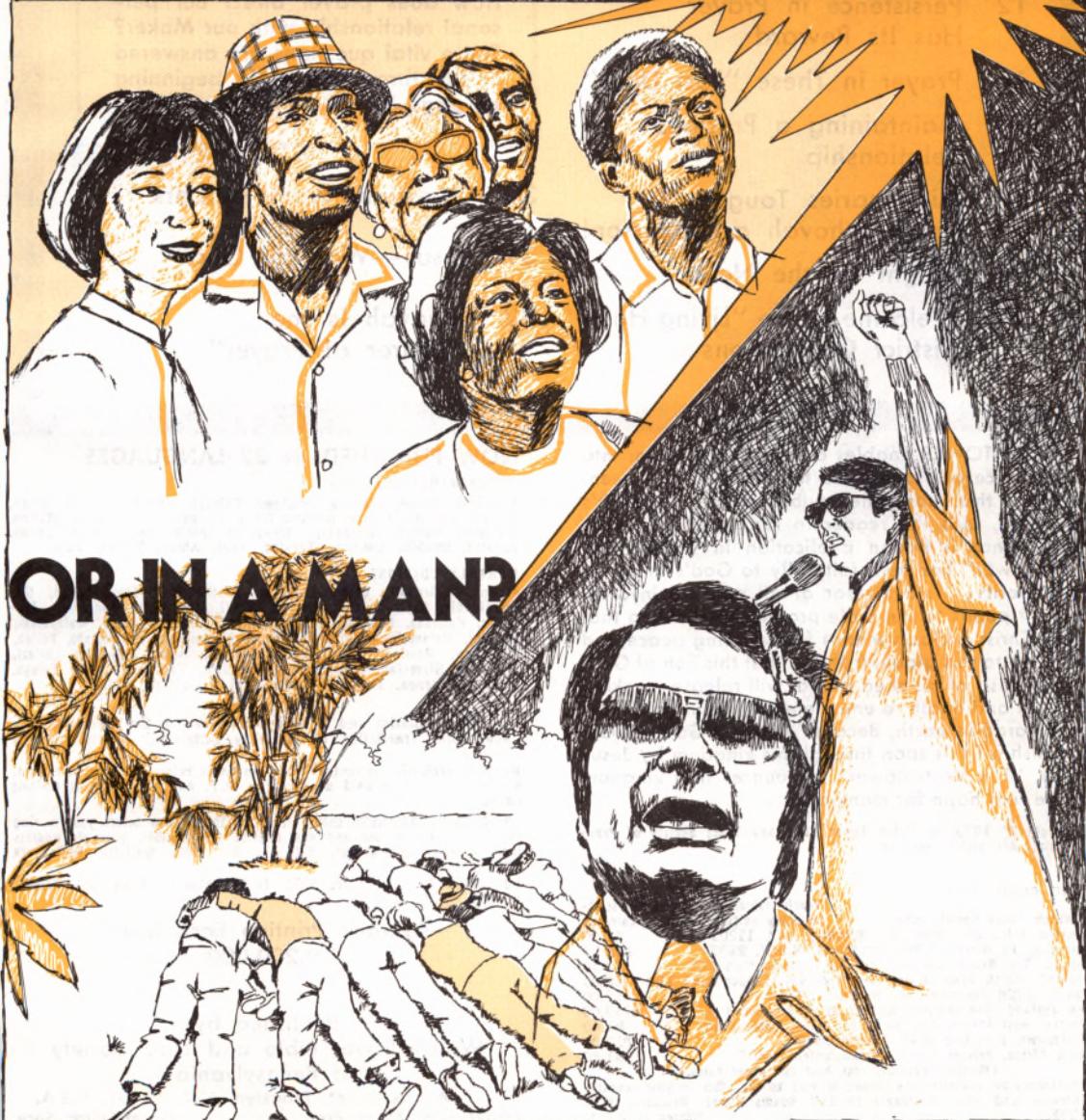


MAY 15, 1979

THE WATCHTOWER

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom

IS YOUR TRUST IN GOD...



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A WATCHTOWER enables a person to look far into the distance and announce to others what is seen. Likewise, this magazine, published by Jehovah's Witnesses, aids the reader to see what the future holds. Since it began publication in 1879, "The Watchtower" has held faithfully to God's Word as its authority. It stays clear of all political involvement. It points to the Bible prophecies showing that Jesus Christ is God's means for restoring peace and harmony to this globe. It shows that this Son of God, on the basis of his shed blood, will release mankind from sin and death to enjoy eternal life in happiness on a paradise earth. Because Jehovah God will accomplish all this soon through his kingdom by Jesus Christ, "The Watchtower" announces that kingdom as the real hope for mankind.

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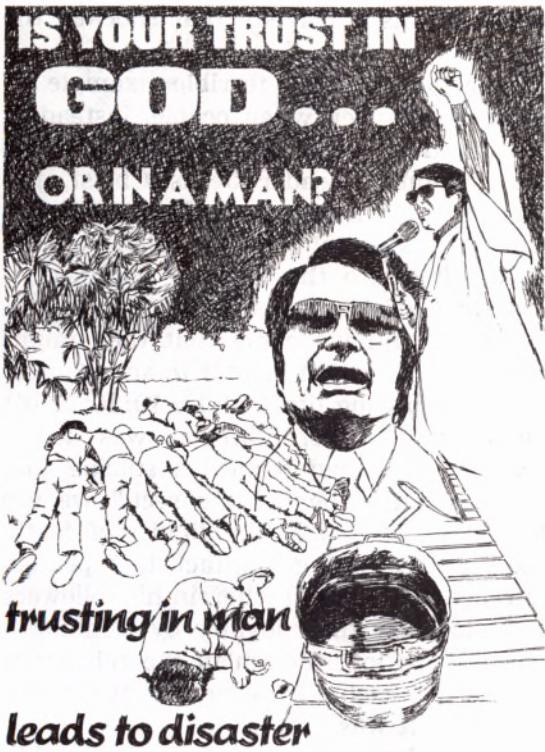
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WITHOUT doubt the most shocking news to make the newspaper headlines in 1978 was the horrible tragedy in Jonestown, Guyana. It was likened to the 960 Jewish zealots at Masada who preferred death to surrendering and being in slavery to the Romans; also, to the 1,000 Japanese civilians who hurled themselves from a cliff in Saipan as the American troops took the island. The Guyana tragedy was featured day after day in newspapers world wide. First, the death toll was 400, then 500, then as high as 780 and next: "GUYANA TOLL IS RAISED TO AT LEAST 900 BY U.S., WITH 260 CHILDREN AMONG VICTIMS AT COLONY." (New York Times, November 26, 1978) Finally, the number rose to 913.

This tragedy is directly related to the question "Is your trust in God or in a man?" Perhaps you will make the rejoinder: 'Of course, it is wiser to put my

trust in God rather than in a man.' And so it is, because the Bible warns: "Don't put your trust in human leaders; no human being can save you." (Ps. 146:3, *Today's English Version*) God can save you, for "the name of Jehovah is a strong tower. Into it the righteous runs and is given protection." (Prov. 18:10) However, to put one's trust in God takes more than mere words. It takes actions, since "faith without works is dead." One who trusts God will live by Bible principles, loving what God loves and hating what God hates.—Jas. 2:26; Heb. 1:9.

In keeping with the psalmist's counsel not to put our trust in human leaders are Jesus' words: "You must not call anyone here on earth 'Father,' because you have only the one Father in heaven. Nor should you be called 'Leader,' because your one and only leader is the Messiah."—Matt. 23:9, 10, TEV.

However, throughout the 19 centuries since Jesus first uttered those words, persons claiming to be his followers have done that very thing. Not only have they titled many men "father" or "leader," but they have also become followers of idolized men, such as Constantine the Great, Charlemagne, Napoleon and Hitler. Many thousands, yes, many millions, have put their trust in a man, even being willing to follow him to the point of death. Regarding the influence that Hitler had, one who lived in Germany at the time recently wrote: "Although the end of the war was already in sight, many Germans refused to believe that Hitler could let them down and believed his promises of superweapons (Wunderwaffen), which would bring ultimate victory." Those who put their trust in such men came to grief, and often also to death. They failed to put their trust in God.

What accounts for the hold that certain men have had on others? It is what today is termed "charisma," and which is

defined as "a personal magic of leadership arousing special popular loyalty or enthusiasm for a statesman or military commander." A striking example of this was furnished by Napoleon. After escaping from the island of Elba with a contingent of about 1,000 men, in short order he had thousands more in his army. When they reached Grenoble and his army was faced by an army of 6,000, Napoleon ordered his own army to halt while he rode toward the opposing army. As he got nearer he dismounted and walked up to this solid mass of men. Their commander ordered them to fire. The men lifted their guns in position, but in awe of the leader before them not one fired the shot that could have put an end to Napoleon's return to power in France. Well could Napoleon once state: "An extraordinary power of influencing and commanding men has been given to Alexander, Charlemagne and myself. But with us the presence has been necessary." He then contrasted their power with that of Jesus Christ who was able to exert his power although not being present.

TRAGEDY AT JONESTOWN

A man very much in the news late in 1978 who had such claimed charisma was James Warren Jones. A retired Roman Catholic priest who served with Jones on the San Francisco Human Rights Commission said: "He had a strange power over people, and that kind of power tends to go to the head." Thousands flocked to him as he preached at the People's Temple in San Francisco and hundreds followed him to the commune that he established in Guyana and that he called "Jonestown." Not only did they follow him to that place but in the end many committed suicide at his behest. With the encouragement of his armed guards, he himself then committed suicide after he had gotten some 909 others to do the

same. It was a tragedy that shocked the world.

What a striking, terrible example of what can happen when people, instead of putting their trust in God and following his appointed Leader Jesus Christ, put their trust in a human leader, an unprincipled demagogue! How the following contrasts illustrate the folly of doing so!

Jesus Christ and his message were life-oriented: "I have come that they might have life and might have it in abundance," yes, "everlasting life." (John 10:10; 3:16) "Reverend" Jones, however, was death-oriented. He "had formed a suicide pact with each member of the sect," we are told. Also, he hailed "the dignity of death, the beauty of dying." In fact, he repeatedly rehearsed a ritual wherein his followers were to show their loyalty by drinking a poisoned potion, though in the rehearsals it was not such. However, for the tragic last time, it was.

We further read that Jesus loved children. While his disciples felt that Jesus should not be troubled with children, he thought otherwise, for we read that God's Son said: "Let the young children come to me; do not try to stop them." Then Jesus "took the children into his arms and began blessing them, laying his hands upon them." (Mark 10:13-16) On the other hand, Jones punished children by putting them into a darkened room and by having electrodes fastened to them by which they received electric shocks. Or he would have them lowered into a well of water and that repeatedly, if they did not scream loud enough. At the tragic end, some 200 children were forced to drink the poisoned liquid, or had it squirted down their throats with hypodermics.

Jesus preached peace and nonviolence, warning that "all those who take the sword will perish by the sword." (Matt. 26:52) However, "Reverend" Jones had henchmen who not only resorted to vio-

lence but killed a United States congressman and three newspapermen whom he feared would take back damaging reports regarding his commune. More than that, when calling all his people together for suicide, he had armed henchmen threaten those who were reluctant to drink the poisoned potion.

Jesus Christ brought freedom and relief from burdens. Well could he say: "Come to me, all you who are toiling and loaded down, and I will refresh you. Take my yoke upon you and become my disciples, for I am mild-tempered and lowly in heart, and you will find refreshment for your souls. For my yoke is kindly and my load is light." (Matt. 11:28-30) Also, "if you remain in my word, you are really my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (John 8:31, 32) In Guyana, Jones made his Jonestown a concentration camp, holding all his people prisoner by taking away their passports. He had them slaving from early to late in the hot tropical sun. Their food gradually deteriorated to where they were getting only rice and gravy three times a day. "This is hell," exclaimed one of the sect who wanted to flee.

Of Jesus, we are told: "Though he was rich he became poor for your sakes, that you might become rich through his poverty." (2 Cor. 8:9) But Jones was so money hungry that he begged, cajoled and forced his followers to turn over their wealth, even their social-security checks, so that at his death he was worth anywhere from 10 to 15 million dollars.

Christ Jesus the perfect Son of God was sinless. Well could he ask his opposers: "Who of you convicts me of sin?" (John 8:46) He was "loyal, guileless, undefiled." (Heb. 7:26) "He committed no sin." (1 Pet. 2:22) It would be difficult to imagine a greater contrast to Jesus than this clergyman Jones. According to reports, Jones "required every woman who was close to

him to have sex with him regularly," and he had a mistress as well as a wife. Not content with that it is also reported that he had a number of male lovers.

Jesus Christ accepted the Bible as God's Word, quoted it as his authority and said of it: "Your word is truth." (Matt. 19:4-6; John 17:17) Jones, far from accepting the Bible, used his sermons to rant against the Bible. Once he even threw a copy of the Bible on the floor, complaining: "Too many people are looking at this instead of me."

Many more contrasts could be made between the Leader sent by God and the man Jones, the human self-styled messiah, but one more should suffice. At no time did Jesus Christ claim to be the "Alpha and the Omega," God the Creator of the universe. His claim solely was: "I am God's Son." (John 10:36; Rev. 1:8) What about Jones? As one of his associates told it: "Jim stopped calling himself the reincarnation of Jesus and started calling himself God. He said he was the actual God who made the heavens and earth." Also, at his Guyana commune he would keep shouting out: "I am the Alpha and the Omega!"

"AN APPALLING DEMONSTRATION"

There is no question that the Jonestown tragedy was a case of the blind leading the blind and both falling into a pit. (Matt. 15:14) The entire episode underscores the wisdom of Jesus' command not to exalt men. No doubt many of those who followed Jones had at one time belonged to the various denominations of Christendom. But they were allured by this self-proclaimed messiah who had a vision of a socialist paradise. Well has this horrible episode been described as "an appalling demonstration of the way in which a charismatic leader can bend the minds of his followers with a devilish blend of professed altruism and psychological tyranny."

But still one wonders about the naïve

people who were taken in by Jones. It is said that 80 percent of them were blacks, mostly in poorer circumstances. Some, both whites and blacks, who were altruistically motivated, joined because of the stress he put on racial equality and because of various humanitarian projects that he at first sponsored. Yet one wonders about their devotion to righteous principles. By tolerating and cooperating with all the unclean things Jones himself did and caused to be done, they certainly showed that their trust was not in God, nor were they concerned about following Jesus Christ.

How could they give such blind devotion and loyalty to a man who "flaunted his power over people and forced them to fulfill his consuming needs for financial, egotistical and sexual gratification"?

Clearly, none who put their trust in the God of the Bible could have been taken in by such an extremely wicked man who selfishly, wantonly, exploited his power to influence others, one who so cruelly, grossly and ruthlessly betrayed naive trust. True Christians are safeguarded from the dire consequences of putting trust in a mere man. God's Word, the Bible, not only points them to the true religion, but clearly identifies the kinds of religion that are to be avoided, the sectarianism that is usually based on the exaltation of some human leader or man-made cult.

The apostle Paul pointed to depraved persons having the brand marks of "Revend" Jones when he wrote: "What! Do

you not know that unrighteous persons will not inherit God's kingdom? Do not be misled. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men kept for unnatural purposes, nor men who lie with men, nor thieves, nor greedy persons, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit God's kingdom." (1 Cor. 6:9, 10) The record shows that the Jonestown "leader" was many of these things. And many people were misled.

In the case of this religious demagogue—and of other cultists like him—"the works of the flesh are manifest, and they are fornication, uncleanness, loose conduct, idolatry, practice of spiritism, enmities, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, contentions, divisions, sects, envies, drunken bouts, revelries, and things like these." So writes the apostle Paul as a "forewarning" concerning counterfeit Christians, many of whom have appeared in recent years, and again he adds: "Those who practice such things will not inherit God's kingdom." On the other hand, says Paul, those who do inherit the



trusting in God leads to everlasting life

Kingdom and its blessings are the ones that cultivate "the fruitage of the spirit . . . love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, mildness, self-control."—Gal. 5:19-23.

This fruitage is not to be found in the emotional hysteria of any man-worshiping cultist camp. Rather, it is found among those who "say to Jehovah: 'You are my refuge and my stronghold, my God, in whom I will trust.'"—Ps. 91:2.

A NATION THAT TRUSTS IN GOD

"IN GOD WE TRUST." That is an oft-repeated slogan. But whose sentiments do these words express? Do you know of any nation that actually trusts in God?

The United States of America claims to, printing these words on its billions of coins and bills of all denominations. Yet, along with other nations of the world, where is its trust actually placed? Is it not in military might and human schemes, rather than in God and his promises? Is there any nation that truly trusts in what God says he will do?

A UNIQUE, WORLDWIDE NATION

The Bible speaks of such a nation. "Open the gates, you men, that *the righteous nation that is keeping faithful conduct* may enter," God's prophet Isaiah wrote. (Isa. 26:2-4) The people who make up this nation, or join themselves to it, are not of any one racial stock or earthly nationality. They come from all nations of the world, and are distinguished by their primary allegiance to God and his laws.—Acts 5:29.

During recent months, from June 1978 to the early part of 1979, over 290 conventions sponsored by this unique, worldwide nation were held in 86 countries. As you can observe from the accompanying chart, more than 3,100,000 persons were in attendance at these "Victorious Faith" Conventions. That is a greater number of persons than the individual populations of some 55 countries that belong to the United Nations.

Representatives of this unique "nation" are found in remote, far-flung parts of the earth. Some of the faraway islands, where they met in convention, include Mauritius, where 690 attended; Cyprus, where 1,057 were present; and Madagascar, where 1,790 enjoyed the program. On the other hand, many of the con-

"VICTORIOUS FAITH" CONVENTIONS

COUNTRIES	PEAK ATTENDANCES
United States	785,051
Mexico	239,101
Nigeria	217,244
Brazil	193,749
Zambia	172,607
Canada	140,590
Italy	111,320
British Isles	111,099
Germany	108,901
Philippines	107,449
France	83,419
Japan	78,136
South Africa	68,353
Ghana	61,595
Spain	54,283
Portugal	37,567
Australia	36,853
Netherlands	35,361
Peru	34,758
Korea	33,181
Puerto Rico	32,267
Rhodesia	30,686
Venezuela	30,031
Greece	28,417
Sweden	25,338
Chile	23,839
Belgium	23,567
Colombia	20,438
58 Other Countries	258,667
	3,183,867

ventions were tremendous in size. In January of this year, 81,938 assembled in São Paulo, Brazil; 80,008 met in Montreal, Canada's Olympic Stadium in July; and that same month, at two separate conventions in Dodger Stadium in Los Angeles, a total of 91,922 attended.

There has indeed been a marvelous increase in the numbers of people who are putting their trust in God.

In foretelling this, Jehovah had his prophet Isaiah write long ago: "The little one himself will become a thousand, and the small one a *mighty nation*. I myself, Jehovah, shall speed it up in its own time." —Isa. 60:22.

But can these people who assembled at the "Victorious Faith" Conventions be identified with the "mighty nation" referred to here? Are they really part of that "*righteous nation that is keeping faithful conduct*"?

THEIR CONDUCT A MATTER OF NOTE

The worldwide series of "Victorious Faith" Conventions concluded in Central and South America early this year. The kind of conduct one would expect of people who trust in God was noted at these gatherings. In Nicaragua, where armed violence has been ravaging the country, the newspaper *Novedades* observed editorially on January 6, 1979:

"Light, when preceded by darkness, shines brighter; hence, it has been a real comfort to see a multitude of Jehovah's Witnesses . . . Jehovah's Witnesses, in their desire to apply the essence of Christianity as expressed in James' words that 'faith without works is dead,' concern themselves with bringing out faith from within, making it spring forth in the streets, in the schools, everywhere, so that Christianity may be a practical thing and not a mere ritual. They want to follow the example of the Man who performed healings on the Sabbath, putting ritual aside when confronted with the compelling need to do good, to work in behalf of his neighbor."

A total of 7,083 attended the convention at General Somoza García Stadium in Managua, and this is more than double the number of Witnesses in all Nicaragua! In recent months, opposition forces have been trying to overthrow Somoza's government, and the fighting has often been intense. In fact, soon after the end of the convention, fighting broke out right in front of

the stadium. There were many Witnesses still there, but none were hurt.

An experience illustrates the position taken by supporters of the "nation" that trusts in God, as well as the consequences. Sometime prior to the convention two men, posing as members of the opposition forces, approached a family of Witnesses. They wanted to use the Witnesses' home for making bombs, since, they said, it was well suited for this. It was explained that Jehovah's Witnesses support God's government, and, hence, take no sides in the political affairs of the world. So the Witnesses would not permit their home to be used for making bombs. The men then identified themselves as representatives of Somoza's government—as spies who were checking up on the family—and told them that it was a good thing they said what they did.

The week after the Nicaragua convention, 8,549 assembled in neighboring Costa Rica. Many visitors came. The *San José News* reported:

"Costa Rica was under 'invasion' this week, but not by hostile Nicaraguan soldiers. Instead, the invading force was comprised of hundreds of Jehovah's Witnesses . . .

"Jehovah's Witnesses view Christianity as a way of life and hold the Bible to be the complete word of God. They believe that God's kingdom, with Christ as King, is an actual government."

Yet, do Jehovah's Witnesses really behave as you would expect subjects of God's government to behave? The administrator of the Morumbi Stadium in São Paulo, Brazil, where over 80,000 assembled, remarked: "Look at the cleanliness, even outside the stadium. They have discipline, without needing a single policeman, and above all, they are obedient. We asked them not to step on the grass of the field, nor inside the chalk marks, and nobody disobeyed."

In Valencia, Venezuela, where over 30,000 persons attended the two conventions in the Monumental Bull Ring, the newspaper *El Carabobeño* carried the headline:

The Convention of Jehovah's Witnesses A Beautiful Example of Living Together Organization and Cooperation

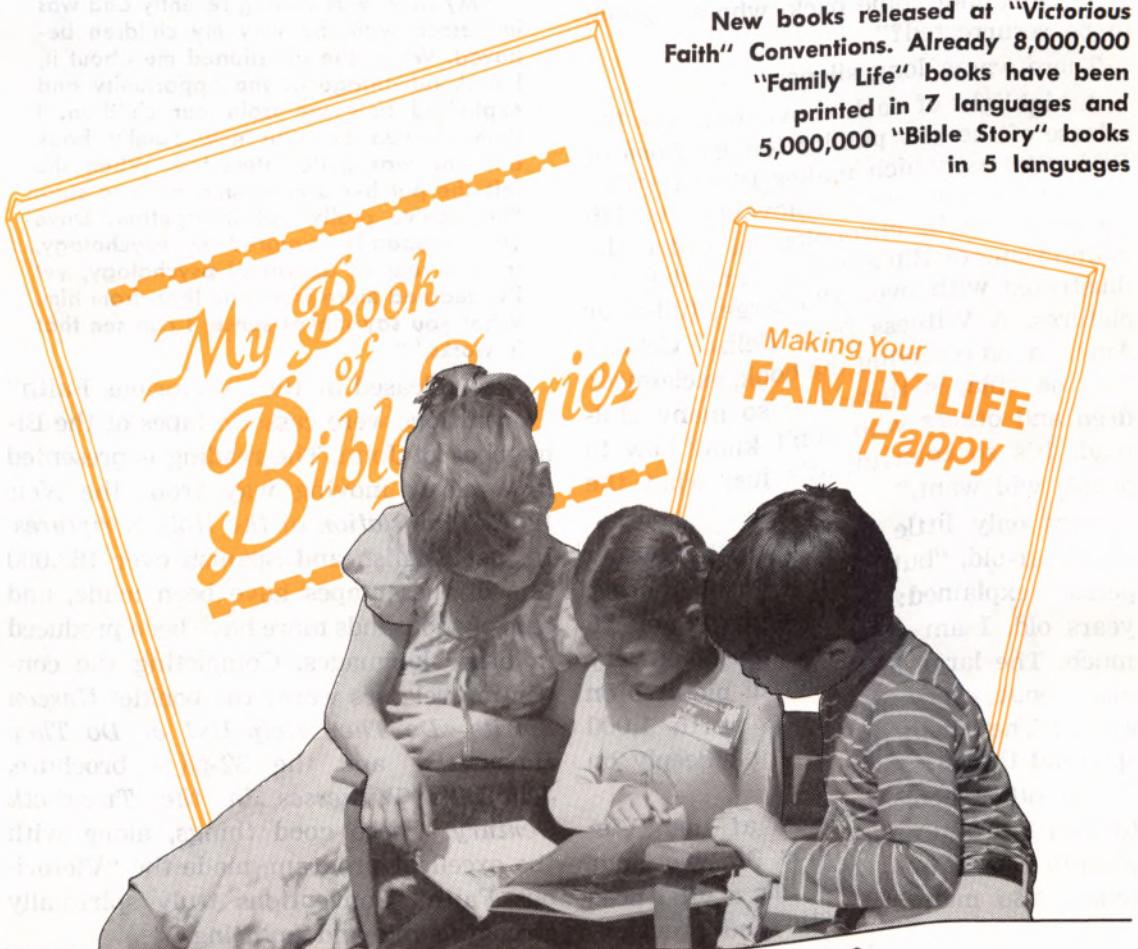
"We are not exaggerating when we state that it is only during the days of the assembly that the Bull Ring remains extremely clean, with its rest rooms in perfect order, its light and sound equipment the way we would like to have it when a bull fight or any other event is held, its walls clean, its plants alive in spite of more than 15,000 persons gathering there daily, in-

cluding hundreds of children and young people. . . . It is a living example that with the cooperation and effort of all, we can build a better world."

Think about that for a moment: A whole world of people living and working together in unity and peace! That will be realized when those associated with "*the righteous nation that is keeping faithful conduct*" are the only ones remaining on earth.

From the evidence at hand, can you identify that "nation" today? For one thing, its members, and those who join themselves to it, love God's Word and are very familiar with it.

New books released at "Victorious Faith" Conventions. Already 8,000,000 "Family Life" books have been printed in 7 languages and 5,000,000 "Bible Story" books in 5 languages



EMPHASIS ON GOD'S WORD

An experience related at the Colombia convention illustrates how Witness children reflect the fine instruction they receive from the Bible. In the town of Turbaco, Colombia, religion classes are conducted in school. However, after the following exchange with six-year-old Tomas, the teacher no longer attempted to discuss with him church doctrines, which Tomas had learned were not based on the Bible.

Tomas asked: "Miss Teacher, do you believe in the resurrection?"

"Yes, Tomas, I do."

"Well, if the good people go to heaven and stay there, and the bad people go to hell and cannot come back, who are going to be resurrected?"

There was a long silence.

A highlight of each convention was the release of the new publication *My Book of Bible Stories*, which makes Bible instruction easier and more enjoyable. Its 116 stories cover in chronological order the main events of Bible history, and they are illustrated with over 125 large, full-color pictures. A Witness from Belize, Central America, on receiving the book, exclaimed: "In the villages there are so many children and others who don't know how to read. It's so colorful; it's just what the people will want."

"Not only little kids enjoy it," wrote a 16-year-old, "but big kids too." Another person explained: "Although I am 26 years old, I am enjoying this book very much. The large and colorful pictures on just about every page are worth 1,000 words! They help me to think deeply on spiritual things."

The other book released at the "Victorious Faith" Conventions, *Making Your Family Life Happy*, also fills a vital need today. "So many realistic and prevalent

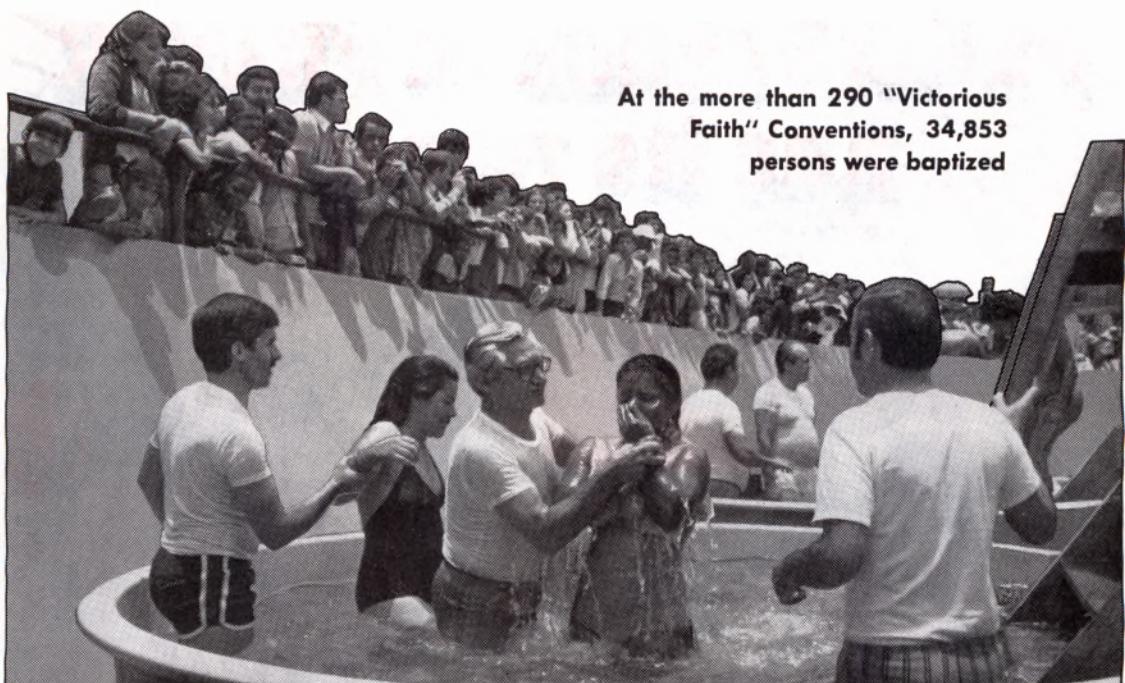
problems are dealt with, and in a sound, reasonable way," observes one reader. "As a wife, I can truthfully say that the chapter for husbands covered the feelings and needs of a woman beautifully. And the chapter for wives gave me some specific and thought-provoking things to examine seriously in my own attitudes."

What really gives force to this publication, making it practical and beneficial, is that it draws on the wisdom of God's Word, and presents this wisdom in thought-provoking, delightful words. (Eccl. 12:10) A Witness explains how the application of the information has helped to improve her family life, and then relates:

"My sister was visiting recently and was impressed with the way my children behaved. When she questioned me about it, I took advantage of the opportunity and explained how we train our children. I then showed her the new **Family** book and she was quite interested. When she left she put her arm around me and said: 'Sis, you've really got it together. Dave [her husband] majored in psychology, took a year of abnormal psychology, yet I've learned more from you than from him. What you say makes sense; I can see that it works.'"

Also released at the "Victorious Faith" Conventions were cassette tapes of the Bible book of John. The reading is presented in a clear, moving way from the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*. In just English and Spanish over 163,000 sets of these tapes have been made, and tens of thousands more have been produced in other languages. Completing the convention releases were: the booklet *Unseen Spirits—Do They Help Us? or Do They Harm Us?* and the 32-page brochure, *Jehovah's Witnesses in the Twentieth Century*. These good things, along with the excellent program, made the "Victorious Faith" Conventions truly spiritually strengthening and uplifting.

**At the more than 290 "Victorious
Faith" Conventions, 34,853
persons were baptized**



JOINING WITH "THE RIGHTEOUS NATION"

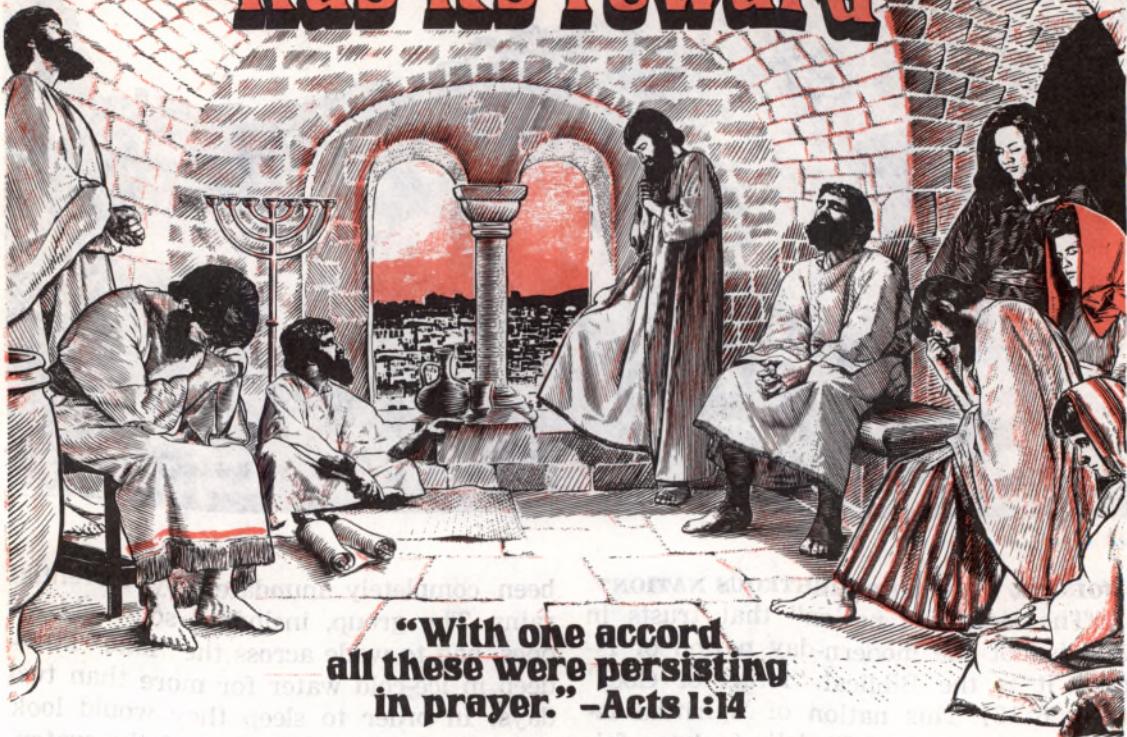
"The righteous nation" that trusts in God is not the modern-day nation of Israel; it is the Biblical "Israel of God." (Gal. 6:16) This nation of 'spiritual Israel' is composed of Christ's footstep followers who will reign with him in heaven. A remnant of this "nation" are still on earth. Tens of thousands of people are joining themselves with these anointed Witnesses, because they recognize them as part of God's "righteous nation." At the conventions, 34,853 persons symbolized their dedication to serve Jehovah God along with this "nation" by undergoing baptism.

The high importance that so many placed on being at the conventions was marvelous to see. The determination of 10 Witnesses from the cold, bleak salt flats on Bolivia's Altiplano, a 13,000-foot-high plain, was almost unbelievable. They had no way to cover the first 60 miles or so except on foot. However, the whole flat, covering thousands of square miles, had

been completely inundated by torrential rains. The group, including some elderly ones, had to wade across the "lake" knee-deep in ice-cold water for more than two days! In order to sleep they would look for a mound standing out of the water. But they still were exposed to the cold rains and wind all during the night. After crossing the "lake," a long, 18-hour train trip brought them to the convention in La Paz. What joy they felt to be with the 5,820 gathered for the spiritual feast!

That same joy was reflected by convention delegates everywhere, just as we would expect. For the Bible says: "Happy is the nation whose God is Jehovah, the people whom he has chosen as his inheritance." (Ps. 33:12) Happiness does not characterize nations of the world today. But we invite you to see that it truly exists among Jehovah's Witnesses. Next month begins their series of "Living Hope" District Conventions. Why not plan to attend one and examine for yourself?

PERSISTENCE in PRAYER has its reward



**"With one accord
all these were persisting
in prayer." -Acts 1:14**

TO PERSIST" or "persevere" in something means to pursue a certain course steadily and constantly until the goal is attained. These verbs include the thought of overcoming difficulties and opposition before success is achieved.

² Appropriately, at Acts 1:14, concerning the little band of Jesus' true followers, it says that "with one accord all these were persisting in prayer." They knew that Jesus had risen from the dead and they had just witnessed his ascension heavenward, but there was much that they did not understand. The promised holy spirit with power had not yet come upon them.

1. What does having persistence or perseverance in something mean?

2. For what reasons was it appropriate for Jesus' disciples to be "persisting in prayer"?

(Acts 1:8) They did not yet fully appreciate why God had permitted their beloved Leader to be impaled on that terrible torture stake. The men responsible for doing this were still in power and there was no sign of any change in their attitude. They had been persistent in their relentless opposition. So Jesus' followers, conscious of their need, persisted in prayer to the One in whom they had faith.

³ Beginning with the day of Pentecost, their prayers of faith were surely answered beyond their anticipations. They began to appreciate Jesus' final words to them before his ascension. Instead of their first

3. (a) When were their prayers answered, and how did this affect their priorities? (b) What extensive witness was given in those early days?

priority centering around a date, as implied in their question "Lord, are you restoring the kingdom to Israel *at this time?*" their attention was now focused on their assignment of being "witnesses of [Jesus] both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the most distant part of the earth." (Acts 1:6-8) What a bold and thorough witness Peter gave on that day of Pentecost, including his declaration "This Jesus God resurrected, of which fact we are all witnesses!"—Acts 2:32; see also Acts 2:40; 3:15; 4:33; 5:32.

⁴ Similarly today, Jesus' true followers need to be persistent in their prayers "to the one who can, according to his power which is operating in us, do more than superabundantly beyond all the things we ask or conceive." (Eph. 3:20) Though greatly enlightened respecting Jehovah's purpose and its outworking, there is still much of which they do not know the detail, as to both the exact timing of events yet future and just how the many scriptures will be fulfilled concerning the complete end of Satan's system of things. These include prophetic references to Jehovah's people, such as the one found at Isaiah 26:20: "Go, my people . . . Hide yourself for but a moment until the denunciation passes over."

⁵ Of more immediate importance, Jehovah's servants realize that meanwhile there is a great work to be done and a stand to be maintained, as is seen in their God-given name, Jehovah's Witnesses. (Isa. 43:10-12) This work and their stand require persistence or perseverance. The message of God's kingdom calls for the destruction of the worldly nations and kingdoms. (Jer. 25:15-30) God's kingdom "will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms." That message is not popular

with present-day rulers who display the spirit of nationalism. Their combined opposition is becoming increasingly manifest. They "have massed together as one against Jehovah and against his anointed one [the installed King, Christ Jesus]."—Ps. 2:2-6; Dan. 2:44.

⁶ For God's servants today to say as did the apostles of the first century: "We must obey God as ruler rather than men," takes much courage. (Acts 5:29) Such courage and boldness are not dependent on our own resources and temperament, about which few of us have anything to boast. The exercise of these qualities requires a clear understanding and discernment of God's purpose, also of the righteous standards and principles set forth in God's Word. Among mankind, never has there been such a wholesale abandonment to selfishness, violence, corruption and uncleanness of all sorts. (2 Tim. 3:1-5) There are many and various pressures to contend with in these "last days." This means that we must learn how to view every situation and problem from God's viewpoint. It is only by looking to him that we can get true enlightenment through his Word and with the aid of his spirit and organization. (Ps. 36:9) Hence, the need for persistence in prayer and the need to build a true and strong faith, a victorious faith. Knowing our needs, Jehovah, in his Word, has kindly given us much timely encouragement, counsel and warning on these vital matters. First, there is the question as to who may pray and under what terms or conditions, if any.

JEHOVAH—THE "HEARER OF PRAYER"

⁷ Jehovah inspired his servant David to write: "O Hearer of prayer, even to you

6. (a) What qualities are required today? (b) How should every situation be viewed, and how has our need been supplied regarding this?

7. (a) Who is the "Hearer of prayer," and why was David often in need in this regard? (b) What fine guideline is provided for those feeling unworthy? (Ps. 103:8-14)

4. How do Jesus' followers today see the need to be persistent in prayer?

5. (a) What two vital things are required of Jehovah's Witnesses? (b) God's kingdom message has produced what results in the world, and how was this foretold?

people of all flesh will come.” (Ps. 65:2) David himself often experienced the need for persistence in prayer, as expressed in many of the psalms that he wrote. Sometimes the need was urgent because of the relentless pressure from his enemies, as is shown at Psalm 70:1-5. At other times the need arose on account of his own weakness and errors, some of which were serious. If you yourself happen to feel unworthy to approach God in prayer on this account, thinking that he will not hear you, we recommend that you read and re-read Psalm 51:1-12. Those words recorded at verses 9 through 11 could well form the basis of your own prayer.

“Conceal your face from my sins, and wipe out even all my errors. Create in me even a pure heart, O God, and put within me a new spirit, a steadfast one. Do not throw me away from before your face; and your holy spirit O do not take away from me.”

⁸ Does the expression concerning the coming of “people of *all* flesh” to the “Hearer of prayer” mean that anyone is free to do this at any time he may choose? No. It actually works out the opposite way. As stated later in that same psalm: “Happy is the one *you* [that is, Jehovah] choose and cause to approach, that he may reside in your courtyards.” (Ps. 65:4) Though the invitation is open to all, the approach must be made in all sincerity. Though your faith may not be strong to begin with, it must be true. “Jehovah is near . . . to all those who call upon him in trueness.” —Ps. 145:18.

⁹ Additionally, our prayers to Jehovah must always be in the name of Christ Jesus, the sole channel appointed by God. (John 14:13, 14) We gratefully recognize Christ’s redemptive work on behalf of all mankind, and that he now serves as God’s

8. In approaching Jehovah, with whom does the choice really rest, and under what conditions?

9. Why must our prayers to Jehovah always be in the name of Jesus?



high priest, through whom we can "approach with freeness of speech to the throne of undeserved kindness, that we may obtain mercy and find undeserved kindness for help at the right time."—1 Tim. 2:4-6; Heb. 2:9; 4:14-16.

¹⁰ For further information as to the kind of person whom God chooses, we suggest that you read, at Psalm 15, the inspired answer to the question: "O Jehovah, who will be a guest in your tent? Who will reside in your holy mountain?" The principles outlined therein must be acknowledged as righteous by us; and we must aim for them, even though at times we may fall short in actual performance.

¹¹ Perhaps you say, and rightly so, that the Holy Scriptures, including those already mentioned, center around God's people and apply to them, especially the Christian congregation that constitutes spiritual Israel, "the Israel of God." (Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:11; Gal. 6:16) In comparison with such, you perhaps consider yourself an outsider or a foreigner, so to speak, because of your previous way of life and total lack of interest in religion. Many are in such a position today. Do not quickly give up, however. Keep in mind that among the many petitions that Solomon presented to Jehovah at the dedication of the temple, he prayed for "the foreigner, who is no part of your people Israel and who actually comes from a distant land by reason of your name." He prayed that "you [Jehovah] must do according to all that for which the foreigner calls to you; in order that all the peoples of the earth may get to know your name so as to fear you the same as your people Israel do."—1 Ki. 8:41-43.

¹² Additional insight and encouragement

for these "foreigners" is given at Isaiah 56:6-8:

"And the foreigners that have joined themselves to Jehovah to minister to him and to love the name of Jehovah, in order to become servants to him, all those keeping the sabbath in order not to profane it and laying hold of my covenant, I will also bring them to my holy mountain and make them rejoice inside my house of prayer. Their whole burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be for acceptance upon my altar. For my own house will be called even a house of prayer for all the peoples."

¹³ What an inviting description! These "foreigners" are not regimented, but gladly join themselves to Jehovah out of love for his name and all for which it stands. Their whole life (not just one day in seven) becomes one of 'sabbath keeping,' one being dedicated to Jehovah; thereby they enter into His rest, as Paul explains at Hebrews 4:1-10. The apostle Paul also shows how the 'whole burnt offerings and sacrifices' have a practical application for dedicated Christians, when he writes:

"Through him let us always offer to God a sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of lips which make public declaration to his name. Moreover, do not forget the doing of good and the sharing of things with others, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."—Heb. 13:15, 16.

¹⁴ In Isaiah's day, Jehovah's "house of prayer" was, of course, the temple that Solomon built. This temple was a symbol of God's great spiritual temple. God's personal presence is up in the heavenly Most Holy of this spiritual temple. In the Holy compartment of this temple the spirit-begotten followers of Jesus Christ yet on earth find themselves. They are also pictured as being in the earthly courtyard reserved for the priests in this spiritual temple.

¹⁵ Nicely corresponding with the fore-

10. How does Psalm 15 provide further helpful guidance respecting this?

11. (a) The Holy Scriptures were written for whose benefit primarily? (b) What encouragement can be found in Solomon's prayer at 1 Kings 8:41-43?

12, 13. (a) How was Isaiah inspired to write about "foreigners"? (b) For whose benefit and in what way can these expressions be applied?

14. What was the "house of prayer" in Isaiah's day, and what did it symbolize?

15. (a) How is a "great crowd" identified at Revelation 7:9-17? (b) How does this apply to Jehovah's Witnesses today?

going, and after reading at Revelation 7: 1-8 about the Christian congregation's making up spiritual Israel, totaling 144,000, we next read of a "great crowd" who also enjoy God's favor; and in proof of their dedication to him they are "rendering him sacred service day and night *in his temple.*" (Rev. 7:15) This beautiful vision presents the international "great crowd" as serving Jehovah in his temple, that is, in the earthly courtyards reserved for those who are not spiritual Israelites, as it were in the "courtyard of the Gentiles." Today, the great majority of Jehovah's Witnesses identify themselves as being of the "great crowd," with hope of everlasting life in God's kingdom on a paradise earth. Jesus spoke of these latter ones as his "*other sheep*, which are not of this fold." As Jesus continued, all his true sheep today "become one flock, [under] one shepherd."—Luke 12:32; John 10:16.*

¹⁰ You are welcome to join in fellowship with this closely knit band of true worshipers of Jehovah. You will find this to be a most happy experience. It will prove to be of practical assistance to you and a

* See the article "The Gathering of All Nations to One Temple to Worship," in the December 1, 1972, issue of *The Watchtower*; also *Paradise Restored to Mankind—By Theocracy!*, p. 80, pars. 14, 15.

16. What rewarding prospects are set before those earnestly seeking Jehovah?

great encouragement in your developing persistence in prayer in true faith. This yields results, for Jehovah "becomes the rewarder of those earnestly seeking him." (Heb. 11:6) This matter of persistence in prayer, linked with faith, is highlighted in a most interesting way in Luke's Gospel.
¹⁷ At this point we wish to remind you of an extraordinary example of persistence and how it was richly rewarded. We refer to the time when Jacob found himself grappling all night with an angel who had materialized. Even though the socket of Jacob's thigh joint was put out of place by the angel, Jacob would not let him go until, as he said: "You first bless me." The angel then said something that would have lasting significance: "Your name will no longer be called Jacob but Israel, for you have contended with God and with men so that you at last prevailed." He also finally blessed Jacob. Jacob surely went far beyond pursuing a certain course steadily and constantly. He literally had to grapple and keep at it in a crippled state until he got what he sought. He was wonderfully blessed, as he said: "I have seen God face to face and yet my soul was delivered." What a fine example of persistence in prayer!—Gen. 32:24-30.

17. How does Jacob's experience with the angel provide a fine example of persistence?

PRAYER in these "LAST DAYS"

"Keep awake, then, all the time making supplication."—Luke 21:36.

WHILE prayer is mentioned early in Luke's Gospel with reference to Zechariah's "supplication" to God (at chapter 1, verse 13), it is at chapter 11

1. (a) Where does Luke first make mention of prayer or "supplication"? (b) How did Jesus respond to the request: "Lord, teach us how to pray"?

that Jesus discusses this subject at some length. To begin with, Jesus answers the request made by one of his disciples: "Lord, teach us how to pray, just as John also taught his disciples." (Luke 11:1) Jesus replied:

"Whenever you pray, say, 'Father, let your name be sanctified. Let your kingdom come. Give us our bread for the day according to the day's requirement. And forgive us our sins, for we ourselves also forgive everyone that is in debt to us; and do not bring us into temptation.'—Luke 11:2-4.

² Similar to the scriptures at 1 Kings 8: 41-43 and Isaiah 56:6-8, mentioned in the previous article, notice the priority given by Jesus to his Father's name. Jehovah's name is certainly not sanctified in the world of today. The spirit of nationalism, of putting self first and of self-indulgence, being content with a "form of godly devotion but proving false to its power," and other suchlike conditions cause God's name to be reproached and dishonored or completely ignored. (2 Tim. 3:5) So God must sanctify his own name in answer to this prayer. (Ezek. 36:23) The disgraceful state of affairs will be remedied when God's kingdom, in the hands of Christ Jesus, goes into action against the nations and their rulers, as described so vividly at Psalm 2.

³ These things take place in Jehovah's day, now so near, as Bible prophecy in course of fulfillment clearly shows. We therefore do well to pay heed to Peter's inspired admonition and warning:

"Awaiting and keeping close in mind the presence of the day of Jehovah, through which the heavens being on fire will be dissolved and the elements being intensely hot will melt! But there are new heavens and a new earth that we are awaiting according to his promise, and in these righteousness is to dwell. Hence, beloved ones, since you are awaiting these things, do your utmost to be found finally by him spotless and unblemished and in peace."

—2 Pet. 3:12-14.

2. (a) How is God's name thus honored, and in harmony with what scriptures? (b) What contrasting situation exists in the world, and how will it be remedied? 3. In this connection, what warning and promise does Peter give?

⁴ When all these things are accomplished, God's name will be completely vindicated and sanctified. That is why the two petitions at Luke 11:2 are closely linked and come first in the Lord's Prayer. These are the really big events for our day and the near future. Keeping them close in mind will help in taking a more balanced view of our personal daily needs and problems next mentioned in that prayer. Instead of becoming self-centered, which is so easy, we will first ask ourselves: What attitude and course of action on my part will be in harmony with God's will, as outlined in his Word, and, hence, will honor his name?

BOLD PERSISTENCE PAYS OFF

⁵ Following the above, Luke next tells of an illustration given by Jesus, containing an unusual feature. Generally, when one or more characters are used in an illustration, each of such closely corresponds with those portrayed by such characters. If, for instance, the heavenly Father is being portrayed, as in the illustration of the prodigal son at Luke 15: 11-32, then we have no difficulty in seeing how the father of that son, by what he said and did, fittingly portrayed the heavenly Father. That cannot be said, however, in the case of the following illustration of Jesus:

"Who of you will have a friend and will go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, loan me three loaves, because a friend of mine has just come to me on a journey and I have nothing to set before him'? And that one from inside says in reply, 'Quit making me trouble. The door is already locked, and my young children are with me in bed; I cannot rise up and give you anything.' I tell you, Al-

4. How are the first two petitions closely linked in the Lord's Prayer, and how does this help us with reference to the other petitions?

5. (a) What is the general rule in Jesus' illustrations respecting the characters used? Cite an example. (b) At Luke 11:5-8, what characters are seen, and what part do they play?



though he will not rise up and give him anything because of being his friend, certainly because of his *bold persistence* he will get up and give him what things he needs."—Luke 11:5-8.

⁶ Here we see that the one in a position to supply the supplicant's needs at first definitely refused to take any action, saying: "Quit making me trouble." He was most unwilling. Rather than showing himself to be like the heavenly Father, he stands out in sharp contrast. By doing so, the point of the illustration was made just that much more forceful. If that man with his family already tucked in bed with him had been willing to get up and give what was needed, there would have been no need for "*bold persistence*" on the part of the supplicant. That was what Jesus was stressing.

⁷ This is clearly confirmed by Jesus' next words: "Accordingly I say to you, Keep on asking, and it will be given you; keep on seeking, and you will find; keep on knocking, and it will be opened to you." (Luke 11:9) Then, still by way of contrast, he concludes: "Therefore, if you, although being wicked, know how to give

6. How did a certain character therein stand out in contrast to Jehovah, and what was Jesus thereby stressing?

7, 8. In what way did Jesus' further words confirm this, and how does this greatly encourage us?

good gifts to your children, how much more so will the Father in heaven give holy spirit to those asking him!"—Luke 11:13.

⁸ Just picture that man who, "because of his bold persistence," got what he needed even at midnight! His persistence paid off. What an encouragement to put into practice Jesus' own application of that illustration: '*Keep on asking—seeking—knocking.*' Do not give up in praying or weaken in faith because of persistent opposition to your work of Kingdom-preaching or disciple-making, or due to living in a divided household, or because of fighting some personal weakness that is more deep-rooted than you imagined.

⁹ A fine example of such persistence in prayer, backed by appropriate action, is seen in the early days of the Christian congregation. When Peter and John reported the opposition that they had experienced before the Sanhedrin, note the united prayer that was expressed at Acts 4:24-30, especially the words at verse 29: "And now, Jehovah, give attention to their threats, and grant your slaves to keep speaking your word with all boldness." Not long after, when all the apostles had been flogged following a further session before the Sanhedrin, the record, at Acts 5:41, 42, says: "These, therefore, went their way from before the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy to be dishonored in behalf of his name. And every day in the temple and from house to house they continued without letup teaching and declaring the good news about the Christ, Jesus." None of those apostles experienced more persistent opposition than did the apostle Paul, and he went on record as saying: "For all things I have the strength by virtue of him who imparts power to me."—Phil. 4:13.

9. What examples of persistence in prayer and action are noted at Acts 4:24-30 and Acts 5:41, 42?

**'THE NEED ALWAYS TO PRAY AND
NOT TO GIVE UP'**

¹⁰ When near the end of his earthly ministry, Jesus gave an even more striking example of using a contrast in an illustration in order to emphasize, as Luke notes: "Then he [Jesus] went on to tell them an illustration with regard to the need for them always to pray and not to give up." (Luke 18:1) First, however, we will consider what led up to the giving of this illustration. (Interestingly, Luke often mentions the reason why certain illustrations were given, as can be noted at Luke 18:9 and 19:11.) Looking back at Luke 17:22-37, we note that Luke was reporting what Jesus had said concerning the conditions that would prevail when he would be "rejected by this generation." (Luke 17:25) While these words of Jesus, corresponding in part to Matthew chapter 24, had a fulfillment in his day, leading up to the end of that Jewish system of things, they have a greater fulfillment in this our day, the "time of the end" for the present system of things.—Dan. 12:4.

¹¹ And what are the prevailing conditions among the people of this generation today? Yes, daily it is becoming more like the days of Noah when "God saw the earth and, look! it was ruined, because all flesh had ruined its way on the earth" and the earth was "full of violence." (Gen. 6:12, 13) Yet Jesus made no reference to those things, but, rather, mentioned something else of still greater significance. What was that? The people then were fully occupied and quite content with the daily routine of such things as 'eating and drinking, marrying and being given in marriage.' It was "likewise . . . in the days of Lot" when additional things are listed such as buying, selling, planting and build-

10. Preceding another illustration highlighting prayer, what does Luke report Jesus had been saying, pointing to what double fulfillment?

11. (a) How do conditions today parallel the days of both Noah and Lot? (b) What did Jesus particularly note, and does this find a parallel today?

In Coming Issues

- Resurrected—"Each in His Own Proper Place"
- My Life as a Soldier—in Two Kinds of Warfare
- Keeping Watch for 100 Years

ing. (Luke 17:26-29) Instead of being concerned and alarmed over the prevailing wickedness and violence, their attitude was marked by apathy and indifference. As for the great witness given by Noah, both in word and in deed in the building of the ark, "they [the people] took no note." (Matt. 24:39; 2 Pet. 2:5) Surely the same can be said of the attitude of people in general today, especially as regards the intensive worldwide witness of God's kingdom, as foretold at Matthew 24:14. The majority are simply not interested; they have too much else to occupy their time and attention. Note, too, the point made by Jesus respecting both the above-mentioned periods, that the execution of final judgment came with unexpected suddenness "and destroyed them all."—Luke 17:27, 29.

¹² We trust that you are among the comparatively few who are concerned about the situation in the world today and are willing to pay attention to what God's Word has to say about these things. If, as indicated at Luke 17:31-37, you see the need to quit being a part of or a supporter of the present system of things and you no longer seek to 'keep your soul (life) safe' just for yourself, then lose no time. Take your stand on the side of Jehovah and his kingdom. Commit your life's prospects, both present and future, in dedica-

12. Based on Luke 17:31-37, what can we learn and put into practice?



tion to Jehovah to do his will. Do not look back longingly on what you have left behind. "Remember the wife of Lot." (Luke 17:32) Rather, identify yourself with those who, as Jesus said, "are no part of the world, just as I am no part of the world." —John 17:14-17.

¹³ Coming now to the illustration at Luke 18:2-5, there is again a suppliant, this time a widow, and also the man in a position to supply her needs, pictured by a "judge that had no fear of God and had no respect for man." He finally and begrudgingly saw that she got justice, as he said, only "because of this widow's continually making me trouble." There was no doubt about her persistence, illustrating the 'need for us always to pray and not to give up.'

13. What are the main points in the illustration at Luke 18:2-5?

¹⁴ That judge is similar to the man at Luke 11:7, for here we again see a complete contrast with what God is really like. Notice, too, Jesus' further comments as to what God will do, contrasting him with that "unrighteous" Judge. God will "cause justice to be done for his chosen ones . . . even though he is long-suffering toward them." He will do this "speedily." (Luke 18:6-8) We can learn much from these comments. This is why we must try to view all things from God's viewpoint, whether in some personal matter or in the outworking of his purpose. As Peter explained: "Jehovah is not slow respecting his promise, as some people consider slowness, but he is patient with you [God's people] because he does not desire any to be destroyed but desires all to attain to repentance." And as the prophet reported Jehovah's words regarding the fulfillment of the vision: "Even if it should delay, keep in expectation of it; for it will without fail come true. It will not be late."—2 Pet. 3:9; Hab. 2:3; see also Revelation 6:10, 11.

¹⁵ In personal problems, we can be assured that any seeming delay in the answer to our petitions is not due to inability or unwillingness on God's part. If, like the widow, we are suffering injustice or persecution, how do we manifest faith that justice will be done? We must not

14. (a) In contrast to the "unrighteous" judge, what did Jesus say God will do? (b) What can we learn from this as to the time feature?

15. How does this apply to personal problems, and what must be avoided?

only keep on praying, but also maintain a faithful course of action. If we compromise in order to avoid persecution, then, of course, there would be no need to keep on praying. This would not only indicate a lack of faith, but would also result in our losing the evidence of being one of God's Christian servants.—2 Cor. 11:23-27; 2 Tim. 3:12.

¹⁶ It might seem strange that Jesus should conclude his comments with the question: "Nevertheless, when the Son of man arrives, will he really find the faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8) He left it an open question. While this would seem to imply that the faith would not be plentiful at that time, we cannot conclude that no true faith at all would be found anywhere on earth. Rather, we can take it as a personal challenge. We should not take ourselves individually for granted, however long we have been Jehovah's dedicated servants. (1 Cor. 10:12, 13) Not only must we heed the admonition at Luke 11:9 to 'keep on asking—seeking—knocking,' but also, as Jesus stressed the need for this day, we must "keep looking, keep awake . . . keep on the watch." This calls for all-around persistence, notwithstanding the pressures of apathy and opposition from without, also overcoming weaknesses from within.—Mark 13:32-37; 14:38.

¹⁷ Keep praying in faith that you may prove faithful and not shrink back. (Heb. 10:39) In severe trial, keep praying, as Jesus did in his hour of greatest need, that above all else *God's will* should take place. (Matt. 26:38-44) God is well pleased with such prayers. He allows us as petitioners to demonstrate our depth of concern, intensity of desire and genuineness of motive. He, though long-suffering, will ex-

cute justice speedily when the time is ripe.
—Ps. 55:16, 17; Rom. 1:9-12.

'KEEP AWAKE, ALL THE TIME MAKING SUPPLICATION'

¹⁸ In line with the foregoing, Luke's Gospel records how Jesus, concluding his prophecy for both his day and ours, warned of overindulgence and our hearts becoming "weighed down with overeating and heavy drinking and anxieties of life, and suddenly that day [of final judgment] be instantly upon [us] as a snare." He then pointedly said: "Keep awake, then, all the time making supplication [to what end?] that you may succeed in escaping all these things that are destined to occur, and in standing before the Son of man." (Luke 21:34-36) This does not mean that we are taken away from the scene of action, but, rather, that we must avoid being 'caught on the wrong foot,' as in a snare, or being found in the wrong camp. Instead, we must earnestly pray at all times and endeavor to act in harmony with our prayers that we may be found having a "standing [of approval] before the Son of man."

¹⁹ In view of all these many reminders as to persistence and never giving up, how often do you pray? Is it only at stated times as at meals or at meetings? Are your prayers just from the mind and expressed on the lips, or do you keep "making supplication" and earnest entreaty from the heart, sometimes perhaps with "groanings unuttered"? (Rom. 8:26) Whatever the need, you can do as Nehemiah did unobserved when before the king: "At once I prayed to the God of the heavens." (Neh. 2:4) His prayer of faith was answered. Remember, too, that though you can be helped by the prayers of others, no one can really substitute for you in prayer.

16. How can the question at Luke 18:8 be taken as a personal challenge with profit to ourselves?

17. Above all, along what lines should we pray, following whose example?

18. (a) What pointed warning and exhortation did Jesus give at the conclusion of his prophecy? (b) In what way can we escape all that is "destined to occur"?

19. What questions can we profitably ask ourselves respecting prayer, and how is Nehemiah's example a help to us?

MAINTAINING A PRECIOUS RELATIONSHIP

JEHOVAH is a generous giver. We have already learned from Luke's account that Jehovah answers the petitions of those who persist in prayer and who keep watching. And other Bible writers also were inspired to give practical counsel on the closely related subjects of prayer and faith.

² James, for example, early in his letter, reminds us that we should "keep on asking God" for wisdom in meeting and enduring various trials. He admonishes and warns: "But let him keep on asking in faith, not doubting at all." He who keeps doubting is an "indecisive [Greek, "two-souled"] man" and receives nothing from Jehovah. Rather, we want our faith to have the quality that James mentions: "This *tested* quality of your faith works out endurance." (Jas. 1:3-8)* Though, to begin with, our faith may not be as great as was Abraham's, it can grow and must always ring true, not be half-and-half. Let it be said of us as Paul wrote: "Your faith is growing exceedingly and the love of each and all of you is increasing one toward the other." True faith is not just a mental process, but as Paul also wrote: "Exercise faith in your heart." We must have good motivation, resulting in good works.—Rom. 4:20; 10:9, 10; 2 Thess. 1:3.

³ In confirmation of the foregoing, James later wrote: "Cleanse your hands, you

* See *The Watchtower*, July 15, 1978, pp. 26-29, for a discussion of James 1:1-12.

1, 2. (a) In what way is Jehovah a generous giver? (b) He who doubts is in what danger, and how can this be avoided? (c) Can faith grow, and is it more than a mental process?

3. By contrasts, what truths are drawn to our attention at James 4:7, 8?

"Draw close to God,
and he will
draw close to you."
—James 4:8

sinners, and purify your hearts, you indecisive ones." Leading up to this, James made certain contrasts, as Jesus did, in order to drive home truths that needed to be emphasized: "Subject yourselves, therefore, to God; but oppose the Devil, and he will flee from you. Draw close to God, and he will draw close to you."—Jas. 4:7, 8.

⁴ What an encouragement to be decisive in a right way and, finally, what a heart-warming appeal! One might be decisive and persistent out of a sense of duty, but to draw close to someone calls for something much deeper. It must come from the heart, prompting one to put oneself out and be ready to make sacrifices in order to gain and enjoy the desired close personal relationship. Notice that James does not say that if we draw close to God, then he, so to speak, is just sitting there waiting to welcome us. Rather, if we take a definite personal course of action in drawing close to God, then he too will take a corresponding action on his part. How does he do this? Well, he has already made certain fine provisions including his Word and the gift of his Son as our Redeemer, so that it is possible for imperfect, sinful humans to draw close to him. These provisions are open to all who wish to take advantage of them with a sincere and true motive.

⁵ Does Jehovah, however, do anything

4. (a) To draw close to someone calls for what kind of action, prompted by what? (b) Does God extend more than just a welcome to such, and what provisions are already made for the benefit of all?

5. How are God's dedicated servants often used in helping those wishing to "draw close to God"?



of a more direct personal nature? In so many instances, what is it that is the one thing that touches and draws out the heart of the truth seeker? More than a knowledge of the truth, is it not additionally the genuine and warm personal interest shown by the one who is being used as God's minister? (1 Cor. 3:5) When the truth seeker attends his first meeting with Jehovah's Witnesses, he may not understand too much of what is said, but he is again deeply impressed with the sincere friendly atmosphere manifest by all, besides the personal attention and welcome extended to him. In this way he feels that, in response to his own efforts in

seeking after truth and the Giver of the truth, now God is drawing close to him. As he progresses, he experiences other evidences of God's direction and blessing, for He gives 'generously and without reproaching.'—Jas. 1:5.

⁶ As the seeker after truth is guided step by step in the way of righteousness, he comes to appreciate what a privilege it is to be used by Jehovah as one of his representatives in helping yet others. This is made possible because of the outpouring of his spirit in our hearts, so that we may show forth the fruitage of that spirit and

6. How only is this made possible, and what must be kept in mind?

exemplify true Godlike love.—Gal. 5:22, 23; 1 John 4:11.

BE ALERT, BE DECISIVE

⁷ James was writing to dedicated Christians who had taken the steps of repentance and conversion. They had turned around from their previous sinful course, and had now dedicated themselves unreservedly to Jehovah to do his will henceforth. As the general tone of James' letter indicates, many were not living up to the terms of their dedication. They overlooked the need to keep that relationship with Jehovah in a healthy state.

⁸ Relationships rarely, if ever, remain stationary. They cannot be taken for granted. They either progress, even though slowly and, like a tree, take deeper root, or they deteriorate and commence to wither. Both fruitage and foliage suffer as a result. (Ps. 1:1-3) That is what happened to the nation of fleshly Israel. Before it was too late, James was anxious to recover those spiritual Israelites who were similarly slipping back. Hence, he put the position very plainly before them, contrasting the true with the false as to the different kinds of wisdom, also of friendship, as he explained at James 3:13-18 and James 4:1-6. Then follows the appeal as above-mentioned at James 4:7, 8. It is similar to the way that Jehovah appealed to fleshly Israel, as we read at Isaiah 55:6, 7 and Malachi 3:6, 7.

⁹ To some extent, does the same situation obtain today? The foretold "critical times hard to deal with" are certainly here with increasing pressures and dangers of all sorts crowding in on people everywhere, especially on true Christians who are on the 'cramped road leading off into life.' (Matt. 7:14; 2 Tim. 3:1-5) The

7. The general tone of James' letter indicates what?
8. (a) Why cannot relationships be taken for granted?
(b) With regard to what was James anxious to help those slipping back?

9. (a) What is one method of attack used by the Devil, and how does it apply in modern times? (b) How did Peter give encouraging counsel in this regard?

Devil has two main methods of attack. At times, as Peter wrote, he acts "like a roaring lion, seeking to devour someone" after frightening us off that road. (1 Pet. 5:8) He brings about threatening situations, either on a national scale or on a more personal level, with the object of forcing us to make some compromise, if not completely to abandon our stand involving Christian conscience and Bible principles. Our daily living, even life itself, can be at stake over difficult questions of employment or neutrality. As already mentioned, this is where the need arises to keep praying for wisdom to discern and the strength to apply these Bible principles. That is why Peter went on to urge: "But take your stand against him [the Devil], solid in the faith . . . After you have suffered a little while, the God of all undeserved kindness . . . will himself finish your training, he will make you firm, he will make you strong."—1 Pet. 5:9, 10.

¹⁰ The Devil's other method of attack is more subtle. Satan also "keeps transforming himself into an angel of light." He acts like a serpent, not to frighten, but to beguile and seduce, as "the serpent seduced Eve by its cunning." (2 Cor. 11:3, 14) As an evidence of this tactic, there is one thing that Satan knows that he does not want you to know, and that is that his time is short. As a result of the war in heaven, following the birth of the Messianic kingdom in 1914, C.E., he, the great dragon, "was hurled down to the earth, . . . having great anger, knowing he has a short period of time." (Rev. 12:1-12) If he can persuade especially those "who observe the commandments of God and have the work of bearing witness to Jesus" that the "time of the end" is not so short after all, then he has won half the battle. (Rev. 12:17) Many would lose the sense of urgency and fail to keep wide awake.

10, 11. (a) What other method is used by Satan, and how is it exemplified today, leading to what danger?
(b) So how should we be alert and decisive?

We could easily become fully occupied with the normal pursuits of daily life. Surely in this we must learn how to look at things from Jehovah's viewpoint and try to appreciate how he counts time, keeping in mind Peter's words: "But the end of all things has drawn close. Be sound in mind, therefore, and be vigilant with a view to prayers."—1 Pet. 4:7; 2 Pet. 3:8, 9.

¹¹ Both Bible writers, James and Peter, said much that helps and encourages us to be alert and decisive in a right way, with a good heart and paying close attention to prayers and to faith.

PRAY FOR THOSE IN NEED

¹² At the conclusion of his letter, James develops the subject of prayer in connection with faith still further and from a different angle. Whatever the situation, whether "suffering evil" or "in good spirits," we should come to God in prayer or in praise. He then talks about praying for those in need. The one who is sick, evidently suffering spiritually and being affected mentally and emotionally, is told to "call the older men of the congregation to him, and let them pray over him." This in itself is an indication of faith on his part and that he knows where to go for help. A person does not call in a doctor unless he has a degree of faith in that doctor. Now observe the fine results for taking such a course: "And the *prayer of faith* will make the indisposed one well, and Jehovah will raise him up. Also, if he has committed sins, it will be forgiven him." (Jas. 5:13-15) This surely gives a good lead and direction both to those in need and to the overseers who should be ready and willing to be instrumental in getting those needs supplied.

¹³ James enlarges on this and, with the

overseers and other mature brothers in mind, says that "a righteous man's supplication, when it is at work, has much force." Supporting this, he cites the remarkable instance of the prayers of Elijah being answered, first "for it not to rain," and which period lasted for three years and six months, and then for a resumption of rainfall. And Elijah was not a superman. He "was a man with feelings like ours."—Jas. 5:16-18.

¹⁴ In conclusion, and giving further encouragement to be alert to aid, if possible, even those who are being "misled from the truth," he says that whoever "turns a sinner back from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins." (Jas. 5:19, 20) What a comforting conclusion! How like Jehovah's own description of himself—"a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abundant in loving-kindness and truth, . . . pardoning error and transgression and sin."—Ex. 34:6, 7.

¹⁵ Interestingly, Jude ends his letter in a similar vein and talks about "building up yourselves on your most holy faith, and praying with holy spirit." He too stresses the need to be alert to help those in need in a kindly yet urgent way: "Continue showing mercy to some that have doubts; save them by snatching them out of the fire. But continue showing mercy to others, doing so with fear, while you hate even the inner garment that has been stained by the flesh." (Jude 20-23) So here again is the exhortation to those who are mature. If you know of some who have doubts or who have stumbled into uncleanness, do not quickly cold-shoulder them, but snatch them from the fire, if possible, taking care to avoid getting burned yourself or in any way contaminated.

12. (a) How does James finally develop the subject of prayer? (b) In what way are both overseers and those in need aided?

13. How does James use Elijah as a striking example in this regard?

14. As a final word, how does James give further encouragement?

15. Similarly, what two ways does Jude mention for helping those in need?

"LOOK INTENTLY . . . CONSIDER CLOSELY"

¹⁶ The apostle Paul was used as the writer for most of the letters in the Christian Greek Scriptures. His letter to the Hebrew Christians gives much practical help and guidance in building up a true and strong faith, leading to a close relationship with Jehovah and Christ Jesus.

¹⁷ Understandably, in the above letter Paul makes many comparisons between the Jews making up fleshly Israel and those Jews who became the first members of the Christian congregation making up spiritual Israel, and to which Gentiles were added later. Based on these comparisons, Paul shows how the Hebrew Christians enjoyed many advantages over those of fleshly Israel, but this also brought greater responsibility. All true Christians today, whatever their background, can likewise apply these same things to themselves and be benefited thereby.

¹⁸ Paul earlier on makes the point that if the word spoken through angels when the Law was given to Israel had to be treated with the greatest respect, then "how shall we escape if we have neglected a salvation of such greatness in that it began to be spoken through our Lord" Jesus? (Heb. 2:1-3; Gal. 3:19) A similar warning is sounded toward the close of the letter. After telling what happened at Mount Sinai, Paul writes: "For if they did not escape who begged off from him who was giving divine warning upon earth, much more shall we not [escape] if we turn away from him who speaks from the heavens."—Heb. 12:25.

¹⁹ This is where our faith must ring true in order to have the required tested quality. The heart is involved. After quoting God's comment on Israel that "they

16, 17. In the book of Hebrews, on what basis does Paul make many comparisons, leading to what conclusions?

18. What warning about not begging off is repeated in this letter, and on what is it based in Israel's history?

19. Hence, what pointed and helpful comments are made at Hebrews 3:12-15; 12:25-29?

always go astray in their hearts," Paul makes the strong warning for our benefit: "Beware, brothers, for fear there should ever develop in any one of you a wicked heart lacking faith by drawing away from the living God." We cannot stand still. If we do not "draw close to God" in ever-growing faith as we appreciate him more fully, then there is the danger that we will "become hardened by the deceptive power of sin," and commence drawing away, not realizing what is happening. We should help one another in this respect and "keep on exhorting one another each day." We will win "only if we make fast our hold on the confidence we had at the beginning firm to the end." This firm confidence, this unshakable faith, must be maintained in order for us to inherit the "kingdom that cannot be shaken" and its blessings.—Heb. 3:10-14; 12:28.

²⁰ Paul also encourages us with regard to prayer, and to "look intently at the Chief Agent and Perfecter of our faith, Jesus. . . . Indeed, consider closely the one who has endured such contrary talk by sinners against their own interests, that you may not get tired and give out in your souls." Because of all he went through he can sympathize with our weaknesses, though without sin himself, and through him we can have access to the "throne of undeserved kindness" and find help at the right time.—Heb. 4:15, 16; 12:2, 3.

²¹ Finally, as Paul wrote to the Ephesians, keep in mind that "prayer on every occasion in spirit" is closely tied in with putting on the "complete suit of armor from God." And, like Paul, we should pray for ourselves and others that we may be given "ability to speak . . . to make known the sacred secret of the good news, . . . with boldness."—Eph. 6:10-20.

20. Besides stressing faith, how does Paul, in this letter, encourage us with regard to prayer?

21. Where and how does Paul closely connect prayer with the "suit of armor" supplied by God, leading to what conclusion?

MISSIONARIES TAUGHT: Know Jehovah as a Person!

"MANY have asked, 'Well, what did you learn?'" So stated a spokesman for the graduating 66th class of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead. Standing before a packed hall of 1,952 persons, he read a class resolution that expressed the sentiments of all 26 students. He continued: "One sister well expressed it this way: 'I have appreciated getting a much better understanding of Jehovah as a person and of his compassion for his people. This has greatly strengthened my confidence in him and his desire to take care of me under any circumstance.'"

How had they come to have a "better understanding of Jehovah as a person"? Addressing the class for the last time, instructor K. Adams revealed the answer to the audience by saying: "We started on a project of studying the whole Bible as a group. We took 10 to 15 pages a day, with all of you students doing research and contributing to our discussion. If we encountered a difficult verse, we considered (1) the context, (2) the circumstances at the time of writing and (3) the meaning of key words in the text. We constantly asked, '*What does this tell us about Jehovah and his qualities?*' We found it always told us something about him."

What quality of Jehovah constantly stood out? Instructor Adams continued, 'It was Jehovah's loving-kindness. It is this "precious" quality that engenders trust and confidence in his worshipers, making them feel that no matter where or under what circumstances, Jehovah will care for them.' —Ps. 36:7.

One of the positive results of knowing Jehovah personally is a heartfelt respect for his authority. This includes loving respect for those vested by God with authority in the congregation. It was about this respect that the school's registrar, U. Glass, spoke. He arrested the attention of all by saying: "We are all dedicated to Jehovah and loyal to his Word. But some of our brothers may find it difficult to accept the authority given by God to imperfect men in the congregation."

What, then, should be our attitude toward such men? Should we become followers of men? Glass referred to Hebrews 13:7 and showed that after contemplating the course of conduct of these men, it is *their faith* that we must imitate. By such contemplation, coupled with love, we can maintain this vital respect for authority.

The first man was tested in this regard, and a person's attitude toward authority may be involved in the final testing of mankind after the end of the 1,000-year reign of Christ.—Rev. 20:1-10.

A penetrating discussion of Malachi chapter three came next on the day's program. The speaker, C. Barber, warned that there is a danger of developing a negative attitude, as did some in Malachi's day who said, 'It is of no value or profit to serve God and keep his laws.' (Vs. 14) But how untrue! Those who know Jehovah as a person rejoice in the fine association of an international brotherhood and are made spiritually rich through God's overflowing blessing. (Vs. 10) These ones, because they bring their spiritual sacrifices of good works into Jehovah's temple of worship, become to him a "special property" or a "treasure." (Mal. 3:16, 17, *The Amplified Bible*) The series of seven talks was capped by the school president's discussion of the fulfillment of the seven plagues mentioned in Revelation chapters 15 and 16. He showed what a large part those with earthly hopes for the future have played in pouring out the plague-like messages.

These graduates, who were assigned to 12 countries, are not novices but already have known God personally for many years before graduating on March 11. In fact, Viola Scott, herself a baptized Christian for over 20 years, said: "It was our appreciation for Jehovah and our love for people that moved my husband and me to come to Gilead."

Before becoming a Witness, Michael Molina had been a naval airplane machine-gunner and had flown 284 combat missions in Vietnam. He had been awarded numerous medals because of his daring. "Killing was my business and I was very good at it," he said. Now a different man, he launched out on a Christian missionary career that is to take him to Guatemala where he can engage in saving lives—all this because he has developed a personal relationship with Jehovah.

The delightful program presented by the students included a session showing the use of music in the Scriptures, as well as two Bible dramas. So, as the curtain closed, all those in attendance had become more conscious of the need to analyze their own relationship with Jehovah and to become ever closer to him.

INSIGHT ON THE NEWS

● A Massachusetts judge ruled that a man may lose visiting rights with his children. As Congregationalist church members, the man and his wife had divorced and she was granted custody. He later became one of Jehovah's Witnesses.

Judge: "Stop Teach- ing Bible"

"The 35-year-old fireman doesn't beat his daughters (aged 7 and 4) or take them to X-rated movies or encourage them to neglect their studies," writes syndicated columnist William Rasberry. "What he does is read the Bible to them." The mother complained: "He was (also) confusing them by telling them there was no Santa Claus, no Easter Bunny, no Tooth Fairy, and I had told them there was."

"Confusion alone could hardly have been the [judge's reason]," observes columnist Rasberry. "Else, what would his honor do about all the children of intact marriages whose parents hold differing religious beliefs? . . . Could it be that the judge himself is a Congregationalist? Or a believer in the Tooth Fairy, et al?"—*"The Philadelphia Inquirer,"* February 13, 1979, p. 13-A.

● Since Darwin's day, has modern geology been able to find proof of his theory of evolution by natural selection?

**Blind
to the
Evidence**
"Instead of finding the gradual unfolding of life," writes David M. Raup, curator of geology at Chicago's Field Museum of Natural History in the museum's "Bulletin," "what geologists of Darwin's time, and geologists of the present day actually find is a highly uneven or jerky record; that is, species appear in the sequence very suddenly, show little or no change during their existence in the record, then abruptly go out of the record."

Curator Raup notes that Darwin's answer to this was to the effect "that if the record were complete and if we had better knowledge of it, we would see the finely graduated chain that he predicted. And this was his main argument for downgrading the evidence from the fossil record."

"Well," says Raup, "we are now about 120 years after Darwin and the knowledge of the fossil record has been greatly expanded.

We now have a quarter of a million fossil species but the situation hasn't changed much. The record of evolution is still surprisingly jerky and, ironically, we have even fewer examples of evolutionary transition than we had in Darwin's time . . . as a result of more detailed information. . . . So Darwin's problem has not been alleviated in the last 120 years." How much more evidence is needed to make an unbiased person admit that the "finely graduated chain" of evolution does not exist? —January 1979, pp. 23-25.

● When dissident members recently charged Herbert W. Armstrong's Worldwide Church of God with mishandling church funds, the California Superior Court put church finances temporarily in receivership. Complaints centered on huge sums spent entertaining prominent world politicians and the lavish life-styles and huge salaries of top church officials.

Armstrong's second-in-command, Stanley R. Rader, defends money spent on jet leasing, very expensive hotels, restaurants and gifts for foreign dignitaries, saying: "We had a commission to spread the gospel." And Rader's lawyer Allan Browne admits that in "proclaiming the word of Jesus," church officials spend "enormous sums of money." Why? "Meeting with prime ministers and other world leaders, you bring him something and maybe it's from Gucci's." "Important people stay at Stan Rader's home. You don't take them out to McDonalds. You take them to Perino's."

To set the record straight, it is of interest to note the actual Gospel commission that Jesus gave his disciples. Quite in contrast to the opulence reflected in the foregoing, Jesus indicated that they would need only very limited funds: "Do not procure gold or silver or copper for your girdle purses." Were they to entertain worldly politicians with lavish meals and gifts? Indeed Jesus did say that they would "be haled before governors and kings for my sake," but this was not to entertain these rulers. Rather, it was to answer charges brought against them as "objects of hatred by all people" for their preaching. The record of Jesus himself and the early Christians proves this to be the case.—Matt. 10:9, 10, 18, 22.

Welcome to the "LIVING HOPE" District Conventions

HOW prominently hope appears in God's Word! Did you know that hope is referred to some 160 times in its pages? Not without good reason does Jehovah God have so much to say in his Word about hope. Well do we read that "hope deferred makes the heart sick; a wish come true is a staff of life."—Prov. 13:12, *The New English Bible*.

No question about it: the hope that Jehovah's people have serves to differentiate them from all others—the hope of the Kingdom that will bring about the triumph of righteousness. That hope serves as an anchor for our souls and as a helmet to protect our minds from Satan's fiery darts.—Heb. 6:19; 1 Thess. 5:8.

Because this hope is so important to our spiritual well-being "Living Hope" was chosen as the theme for the 1979 district conventions. The program is truly designed to strengthen our hope. So let all of Jehovah's people put forth every possible effort to attend; and not only to attend but to be on hand for the opening song and prayer on the first day and remain until the concluding song and prayer on the last day. And let all of us 'pay more than the usual attention to the things presented,' as well as making provision to share in the field service on Friday morning. (Heb. 2:1) All doing so will certainly get an enriched appreciation of our living hope.

1979 DISTRICT CONVENTIONS IN THE UNITED STATES

June 14-17: DES MOINES, IOWA, Veterans Memorial Auditorium, 833 5th Ave. HAMPTON, VA., Hampton Coliseum, 1000 Coliseum Dr. JACKSONVILLE, FLA., Memorial Coliseum, Gator Bowl Sports Complex. KNOXVILLE, TENN., Civic Auditorium, 500 Church Ave. SE. LANSING, MICH., Civic Center, 505 W. Allegan St. PONTIAC, MICH., Silverdome, 1200 Featherstone. SAVANNAH, GA., Civic Center, Orleans Square. TUCSON, ARIZ., Community Center, 260 Church. WICHITA, KANS., Kansas Coliseum, I-135 at 85th St. N.

June 21-24: AMARILLO, TEX., Civic Center, 3rd & Buchanan Sts. BILLINGS, MONT., Yellowstone Metra, Hwy. #10. DALLAS, TEX., State Fair Coliseum, State Fair Park. DENVER, COLO., Denver Coliseum, I-70 & Brighton Blvd. GREENVILLE, S.C., Greenville Memorial Auditorium, 300 E. North St. HAMPTON, VA., Hampton Coliseum, 1000 Coliseum Dr. LANDOVER, MD., Capital Centre, Beltway Exit 32 or 33 E. LANSING, MICH., Civic Center, 505 W. Allegan St. MACON, GA., Macon Coliseum, 200 Coliseum Dr. PHILADELPHIA, PA., Veterans Stadium, S. Broad & Pattison Ave. PHOENIX, ARIZ., Arizona Veterans Memorial Coliseum, 1826 W. McDowell Rd. PORTLAND, ME., Cumberland County Civic Center, One Civic Square. PROVIDENCE, R.I., Civic Center, One LaSalle Sq. ST. PETERSBURG, FLA., Bayfront Center, 400 1st St. S.

June 28-July 1: ANCHORAGE, ALASKA, Anchorage West High School, 1700 Hillcrest Drive. DALLAS, TEX., State Fair Coliseum, State Fair Park. DENVER, COLO., Denver Coliseum, I-70 & Brighton Blvd. GREENSBORO, N.C., Greensboro Coliseum, 1921 W. Lee St. GREENVILLE, S.C., Greenville Memorial Auditorium, 300 E. North St. LANDOVER, MD., Capital Centre, Beltway Exit 32 or 33 E. MACON, GA., Macon Coliseum, 200 Coliseum Dr. NASHVILLE, TENN., Municipal Auditorium, 417 4th Ave. N. PROVIDENCE, R.I., Civic Center, One LaSalle Sq. RICHFIELD, OHIO, The Coliseum, 2923 Streetsboro Rd. ST. PETERSBURG, FLA., Bayfront Center, 400 1st St. S. SOUTH BEND, IND., N.D.U. Athletic Center, Juniper Rd. UTICA, N.Y., Memorial Auditorium, Oriskany St. W.

July 5-8: BATON ROUGE, LA., Assembly Center, Louisiana State University. CORVALLIS, ORE., Gill Coliseum, 600 SW. 26th St. FRESNO, CALIF. (Spanish only), Convention Center, 700 "M" St. HOLLYWOOD, FLA., Sportatorium, 16661 Hollywood Blvd. INGLEWOOD, CALIF. (Spanish only), The Forum, Manchester & Prairie. LINCOLN, NEB., Pershing Municipal Auditorium, 226 Centennial Mall South. MILWAUKEE, WIS., MECCA Arena, 500 W. Kilbourn Ave. NEW HAVEN, CONN., Veterans Memorial Coliseum, 275 S. Orange. OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLA., Myriad, One Myriad Gardens. RICHFIELD, OHIO, The Coliseum, 2923 Streetsboro Rd. ST. PAUL, MINN., Civic Center, 143 W. 4th St. SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF., Cow Palace, Geneva Ave. SOUTH BEND, IND., N.D.U. Athletic Center, Juniper Rd. TUSCALOOSA, ALA., Memorial Coliseum, 10 St. & Hackberry Ln. UTICA, N.Y., Memorial Auditorium, Oriskany St. W.

July 12-15: BILOXI, MISS., Mississippi Coast Coliseum, 3800 W. Beach Blvd. CORVALLIS, ORE., Gill Coliseum, 600 SW. 26th St. FRESNO, CALIF., Convention Center, 700 "M" St. GREEN BAY, WIS., Memorial Arena, 1901 S. Oneida St. HOLLYWOOD, FLA. (Spanish only), Sportatorium, 16661 Hollywood Blvd. MILWAUKEE, WIS., MECCA Arena, 500 W. Kilbourn Ave. PINE BLUFF, ARK., Pine Bluff Convention Center, 500 E. 8th Ave. PULLMAN, WASH., Performing Arts Coliseum, Stadium Way. ROCHESTER, N.Y., Memorial Auditorium, 100 Exchange St. ST. LOUIS, MO., The Checkerdom, 5700 Oakland Ave. SAN ANTONIO, TEX., Convention Center Arena, S. Alamo & Market Sts. SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF., Cow Palace, Geneva Ave.

July 19-22: CHICAGO, ILL. (Spanish only), Jehovah's Witnesses Assembly Hall, 7859 S. Ashland Ave. CINCINNATI, OHIO, Riverfront Coliseum, 100 Broadway. FRESNO, CALIF., Convention Center, 700 "M" St. HOUSTON, TEX., Astroarena, Fannin & 610 S. Loop Fwy. LAKELAND, FLA., Civic Center, 700 Lemon St. MEMPHIS, TENN., Mid-South Coliseum, Mid-South Fairgrounds. NIAGARA FALLS, N.Y., International Convention Center, 300 4th St. PUYALLUP, WASH., Fairgrounds Grandstand, Cor. Meridian & 9th Ave. SW. ROANOKE, VA., Roanoke Civic Center, 710 Williamson Rd., NE.

SAN ANTONIO, TEX. (Spanish only), Convention Center Arena, S. Alamo & Market Sts. **SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.**, Cow Palace, Geneva Ave. **SPRINGFIELD, MASS.**, Civic Center, 1277 Main St. **WOODBURN, ORE.** (Spanish only), Jehovah's Witnesses Assembly Hall, 1510 N. Pacific Hwy. July 26-29: **CHICAGO, ILL.** (Spanish only), Jehovah's Witnesses Assembly Hall, 7859 S. Ashland Ave. **CINCINNATI, OHIO**, Riverfront Coliseum, 100 Broadway. **E. RUTHERFORD, N.J.**, Giants Stadium, New Jersey Sports Complex. **EL PASO, TEX.** (Spanish only), County Coliseum, 4000 E. Paisano Dr. **HOUSTON, TEX.**, Astroarena, Fannin & 610 S. Loop Fwy. **INGLEWOOD, CALIF.**, Hollywood Park Race Track, 1050 S. Prairie Ave. **LAKELAND, FLA.**, Civic Center, 700 Lemon St. **PUYALLUP, WASH.**, Fairgrounds Grandstand, Cor. Meridian & 9th Ave. SW. **SPRINGFIELD, MASS.**, Civic Center, 1277 Main St. **WILLOUGHBY, OHIO** (Spanish only), Jehovah's Witnesses Assembly Hall, 38025 Vine St.

August 2-5: **ELMONT, N.Y.** (Spanish & Portuguese only), Belmont Park Race Track, Hempstead Tpk. at Cross Island Pkwy. **INGLEWOOD, CALIF.** (Korean also), Hollywood Park Race Track, 1050 S. Prairie Ave.

August 8-11 (Note: Wednesday through Saturday): **NEW YORK, N.Y.** (Chinese only), Yung Wing School Auditorium, 40 Division St.

August 9-12: **ELMONT, N.Y.** (Italian also), Belmont Park Race Track, Hempstead Tpk. at Cross Island Pkwy. **INGLEWOOD, CALIF.** (Japanese also), Hollywood Park Race Track, 1050 S. Prairie Ave. **LONG ISLAND CITY, N.Y.** (French only), Jehovah's Witnesses Assembly Hall, 44-17 Greenpoint Ave.

August 16-19: **ELMONT, N.Y.** (Greek & Korean also), Belmont Park Race Track, Hempstead Tpk. at Cross Island Pkwy. **LONG ISLAND CITY, N.Y.** (French only), Jehovah's Witnesses Assembly Hall, 44-17 Greenpoint Ave.

QUESTIONS from READERS

- Is the use of the birth-control device known as the IUD (intrauterine device) compatible with Christian principles?

An IUD is a small object inserted into a woman's uterus as a birth-control measure. Of particular concern to Christians is whether the IUD functions in a way that is basically abortive. There is increasing evidence that it does.

The matter can best be understood by considering the normal course of events in pregnancy. A female egg or ovum comes from a woman's ovary and enters her fallopian tube. Male sperm that have passed up through her uterus may meet the ovum in the tube. When fertilization (conception) occurs there, a new life has begun. In about a week the fertilized ovum (blastocyst) reaches the uterus and becomes implanted in its lining, to which it will be attached for the remainder of the pregnancy.

For many years there were conflicting theories as to how an IUD functioned. In *The Watchtower* of December 15, 1969, we pointed out that some scientists then believed that an IUD prevented the sperm from reaching and fertilizing the egg. Yet other authorities held that it permits conception but interferes with implantation. Regarding this latter possibility, it was explained that such "would amount to abortion from a Biblical stand-

point." (Ex. 23:26; 1 Cor. 15:8, footnote, NW; Moffatt) Yet, in view of the fact that even experts were divided over how the IUD functioned, the view was expressed that each concerned married couple would have to make a conscientious decision.

In the intervening years doctors have done much research into the IUD's mode of action. What have they learned?

A lengthy article on the subject in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal* of January 7, 1978, concluded:

"The exact mechanism of action of the IUD is not known. Several effects have been noted with the IUD in place and probably a combination of these contribute to its contraceptive action."

The article mentioned some of these effects:

1. "The IUD interferes mechanically with implantation."
2. It produces an inflammatory reaction in the uterus, with resulting cells that engulf and interfere with the sperm [and the blastocyst, according to other researchers].
3. Increased muscular action of the fallopian tubes or uterus, so that the egg [fertilized or not] moves along too quickly.
4. Alteration of the biochemical state of the uterine lining where the fertilized egg would have to implant.

Additional comments were made about IUD's containing copper, which seems to "have additional mechanisms of action," such as: decreasing sperm motility, producing enzyme changes in the uterus' lining that retard implantation, and more pronounced inflammatory reaction.

Such technical discussions usually include some comment about the possibility that the IUD may interfere with the sperm before fertilization can occur. However, most of the descriptions of how the IUD likely functions involve its preventing implantation after con-

ception has occurred. The *American Family Physician* (Nov. 1977) observed: "Animal experiments have shown that the copper IUD exerts its contraceptive action mainly by preventing implantation."

Even with an IUD in place actual developing pregnancies sometimes occur. There is also evidence of increased risk of ectopic (extrauterine) pregnancy, such as in the fallopian tubes. The last-quoted article concludes:

"While the IUD is effective in preventing over 98 percent of intrauterine pregnancies, it is less than 90 percent effective in preventing tubal pregnancies. If a patient becomes pregnant while she still has an IUD in place, the chances are more than one in 20 that the pregnancy is ectopic [extrauterine]."

The *Canadian Medical Association Journal* says:

"Among pregnancies occurring with the IUD in place the spontaneous abortion rate is 41%, . . . In contrast, the rate among pregnancies in women without an IUD is 10% to 15%."

Many persons who condone deliberate abortion hold that (after conception) until an

embryo reaches an age of a certain number of weeks no life or living person is involved. But the Creator of life, Jehovah God, expresses no such view in his Word. On the contrary, the Bible makes it plain that God recognizes and respects a life even in its early embryonic development. (Ps. 139:13-16; Jer. 1:5) Under the Mosaic law an action that caused the termination of that developing life merited severe punishment.—Ex. 21:22, 23.*

Such respect for life comes into the picture when considering the question of using an IUD. The fact is that at present no man can state with absolute certainty whether the IUD does prevent conception from occurring. There is mounting evidence, instead, that with an IUD in place conception can or does take place and that the product of conception is prevented from developing normally into a child. The sincere Christian concerned about the propriety of using an IUD should seriously weigh such information in the light of a Bible-based respect for the sanctity of life.

* *The Watchtower* of August 1, 1977, pp. 478-480.

Jesus—Was He God?

In the fourth century C.E. clerics of the Roman Catholic Church formulated the Trinity doctrine, which claims that Jesus was equal to his Father and part of a triune deity. However, many careful Bible students have held that the Scriptures actually do not support this widely taught doctrine.

Volume 2 of *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* (1976) considers this matter. It acknowledges that there are "a few N[new] T[estament] texts [that] raise the question whether the Son of God is also called God." But what is the overall picture found in the "New Testament," or Christian Greek Scriptures? This dictionary states:

"Jesus Christ does not usurp the place of God. His oneness with the Father does not mean absolute identity of being. Although the Son of God in his pre-existent being was in the form of God, he resisted the temptation to be equal with God (Phil. 2:6). In his earthly existence he was obedient to God, even unto death on the cross (Phil. 2:8). He is the me-

diator, but not the originator, of salvation (2 Cor. 5:19; Col. 1:20; Heb. 9:15), the lamb of God who bears the sins of the world (Jn. 1:36). After the completion of his work on earth he has indeed been raised to the right hand of God (Eph. 1:20; 1 Pet. 3:22) and invested with the honour of the heavenly *Kyrios*, Lord (Phil. 2:9 f.). But he is still not made equal to God. Although completely co-ordinated with God, he remains subordinate to him. (cf. 1 Cor. 15:28). This is true also of his position as eternal high priest in the heavenly sanctuary according to Heb. (Heb. 9:24; 10:12 f.; cf. Ps. 110:1). He represents us before God (cf. also Rom. 8:34). If in Rev. 1:13 ff. the appearance of the heavenly son of man is described with features from the picture of the 'Ancient of Days' (God) of Dan. 7, this is not to say that Christ is equal with God. In Rev. a distinction is always made between God and the 'Lamb'."

Surely the overall view of the Scriptures points to the fact that Jesus was not God as the Trinity doctrine claims.

Jehovah Is the “Hearer of Prayer”

The psalmist David called Jehovah the "Hearer of prayer," and there is frequent evidence that God does, indeed, answer earnest petitions. (Ps. 65:2) Noteworthy in this regard is the following experience from Portugal:

A registered nurse was highly esteemed by friends and acquaintances. But her marriage was a failure, and her husband eventually departed because of his immoral life. Being a deeply religious woman, one day the nurse desperately prayed, expressing her longing for a happy life and pleading that God would let her know if he had a worthwhile purpose.

That very afternoon, Jehovah's Witnesses came to the woman's door while they were engaging in their house-to-house preaching activity. She had just taken a shower and was still wearing a robe. But even from the brief introductory comments made by one of the Witnesses, the nurse felt that her prayer had

been answered. So she invited the Witness couple into her home, asked many questions and enjoyed receiving Scriptural answers. A home Bible study was started with the woman, and soon she was attending Christian meetings regularly.

In time, the nurse herself became a proclaimer of the "good news" and was conducting a Bible study. Before long, she was planning to be baptized in symbol of her dedication to Jehovah, the "Hearer of prayer."

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

June 17: Persistence in Prayer Has Its Reward.

Page 12. Songs to Be Used: 5, 42.

June 24: Prayer in These “Last Days.” Page 16.

Songs to Be Used: 41, 110.

July 1: Maintaining a Precious Relationship.

Page 22. Songs to Be Used: 77, 107.