

The **WATCHTOWER**

Announcing
**JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM**

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Semimonthly

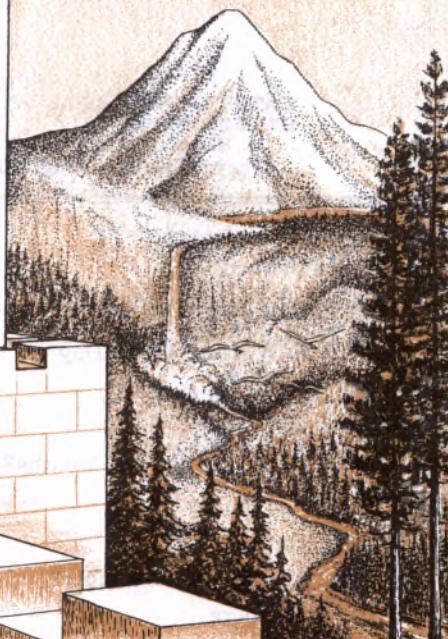
**LISTEN TO DANIEL'S
WORDS FOR OUR DAY**

CRUSHING ALL NATIONS IN OUR DAY
BY GOD'S KINGDOM

HOW TO PRAY AND BE HEARD BY GOD

WILL YOU REALLY BE AT THE ASSEMBLY?

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

THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER"

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

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

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

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

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



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

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AV - Authorized Version (1611)
Dy - Catholic Douay version
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KEEP LOOKING

Forward

THE careful driver of an automobile keeps glancing up at his rearview mirror. Especially does he do so when he wants to change from one lane to another, turn off on a side road or come to a stop. But does he fix his attention on that rearview mirror? Not at all! His eyes, his attention, are fixed primarily on the road ahead.

The pattern set by the careful automobile driver is one that all do well to follow. Particularly do we do well to keep this counsel in mind when we find ourselves wanting to dwell on the negative things of the past. We can profit from looking back from time to time. But we should not dwell on these things so as to let them overshadow what lies ahead.

For example, you may have lost your home because of some disaster, such as a fire, flood or tornado. Or you may have lost all your savings because of some financial failure, or perhaps a loved one has died suddenly. There is no profit, but only sadness, in dwelling on these misfortunes.

Even if you can see now how a calamity could have been avoided, there is no reason for you to torment yourself by dwelling on it, as though you could atone for your mistake by making yourself miserable. If possible, benefit from the past bad experiences. Let

them serve to give you better judgment, to exercise better care. But then enjoy what present blessings are yours.

The Hebrew Scriptures tell of persons who made the mistake of dwelling on past calamities. For example, some Jews who returned from Babylonian exile regularly observed certain self-imposed fasts, apparently mourning over the calamities they and their land had suffered at the hands of the Babylonians. But Jehovah God, by his prophet Zechariah, reproved these men for this. They were told to look ahead to the joys and prosperity that were due to come, when "the public squares of the city themselves will be filled with boys and girls playing in her public squares." —Zech. 7:1-8:15.

There may also be this unwholesome tendency to look backward instead of forward when someone has wronged us, perhaps deeply wounded us in some way. Is it wise to keep looking back to this incident and make ourselves miserable because of it? By no means! Rather, the kind and

wise thing to do is to forgive and forget. Look forward to better relations with that one. You will feel the better for it, and the other person, too, will be benefited.

Jehovah God certainly has set a fine example in this connection. The Bible tells us that "as far off as the sunrise is from the sunset, so far off from us he has put our transgressions." He does not keep looking back at these, neither should we keep looking back at the trespasses of others against us.—Ps. 103:12; Eph. 4:32.

The counsel to keep looking forward might be said to have particular application to all those who have started out to follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. As Jesus warned: "No man that has put his hand to a plow and looks at the things behind is well fitted for the kingdom of God." Anyone looking longingly behind at the things he gave up to be a follower of Jesus Christ would indicate that he regrets having become Christ's follower. Surely no such one would be fit material for the kingdom of God.—Luke 9:62.

The apostle Paul set us a fine example in looking forward. After telling about his privileges and credentials as a part of the Jewish system of things, he goes on to say: "Why, for that matter, I do indeed also consider all things to be loss on account of the excelling value of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. On account of him I have taken the loss of all things and I consider them as a lot of refuse . . . Forgetting the things behind and stretching forward to the things ahead, I am pursuing down toward the goal," the goal ahead.—Phil. 3:8, 13, 14.

This does not mean we should discount the blessing of memories. No doubt the apostle Paul, while spending days, months

and years in prison in Rome, looked back with pleasure on the many joyful and fruitful experiences he had in preaching the good news of God's kingdom to the people of the nations. (2 Tim. 4:7) And so all those who have been serving God for a number of years can look back with joy on the way that God has led them. But at the same time they appreciate that the most blessed times are yet ahead, when God's will is to be done on earth as in heaven and when there will be no more

death, neither sorrow nor crying nor pain.—Matt. 6:10; Rev. 21:4.

While Christians have always had reason to look forward, today there is more reason than ever; in fact, there is an urgency about it. After telling his disciples of the calamity to come upon Jerusalem in the first century, Jesus said: "Let the man on the housetop not come down to take the goods out of his house; and let the man in the field not return to the house to pick up his outer garment." (Matt. 24:17, 18) Is it not even more urgent today in the "last days" of the present system of things? Of similar import is the warning Jesus gave to "remember the wife of Lot." She had been warned not to look backward, but she failed to heed that warning and it cost her her life. She no doubt looked back with longing. Do not make her mistake!—Luke 17:32.

Be wise, heed the counsel of God's Word, keep looking forward. Forget the things behind, be they misfortunes, mistakes, injuries or material things above what is necessary. While enjoying present blessings, look hopefully forward to the triumph of righteousness, when "the former things will not be called to mind."—Isa. 65:17.

COMING IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- Be a Good Listener!
- Fight Indifference with Endurance!
- Godly Respect for Life and Blood.
- Choosing a Modern Bible Translation.

HOW TO PRAY and BE HEARD BY GOD

THE Bible says of Jehovah God: "O Hearer of prayer, even to you people of all flesh will come." (Ps. 65:2) Yes, God does hear prayers. And persons in all the earth who love the truth, who long to do his will, and who approach him in the way he approves, can enjoy this precious privilege. (Acts 10:34, 35) Really, what a marvelous privilege it is to be able to talk to the glorious Ruler of all the universe and know that he hears you!—Ps. 8:1, 3, 4; Isa. 45:22.

Encouragingly, his written Word promises: "Do not be anxious over anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication along with thanksgiving let your petitions be made known to God; and the peace of God that excels all thought will guard your hearts and your mental powers by means of Christ Jesus."—Phil. 4: 6, 7.

However, some may personally feel uncertain about the matter of prayer because many of their prayers seem to have gone unanswered. Why is this? It is important for us to know. In his Word, God makes clear what his will is regarding prayer.

THE WAY OF APPROACH TO GOD IN PRAYER

The Bible tells us that "he that approaches God must believe that he is and that he becomes the rewarder of those earnestly seeking him." (Heb. 11:6) Notice that this scripture says we are to 'approach God.'

As the true and living God, Jehovah wants us to pray to Him, not to someone else. Prayer is part of our worship and for this reason should be directed only to the Creator, Jehovah. (Matt. 4:10) Jesus Christ taught his followers to pray to his "Father in the heavens." (Matt. 6:9) Jesus did not teach them to pray to himself, nor to his human mother Mary, nor to any other person. Jehovah is all-powerful, all-wise, perfect in justice and in love. So, why should we go to any lesser person? Further, the inspired apostle Paul assures us that God "is not far off from each one of us," if we seek him in the right way.—Acts 17:27.

But you may say, "How can we, as imperfect creatures with inherited sin, pray to a God who is perfect and righteous?" Jehovah has lovingly taken this into consideration and provided a "helper" to speak for us in heaven. That helper is "Jesus Christ, a righteous one."—1 John 2:1, 2.

Jesus gave his life as a ransom for mankind. Moreover, Jehovah has appointed him as his High Priest. Jehovah requires us to recognize the position of his Son in His purpose and to offer all our prayers in his name. That is why Jesus told his followers: "No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6) Jesus also said: "If you ask the Father for anything he will give it to you in my name." (John 16:23) For our prayers to be acceptable to God, then, we must pray

to Jehovah God through his Son, that is, in the name of Jesus.

PRAYERS THAT ARE PLEASING TO GOD

At 1 Peter 3:12 we read: "The eyes of Jehovah are upon the righteous ones, and his ears are toward their supplication." Thus, if our prayers are to please God, we must be sincere in trying to live our lives in harmony with the righteous principles of God's Word. If one rejects God's Word and His will he should not expect God to answer his prayers for help in time of trouble. The Bible plainly states: "He that is turning his ear away from hearing the law—even his prayer is something detestable."—Prov. 28:9; 15:29.

Also, to those who do not respect the sacredness of life, God says: "Even though you make many prayers, I am not listening; with bloodshed your very hands have become filled." (Isa. 1:15) In this "time of the end" when violence, immorality, dishonesty, false worship and other wrong conduct are becoming more and more common, we certainly need to consider seriously the way we live our daily lives if we want our prayers to be heard by God.—1 John 3:21, 22.

What we pray for also has much to do with determining whether God will answer our prayers. Jesus gave his disciples a model prayer to guide them as to the kind of prayer God accepts. He said: "You must pray, then, this way: 'Our Father in the heavens, let your name be sanctified. Let your kingdom come. Let your will take place, as in heaven, also upon earth. Give us today our bread for this day; and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the wicked one.'"—Matt. 6:9-13.

This prayer shows that God's name and purposes should be our first concern. Next, we may ask for our material needs, for

forgiveness and for deliverance from temptation and from the wicked one. Note, too, that Jesus teaches us to pray to "our Father" to "give us today our bread" and to "forgive us." This shows that, when praying, a person should think not just of himself, or of his own problems and needs. Instead he should unselfishly broaden out his prayers to include others. We should include, not only our own family and relatives, but others who are seeking to please God, and especially those who face trials and difficulties in their service to God.—Jas. 5:16; Eph. 6:18-20.

The apostle John writes: "This is the confidence that we have toward him, that, no matter what it is that we ask according to his will, he hears us." (1 John 5:14) Yes, every part of a Christian's life is a proper matter for prayer. But the important thing is that what he requests be in harmony with God's will. This is a foremost reason why many prayers go unanswered. The person has not really applied the Bible counsel: "*Trust in Jehovah with all your heart and do not lean upon your own understanding. In all your ways take notice of him . . . Fear Jehovah.*"—Prov. 3:5-7.

So, rather than deciding what we want to do or have, and praying to God about it, is it not proper to find out first what God wants of us, and then frame our prayers accordingly? Certainly we do not want to be classed among those of whom it is written: "You do ask, and yet you do not receive, because you are asking for a wrong purpose, that you may expend it upon your cravings for sensual pleasure." We should always take Jehovah's will into consideration in our prayers.—Jas. 4:3, 13-15.

By our study of God's Word and by our experience in serving him in association with other true Christians we can come to understand his will. (Rom. 12:2) The

psalmist prayed: "Make me understand, that I may observe your law and that I may keep it with the whole heart. Cause me to tread in the pathway of your commandments, for in it I have taken delight. Incline my heart to your reminders, and not to profits."—Ps. 119:34-36.

If we pray to God in faith, he will generously give us the wisdom we need to cope with the problems of life. (Jas. 1:5-8) He will help us to know and do what will bring honor to his own great name, and this will result also in our own happiness.—Ps. 84:11, 12.

THE PROPER MANNER OF PRAYING

Does God require that we assume a certain position when praying or that we go to a particular building to pray? His Word shows that he does not. For example, in the days of God's servant Ezra, worshipers prostrated themselves with their faces to the ground. Daniel prayed in his roof chamber three times daily, kneeling on his knees. Others stood. Jesus raised his eyes to heaven.—Neh. 8:6; Dan. 6:10; Mark 11:25; John 11:41.

Jesus indicated that it is good to have privacy in personal prayer, going into one's own room to pray. (Matt. 6:6) And though Jesus himself prayed at times in public places, he strongly condemned praying before others just to be seen by them and to make a show of one's "holiness." He also showed that God does not approve of using the very same words over and over again in prayer. (Matt. 6:5, 7, 8) Why is this?

It is because what really matters to God is what is in our heart. "For, as regards Jehovah, his eyes are roving about through all the earth to show his strength in behalf of those whose heart is complete toward him." (2 Chron. 16:9) How could our prayer express what is in our

heart if it is simply read out of a prayer book? So, when we pray, we should do so from the heart, with humility. "God opposes the haughty ones, but he gives undeserved kindness to the humble ones."

—Jas. 4:6.

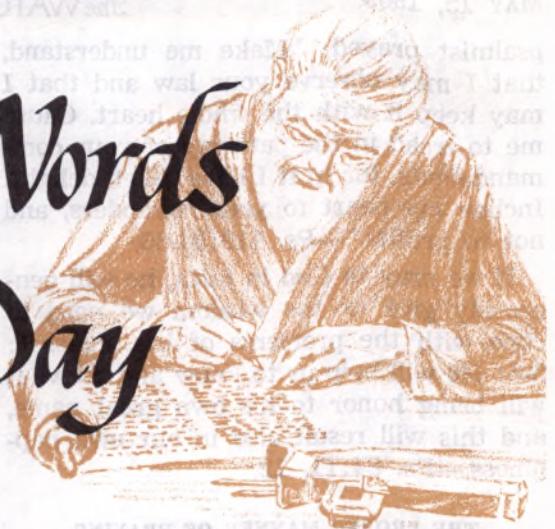
In our prayers there is no value in using language that is unusual or high-sounding. Rather, we should talk to God as we would to a close and trusted friend and as a son to his father. Our prayer may even be a silent one, in our heart. (1 Sam. 1:12, 13) At times we may not find just the right words to express our thoughts to God. But we can be confident that God knows our needs and will understand our simple prayer.

APPRECIATING THE PRIVILEGE OF PRAYER

We all reach times in our lives when no human help is available or when the help humans offer is not sufficient for our needs. Then it is to God alone that we must turn. However, if we love Jehovah and appreciate the privilege of prayer we certainly will not wait for such occasions to speak to him. Instead, we will approach him regularly, frequently, with expressions of thanksgiving and praise, as well as with our petitions and requests. (Eph. 6:18; 1 Thess. 5:17, 18) A family benefits greatly from prayer, even the simple expression of thanks to God at mealtimes, following the example of Jesus.—Matt. 14:19.

Truly, private prayer, family prayer and congregational prayer all bring marvelous benefits. Prayer shows a frank recognition of our complete dependence on God for everything. It draws us close to fellow worshipers. It brings upon us the peace of the loving Creator. It promotes the flow of God's holy spirit in our lives. It helps us to be confident about the future. It is a gift from God and one that we should appreciate and use.

LISTEN TO Daniel's Words FOR Our Day



THE prophet Daniel foretold the momentous times in which we are now living. Rich in prophetic meaning for our day, Daniel's prophetic writings are a source of strength and encouragement to Christians today. They can be thrilled to have Daniel's marvelous visions and prophecies for this "time of the end." Yes, that is where the term "time of the end" originates—from Daniel's writings. Daniel was so keenly interested in the fulfillment of his prophecies that he asked God's angel about the matter. The angel told him that the fulfillment was a secret and sealed up until the "time of the end," and that is exactly where we are now. How thrilled Daniel would be if he could be alive today as his book of prophecy is opened up to human understanding! Oh, how he would rejoice and delight to reach this time in history for the climax of his prophetic words! So we should take great delight in examining Daniel's words for our day, feeling especially privileged to understand what Daniel himself could not discern.

—Dan. 12:4, 8, 9.

² Who was this prophet? Daniel wrote his prophecies mostly in Babylon. He was taken there by King Nebuchadnezzar with

"And he went on to say: 'Go, Daniel, because the words are made secret and sealed up until the time of the end.'”—Dan. 12:9.

certain others who were selected to get special training for service at the king's court. With Daniel there were Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, but Nebuchadnezzar changed their names to the ones with which we are more familiar, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. These four youths from the tribe of Judah probably ranged in age from about fourteen to eighteen years.—Dan. 1:1-7.

³ They were slaves in Babylon, and Daniel knew they would be in exile a long time. He was there before Jerusalem was destroyed in 607 B.C.E. And after that event, he knew, the whole land of Judah would lie desolate for seventy years. What a long time to be away from their homeland!—Dan. 9:1, 2; Jer. 29:10.

VISION OF GOD'S KINGDOM ESTABLISHED

⁴ The years passed and soon the day approached when the luster of Babylonian world power must be forever dimmed. The last of its dynasty of Chaldean kings was

1. When were the words of the prophet Daniel to be opened up to human understanding, and why should we feel specially privileged?

2, 3. How did Daniel come to be in Babylon, and on what basis did he know that he and his companions would be there a long time?

4, 5. In the first year of Belshazzar, king of Babylon, what visions did Daniel have, and how did he describe the opening of Court in heaven?

on the throne of world government. It was the first year of Belshazzar, king of Babylon. (Dan. 7:1-8) The dream and visions of Daniel's own head upon his bed in that year had to do with the rise and fall of world powers, symbolized by frightful beasts. As the eyes of the prophet Daniel turned from the dreadful fourth beast out of the sea, he was given a vision of a heavenly scene that vitally concerns our day:

⁵ "I kept on beholding until there were thrones placed and the Ancient of Days sat down. His clothing was white just like snow, and the hair of his head was like clean wool. His throne was flames of fire . . . There was a stream of fire flowing and going out from before him. There were a thousand thousands that kept ministering to him, and ten thousand times ten thousand that kept standing right before him. The Court took its seat, and there were books that were opened."—Dan. 7:9, 10.

⁶ What a marvelous vision! Court is in session in heaven, and the setting is during our time, from the year 1914 C.E. onward. During this time the judgment of the nations is taking place. Soon Jehovah God will proceed to execute the national governments and empires represented by the ferocious beasts described by Daniel. The Ancient of Days is none other than Jehovah God. Since the autumn of 1914 C.E. the books or records made by the nations during the "seven times" of Gentile rule have been opened. A beastly record comes under the scrutiny of the great Judge. The "appointed times of the nations" have run out. (Luke 21:24) The nations deserve no further lease of sovereignty over the earth. So the time has come for the Permanent Heir of King David to be installed as king at this momentous time in history.

6. (a) Who is the Ancient of Days, and when does this vision of the opening of Court in heaven have its fulfillment? (b) What books come under the scrutiny of the heavenly Judge, and why?

⁷ Picture in your mind all those angels in heaven standing before the Ancient of Days—a hundred million of them—waiting to hear and rejoice in his righteous decrees. Well may we marvel at the 100,000,000 angels standing before the Supreme Judge. When you think of it, an attendance of one million angels would be stupendous. What skill it must take to deal with so many, so many millions! How can he see them all and deal with so many at once? How Jehovah God manages all these angels single-handedly is staggering to our imagination. What a great and wonderful Organizer! A hundred million dealt with, and each one assigned his work. This should give strong encouragement to those in Jehovah's visible organization today. The Great Organizer can help his people in the organization of the Kingdom work, and, further, we can be confident that these ministering angels will aid us in time of need and assist us to get the Kingdom preaching work done. Let us work with these angels, our heavenly brothers, who stand in the presence of the Ancient of Days.—Prov. 16:3; Heb. 1:14.

⁸ But now Daniel sees a thrilling sight: "I kept on beholding in the visions of the night, and, see there! with the clouds of the heavens someone like a son of man happened to be coming; and to the Ancient of Days he gained access, and they brought him up close even before that One. And to him there were given rulership and dignity and kingdom, that the peoples, national groups and languages should all serve even him. His rulership is an indefinitely lasting rulership that will not pass away, and his kingdom one that will not be brought to ruin."—Dan. 7:13, 14.

7. (a) Why may we marvel at this vision of the angels' standing before the Ancient of Days? (b) What encouragement is there to God's people, especially for overseers and ministerial servants, in this vision? 8. Whom does Daniel next see as gaining access to the Ancient of Days, and what is given to him?

⁹ Who is this being ushered into the Divine Court? It is "someone like a son of man." But is this not a heavenly scene? Yes, but the term "son of man" here pointed forward to the time when this heavenly Son of God would become a man on earth and be known as Jesus Christ. Now he is exalted to heavenly glory, but he still retains the title "son of man," which he earned by his faithful course on earth. Here in this vision Daniel sees the "Son of man," the Lord Jesus Christ. (Matt. 25:31) The time has come at last for him to appear before the Ancient of Days and to ask for the things that are due him according to the covenant for the kingdom over all the earth. (Ps. 110:1-6) All the evidence, visible and spiritual, proves that Jesus Christ has been given 'the nations as his inheritance and the ends of the earth as his own possession,' to fulfill Daniel's vision. (Ps. 2:8) What a thrilling time in which to be living, now that Jesus Christ has been given Kingdom power and rules as King!

TEST OVER ISSUE OF WORSHIP

¹⁰ With God's kingdom established in the heavens, the issue facing all professed Christians is critical: To whom will they render worship? To Jehovah Most High who rules as King through his Son? Or to man-made gods and images? (Rev. 11:15, 17; 13:11-18) Helping Christians in their determination never to give in to idolatrous worship is the example of the faithfulness of Daniel's three companions, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. Although they were still slaves, they were appointed over the administration of the jurisdictional district of Babylon. Even as all servants of Jehovah must eventually

face tests of faith, Satan was maneuvering those faithful witnesses of Jehovah into direct conflict with the king over the issue of worship.

¹¹ King Nebuchadnezzar had a great image of gold made. (Dan. 3:1-3) It was about nine stories high and nine feet thick. He then began to call the prefects and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the police magistrates and all the administrators of the jurisdictional districts to come to the inauguration of the image. But why did the king make such a costly golden image? Well, history records that King Nebuchadnezzar was extremely religious, so much so that the annals of Babylon give more attention to his exploits regarding religion and worship of the gods of Babylon than they do to his military operations. And here on the plain of Dura this religious-minded king undoubtedly wanted to unite the world empire in worship. No name is given to this image in the Bible; however, it may have been erected in honor of the king's favorite god—Marduk. Perhaps to put them all in a religious frame of mind, the king arranged for some kind of music to be played. At the king's command the royal herald cried out loudly:

¹² "To you it is being said, O peoples, national groups and languages, that at the time that you hear the sound of the horn, the pipe, the zither, the triangular harp, the stringed instrument, the bagpipe and all sorts of musical instruments, *you fall* down and worship the image of gold that Nebuchadnezzar the king has set up. And whoever does not fall down and worship will at the same moment be thrown into the burning fiery furnace."—Dan. 3:4-6.

¹³ The three Hebrews, obedient to the

9. (a) Who is identified as the "son of man," and why appropriately so? (b) What time has arrived, in harmony with what was foretold in the Psalms?

10. What issue specially faces Christians today, and whose example do they have to help them to meet it?

11, 12. (a) What image did King Nebuchadnezzar set up, and what may have been his purpose? (b) What proclamation did the royal herald make?

13. Explain how the three Hebrews rendered obedience to the State as far as they could.

king's command to assemble, appeared on the plain of Dura. But what would Daniel's three companions do? They went as far as they could by assembling with the others—but they refused to bow! Nebuchadnezzar had so much wanted to have 100-percent participation in this exercise, and here these three men were refusing to join in!

¹⁴ Today the faithful servants of Jehovah face a similar situation. The thirteenth chapter of Revelation, after the previous chapter's discussion of the establishment of God's heavenly kingdom, tells about the worship of the "wild beast" and the "image" of the wild beast, and how this idolatrous worship will be enforced in all the inhabited earth, under one guise or another. So the issue today is the same: Will it be worship of Jehovah God or of false gods? And the Devil's purpose today is the same as formerly: He is trying to compel all at the cost of their jobs and lives to take part in idolatry. The Devil uses extreme, drastic measures, these diabolical efforts being referred to at Revelation 12:17, where we are told that the symbolic dragon goes forth to wage war against the true followers of Jesus Christ.

¹⁵ This burning issue of worship faced Jehovah's witnesses thirty years ago in Nazi Germany. Anyone who would not heil Hitler with his arm raised to the swastika was sent off to a concentration camp, to suffer brutal treatment. Today, behind the Iron Curtain the State forbids the preaching of the good news of God's established kingdom, whether this is done by word of mouth or in printed form. Over the years thousands of the

Christian witnesses of Jehovah have been imprisoned because of refusing to bow to the ungodly demands of the Communist state, to stop preaching the good news. In many lands the issue of nationalism has come to the fore, in which the State demands the worship that belongs to God alone. To help Christians in these critical times, they have the fine example of the three faithful Hebrews who rendered exclusive devotion to Jehovah despite the most fearsome threats.

¹⁶ Just like some rulers or officials today who want all citizens to bow in worship of the State or their religious gods, when Nebuchadnezzar heard that Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego would not bow down, he went into a rage and ordered an investigation. So they were brought in before him. Could you imagine yourself standing there before the infuriated king of the Third World Power when he asked: "Is it really so, O Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, that you are not serving my own gods, and the image of gold that I have set up you are not worshiping?" (Dan. 3:13, 14) These men were fine servants in everything else. Why should they step out of line now and not do this little thing? 'Just bow down, that is all I am asking of you.' Nebuchadnezzar was prepared to give them another chance:

¹⁷ "Now if you are ready so that when you hear the sound of the horn, the pipe, the zither, the triangular harp, the stringed instrument, and the bagpipe and all sorts of musical instruments, you fall down and worship the image that I have made, all right. But if you do not worship, at that same moment you will be thrown into the burning fiery furnace. And who is that god that can rescue you out of my hands?"—Dan. 3:15.

14. (a) Why do Jehovah's people face a similar situation in our day? (b) Why is the Devil expected to resort to drastic measures in our day, even as he did with the three Hebrews?

15. Show how the issue of worship is a major issue in modern times, and what encouragement do we have to be faithful to God?

16, 17. How did Nebuchadnezzar react when he heard that the three Hebrews refused to worship the golden image?

BENEFIT OF DECIDING BEFOREHAND

¹⁸ It did not take these men a moment to decide. Their minds were already made up. They knew from their youth up whom they would serve. Without hesitation Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego answered: "O Nebuchadnezzar, we are under no necessity in this regard to say back a word to you. If it is to be, our God whom we are serving is able to rescue us. Out of the burning fiery furnace and out of your hand, O king, he will rescue us. But if not, let it become known to you, O king, that your gods are not the ones we are serving, and the image of gold that you have set up we will not worship."—Dan. 3:16, 17.

¹⁹ What these men were commanded to do was obviously worship. In our day the issue is not so clear, so sharply defined, but it is there in some form. To pass the tests faithfully in our day true Christians likewise should determine their course in advance. What is their position toward State images and songs that eulogize nations? The three faithful Hebrews *had* to appear before Nebuchadnezzar's image, but often today dedicated Christians can take steps to avoid difficult situations. However, when these cannot be avoided and the servants of God are faced with a choice between idolatry and faithfulness to Jehovah, the true Christians must be just as uncompromising as Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, no matter how fearsome may be the threat if they refuse to bow in compromise to other gods. In one African country a few years ago, a large group of Christians were peacefully assembled at a convention when armed soldiers came in and marched them off to a

18. Why did not the three Hebrews need time to decide their course of action, and what did they say in answer to the king?

19. (a) What should Christians today do who wish to pass tests of integrity? (b) What course is often open to us today that was not to the three Hebrews? (c) What modern-day example of faithfulness like the three Hebrews do we have?

government compound, there to be beaten, insulted and tortured until they agreed to salute a State emblem. It appeared that it was either salute or die! Those who remained firm, trusting in Jehovah, were richly blessed by him. They were delivered from their tormentors, just as it was with Jehovah's faithful witnesses in Daniel's day.—Ex. 20:4, 5; 1 Cor. 10:14.

²⁰ After those Hebrews had been thrown alive into the fiery furnace, Nebuchadnezzar saw a frightening thing. In fact, Daniel tells how Nebuchadnezzar rose up in a hurry and said to his royal officials: "Was it not three able-bodied men that we threw bound into the midst of the fire? . . . Look! I am beholding four able-bodied men walking about free in the midst of the fire, and there is no hurt to them, and the appearance of the fourth one is resembling a son of the gods." (Dan. 3:24, 25) Then he got as close as he could to the door of the burning fiery furnace and called out: "Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, you servants of the Most High God, step out and come here!"—Dan. 3:26.

²¹ When they came out everyone could see that the fire had had no power over their bodies and not a hair of their head had been singed, and even their clothing—why, there was not even the smell of fire upon it! Their faithfulness under trial proved to be a great witness to all the onlookers back there and even to the king who, obviously shaken by this experience, was moved to say: "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who sent his angel and rescued his servants that trusted in him and that changed the very word of the king and gave over their bodies, because they would not serve and would not worship any god at all except their own God. . . . there does not exist

20. What happened after the three Hebrews were thrown into the burning fiery furnace?

21. How did the faithfulness of the three Hebrews result in a great witness to all the onlookers?

another god that is able to deliver like this one."—Dan. 3:28, 29.

²² Like these men, Jehovah's witnesses today cannot compromise. In some countries they must preach the Kingdom good news underground. In others they meet secretly in order to be strengthened for the work ahead. Though they are law-abiding Christians, when faced squarely with an issue involving integrity to Jehovah, they cannot bow to the whim or dictates of nationalistic rulers. The very same issue is facing Jehovah's people today as in Daniel's time: 'Whom do you worship?' Sooner or later such tests will come upon most of God's servants, and those who have resolutely made their decision beforehand may be expected to prove faithful. Better it is to make that decision now than to put it off until one is faced with some test. How timely the record of these faithful men of old! How encouraging for faithful servants of God today to see the outcome that Jehovah God gave to those who refused to worship other gods!

PROPHETIC TREE DREAM

²³ One night more than eight years before Nebuchadnezzar died he had a frightening dream. When all the magic-practicing priests of Babylon failed to give him the interpretation, Daniel was called in to the imperial presence, and the mighty world ruler said to him: "Tell me the visions of my dream that I have beheld and its interpretation." (Dan. 4:9) The dream was of an immense tree that an angel from heaven commanded to be chopped down. Its stump was banded with iron and copper and had to stay that way among the grass of the field until "seven

22. (a) Show how the basic issue is the same today as in Daniel's day. (b) Since tests come upon most of God's servants, what is the wise course of action?

23. What dream did Nebuchadnezzar have more than eight years before he died, and what did Daniel say in interpretation?

times" passed over it. The angel in the dream had said: "Let its heart be changed from that of mankind, and let the heart of a beast be given to it, and let seven times pass over it." But what was the meaning of this dream? Would its interpretation prove to be equally frightening to King Nebuchadnezzar? Listen to Daniel's words: "The tree that you beheld, . . . it is you, O king."—Dan. 4:10-22.

²⁴ Imagine how this must have heightened Nebuchadnezzar's interest as he listened attentively to Daniel's explanation that followed. Daniel revealed that he was to be driven from his throne into the field to eat grass like bulls. But, like that double-banded tree stump, his kingdom was to be held for him until he had spent "seven times" in such a degraded state. Only then would he come to his senses and be obliged to confess that the Most High God rules supreme and gives the kingdom of mankind to whom He wants to give it. One year later the dream was fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar while he was walking upon his royal palace looking out over the magnificent city and one of the "Seven Wonders of the Ancient World," the hanging gardens of Babylon. How exalted he felt as he viewed all this glory! boastfully he spoke: "Is not this Babylon the Great, that I myself have built for the royal house with the strength of my might and for the dignity of my majesty?"—Dan. 4:29, 30.

²⁵ Nebuchadnezzar had no sooner spoken those words than a voice from heaven announced that the tree dream would be fulfilled upon him now! At that very moment he was seized with madness and went out into the field to eat grass like a bull and stayed there for seven years. At the end of that period his understanding came back to him, and he now rendered

24, 25. (a) What was to happen to Nebuchadnezzar, and why? (b) On what occasion was the tree dream fulfilled upon him, and how?

praise to the Most High God rather than appropriating it to himself. That dream and its direct fulfillment upon Nebuchadnezzar were prophetic, reaching right down to the twentieth century.

²⁶ When Nebuchadnezzar destroyed God's typical kingdom of Israel, a transfer of domination to the victorious Gentile world power took place. Gentile governments were now to rule the earth without any interference from the kingdom of Jehovah God even in a typical way, until "seven times" had passed. The tree, which pictured world domination by God's kingdom, was banded and its stump left in the ground. This symbolized that the One who originally held world domination would not forever let go of it. The banding of the stump gave assurance that the tree was not dead and that its rootstock was destined to sprout again.

²⁷ Prophetically, during the "seven times" of Gentile rule, God's kingdom would remain low, like that tree stump.

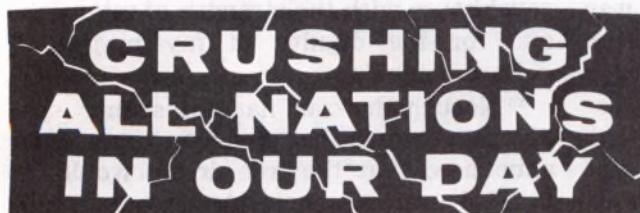
26. (a) With the destruction of Jerusalem in 607 B.C.E. what transfer of domination took place? (b) What was pictured by the tree and by the banded stump?

27. (a) What was symbolized by Nebuchadnezzar's insane conduct? (b) What do the Scriptures show the length of seven prophetic times to be, reaching into what time period?

Nebuchadnezzar's insane bestial conduct during the period when the seven literal times passed over him pictured how the Gentile rulers would conduct themselves in a bestial manner during the time of their world dominance. The Scriptures show the length of the "seven times" of Gentile rule to have been a period of 2,520 years, stretching forward from 607 B.C.E. to 1914 C.E., yes, right into our twentieth century!

²⁸ In 1914 God removed the bands around the symbolic tree, and he has raised up the Lord Jesus Christ and clothed him with world domination. God's kingdom now rules! It is only by Jehovah's long-suffering that the Gentile powers remain, for he could have wiped the nations out in the years immediately following the reestablishment of his kingdom. Whether they recognize it or not the Gentile nations rule today only by God's toleration. Jehovah permits their continuance for a few years more so that sheeplike persons from all nations may come out of this system of things before its Armageddon end.

28. What took place at the end of the seven symbolic times, and why does Jehovah permit the nations to continue yet for a little while?



by GOD'S KINGDOM

"In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be brought to ruin. . . . It will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, and it itself will stand to times indefinite." —Dan. 2:44.

JEHOVAH notified Nebuchadnezzar in the second year of his reign as world ruler, or in 606-605 B.C.E., that he would

begin the march of world powers, which would run for 2,520 years from the fall

¹ Concerning what did God notify King Nebuchadnezzar, and by what means?

of 607 B.C.E. God also disclosed to Nebuchadnezzar that He would eventually crush all the nations of the earth by means of His kingdom. He did this by sending a dream that the king of Babylon could not recall on awakening, but the terror of the forgotten dream stuck with him. He called for the magicians and other wise men to interpret the dream. When they could not tell him what the dream was, much less the interpretation, the enraged king issued a decree for all the wise men of Babylon to be destroyed—and this included Daniel and his three companions.—Dan. 2:1-13.

² When Daniel heard of this harsh order, he asked Arioch, the chief of the king's bodyguard, the reason for it. Then Daniel went in to the king and asked for a stay of execution, that he might learn the dream and give the king its interpretation. Daniel and his three companions sought Jehovah's help in prayer. In a night vision Jehovah revealed to Daniel the secret, causing Daniel to bless the name of God and to say: "He is changing times and seasons, removing kings and setting up kings, giving wisdom to the wise ones and knowledge to those knowing discernment." (Dan. 2:14-23) Daniel then went to see Arioch, the appointed executioner, and asked to be taken in before the king, who was answering and saying to Daniel: "Are you competent enough to make known to me the dream that I beheld, and its interpretation?"—Dan. 2:25, 26.

³ What Daniel answered is of the highest importance today, because he said: "There exists a God in the heavens who is a Revealer of secrets, and he has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what is to occur in the final part of the days,"

2. (a) Faced with the threat of execution, what did Daniel and his companions do? (b) After receiving the interpretation from God, what did Daniel say and do? 3, 4. (a) How did Daniel show that the dream's interpretation is of vital importance today? (b) Describe the prophetic dream.

our days. (Dan. 2:28) Daniel disclaimed any wisdom of his own as he now recalled this forgotten dream to the king's mind:

⁴ "You, O king, happened to be beholding, and, look! a certain immense image. That image, which was large and the brightness of which was extraordinary, was standing in front of you, and its appearance was dreadful. As regards that image, its head was of good gold, its breasts and its arms were of silver, its belly and its thighs were of copper, its legs were of iron, its feet were partly of iron and partly of molded clay. You kept on looking until a stone was cut out not by hands, and it struck the image on its feet of iron and of molded clay and crushed them. At that time the iron, the molded clay, the copper, the silver and the gold were, all together, crushed and became like the chaff from the summer threshing floor, and the wind carried them away so that no trace at all was found of them. And as for the stone that struck the image, it became a large mountain and filled the whole earth."—Dan. 2:29-35.

⁵ Amazed, the king of Babylon must have recognized the description, but what did it all mean? Daniel explained: "This is the dream, and its interpretation we shall say before the king. You, O king, the king of kings, you to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the might, and the strength and the dignity . . . you yourself are the head of gold. And after you there will rise another kingdom inferior to you; and another kingdom, a third one, of copper, that will rule over the whole earth. And as for the fourth kingdom, it will prove to be strong like iron."—Dan. 2:36-40.

DREAM IMAGE RELATES TO OUR DAY

⁶ How precisely the prophetic words of

5. How did Daniel interpret the dream?
6. How do history and Bible prophecy agree, with regard to the dream image and its interpretation?

Daniel have been fulfilled! The golden head pictured the Babylonian World Power beginning with Nebuchadnezzar. Then arose the Medo-Persian Empire, pictured by the silver breasts and arms. Next came the Grecian World Power, foretold by the belly and thighs of copper. But what is represented by the legs of iron? A fourth imperial system, starting off with imperial Rome, and then merging into the Anglo-American World Empire. History shows that Great Britain really got started as an offshoot of the Roman Empire, and hence the final world power is included in the iron of Nebuchadnezzar's dream image. This is also shown in Daniel chapters 7 and 8, where the Anglo-American dual World Power is represented by the little horn, which is shown to grow up out of the Roman World Power.

⁷ But there was a final or completing part of the symbolic image—its feet made partly of iron and partly of clay. On this the prophet Daniel made the following inspired comment to the king: "And whereas you beheld the feet and the toes to be partly of molded clay of a potter and partly of iron, the kingdom itself will prove to be divided, but somewhat of the hardness of iron will prove to be in it . . . And as for the toes of the feet being partly of iron and partly of molded clay, the kingdom will partly prove to be strong and will partly prove to be fragile. . . . they will not prove to be sticking together, this one to that one, just as iron is not mixing with molded clay."—Dan. 2:41-43.

⁸ What possible significance could the ten toes have? These picture all the co-existing powers and governments on earth today, since the number ten is a Biblical number symbolizing earthly completeness. So the dream image relates to our day

7, 8. (a) What did Daniel say with regard to the feet of the symbolic image? (b) What is the significance of the ten toes, and how has the image kept on developing after the appearance of the final world power?

indeed! We should keep in mind that this image did not become static with the appearance of the final world power. The image had to keep on developing in order to include the weakening influence of the socialistic, democratic elements against the imperial, dictatorial powers of this world. Ever since 1914 the weakening influence of democracy and socialism has gone forward particularly against that part of the iron feet of the image represented by "the king of the north." The ten toes of the image picture all the nations, not merely those that have thus far gained admission to the U.N. At this stage comes the dramatic climax of Nebuchadnezzar's dream. The prophet Daniel continues his interpretation; his words have vital meaning for our day:

⁹ "And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be brought to ruin. And the kingdom itself will not be passed on to any other people. It will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, and it itself will stand to times indefinite; forasmuch as you beheld that out of the mountain a stone was cut not by hands, and that it crushed the iron, the copper, the molded clay, the silver and the gold. The grand God himself has made known to the king what is to occur after this. And the dream is reliable, and the interpretation of it is trustworthy."—Dan. 2:44, 45.

CRUSHING OF THE SYMBOLIC IMAGE BY THE KINGDOM STONE

¹⁰ In the interpretation by Daniel, he saw a stone cut out of a mountain not by hands. Here is pictured the establishment of God's kingdom in the heavens in 1914 C.E., which establishment was by no hu-

9. What trustworthy interpretation does Daniel give as to the destiny of the symbolic image?

10, 11. What is pictured by (a) the stone cut out of a mountain without hands? (b) the mountain? (c) the stone's smashing the image?

man hands. The mountain stands for Jehovah God's universal sovereignty. The kingdom is an expression of God's universal sovereignty.—Dan. 2:34.

¹¹ This birth of God's kingdom occurred "in the days of those kings." That means not merely the kings pictured by the ten toes but also those pictured by the iron, copper, silver and gold parts of the image, since basic remnants of those previous world powers were still in existence in 1914 C.E. So the symbolic image seen in the dream was complete in 1914. Of course, many new nations have come into existence since then, but at that date they were part of the then division of the nations of the world. The ten toes picture all the nations. And so the stone's hitting and smashing the image pictures nothing less than the destruction of all the kingdoms of the world today by God's kingdom!

¹² That kingdom will break in pieces and destroy all the kingdoms pictured in the metallic image and bring them to an everlasting end at Armageddon! That kingdom is speeding on its mission. At Armageddon the Kingdom Stone will strike the symbolic image with crushing impact, destroying every nation, whether it be of a socialistic, communistic or democratic type, also the so-called neutral nations being included. All will be annihilated! The nations of the earth will be ground to powder, and the wind of God's storm will sweep the powder away like the chaff on the threshing floor, never to be brought together again on earth. Like the image-smashing stone that grew to mountain size to fill our en-

12. What mission is the Kingdom Stone speeding to accomplish, and what is symbolized by the stone's becoming a large mountain, filling the earth?

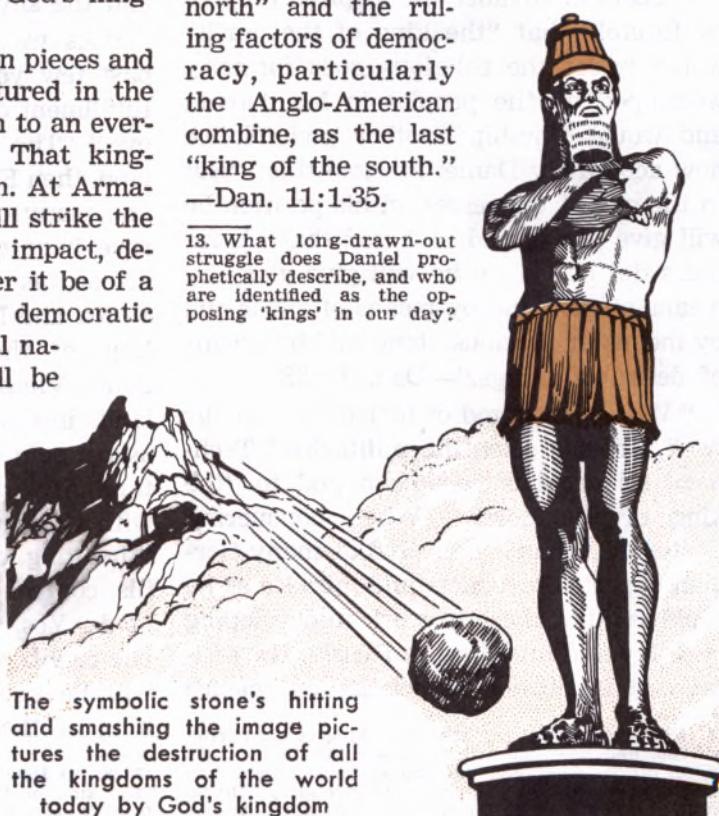
tire earth, God's kingdom will become the governmental mountain that will fill the whole earth and dominate all its affairs. Truly, Daniel's prophecies are for our day!

TODAY'S INTERNATIONAL POWER STRUGGLE

¹³ As we peer closely into the book of Daniel to learn of further things that were prophesied to occur in our day, we find Daniel's description, given him by God's angel, of a long-drawn-out warfare between opposing governments called "the king of the north" and "the king of the south," running from the days of ancient Greece down to our day. But who are these kings in our day? The facts of history in fulfillment of this reliable prophecy show the ruling factors of totalitarianism, particularly world communism, to be the final "king of the north" and the ruling factors of democracy, particularly the Anglo-American combine, as the last "king of the south."

—Dan. 11:1-35.

13. What long-drawn-out struggle does Daniel prophetically describe, and who are identified as the opposing 'kings' in our day?



¹⁴ After discussing material that is now history, the prophecy focuses attention on our generation and settles upon the totalitarian "king of the north." What does Daniel say this king will do? "And the king will actually do according to his own will, and he will exalt himself and magnify himself above every god." (Dan. 11:36, 37) Has he not exalted the godless political state to a position higher than any god worshiped formerly by his people? He has magnified himself over every earthly man-made "god," even going so far as to deny the existence of the Creator, Jehovah God. On August 6, 1961, when the Russian astronaut saw "no God or angels" during his seventeen orbits by a man-made satellite through outer space around our earth, he felt he had absolute proof that God did not exist.

¹⁵ Years in advance the inspired prophecy foretold that "the king of the north" would reject the religious gods formerly worshiped by the peoples in his domain and would worship another god. Notice how accurately Daniel foretold this: "But to the god of fortresses, in his position he will give glory; and to a god that his fathers did not know he will give glory by means of gold and by means of silver and by means of precious stone and by means of desirable things."—Dan. 11:38.

¹⁶ Who is the "god of fortresses," in our day? Modern, scientific militarism! Technical science has become a god to "the king of the north." When conquering Eastern Germany, he seized as many German experts on rockets and missiles as he could and put these to work in developing rocketry and missilery in Russia. His educational institutions specialize on science

and the production of engineers with a view to military domination of the whole earth. Today, in order to maintain a large army and to advance in space technology, the Communist "king of the north" has had to deprive his people of many consumer goods and material comforts. These desirable things are sacrificed at the altar of the god of scientific militarism.

¹⁷ What would all this result in? Daniel explains: "He will certainly prove successful . . . He will act effectively against the most fortified strongholds, along with a foreign god. Whoever has given him recognition he will make abound with glory . . . He will certainly enter into the lands and flood over and pass through. . . . He will keep thrusting out his hand against the lands; . . . He will actually rule over the hidden treasures of the gold and the silver."—Dan. 11:36, 39-43.

¹⁸ As we consider world events in the past few years, we can see the amazing fulfillment of these words before our very eyes! "The king of the north" seized Poland, then Eastern Germany and Hungary; and many other countries of eastern Europe have come under Communist domination, as have mainland China, North Korea and North Vietnam. And now "the king of the north" seeks control over South Vietnam. In many Latin American lands international communism is encouraging political unrest and guerrilla warfare. Africa and the Middle East are rife with Communist-sponsored subversion, as "the king of the north" tries to spread his control over the treasures in many lands. Yes, we have witnessed the fall of one country after another before him. But will he eventually gain control of "the king of the south"? Does Daniel tell us

14. What does Daniel say that "the king of the north" will do, and how has history shown this to be true?

15, 16. (a) To what god did Daniel foretell that "the king of the north" in our day would give glory? (b) So what has "the king of the north's" god proved to be?

17, 18. (a) How does Daniel describe the success of "the king of the north"? (b) What facts of history point to success for "the king of the north"?

the outcome of this international power struggle?

¹⁹ Yes, Daniel gives the final outcome. The final words of this prophecy say: "He will have to come all the way to his end, and there will be no helper for him." (Dan. 11:44, 45) Thus Daniel's prophecy reveals that "the king of the north" will not succeed in his ambitious aims to dominate the whole earth, especially to bring about the destruction of "the king of the south." However, the destruction of "the king of the north" will not be brought about by "the king of the south." On the contrary, both will meet their end at Jehovah's appointed time—the battle of Armageddon. Daniel's words (11:40-45) describe the approach of "the king of the north" to Armageddon and his position there at Armageddon, it being that of one in opposition to the anointed people of God and the "great crowd" of companion witnesses. At Armageddon Jehovah God will confuse "the king of the north" and "the king of the south" and cause them to fight against each other, as well as all of their on-hangers and supporters to fight against one another in self-ruin, suicidally. This is what Ezekiel 38:21-23 shows, as well as other scriptures.

MICHAEL STANDS UP IN THE MIDST OF HIS ENEMIES

²⁰ In the time period immediately preceding the battle of the great day of God the Almighty, the final chapter in the book of Daniel has its fulfillment. Note closely the words the angel spoke to Daniel: "And during that time Michael will stand up, the great prince who is standing

in behalf of the sons of your people. And there will certainly occur a time of distress such as has not been made to occur since there came to be a nation until that time."—Dan. 12:1.

²¹ That means that Michael becomes king in heaven. Michael stands up to reign during the conflict between "the king of the north" and "the king of the south." Hence, he stands up in the midst of his own enemies. Who is Michael? The first occurrence of the name in Daniel is in the tenth chapter, where Michael is described as "one of the foremost princes" that came to the aid of a lesser angel who was opposed by the "prince of the royal realm of Persia." (Dan. 10:13, 21) There is Scriptural evidence for concluding that Michael was the name of Jesus Christ before he left heaven and after his return. Michael is the only one said to be the "archangel," meaning chief angel or principal angel; the term occurring in the Bible only in the singular would seem to imply that there is only one chief or head of the angelic host. In the only other scripture besides Jude 9 where reference is made to an archangel it is definitely speaking about the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Thess. 4:16) So after a period of waiting Michael or the Lord Jesus Christ stands up, Daniel explaining that this expression "stand up" means to take up power and begin reigning as king. (Dan. 8:22, 23; 11:2, 3, 7, 20, 21; compare Hebrews 1:13; 10:12, 13.) In 1914, Jesus Christ was glorified in heaven at God's right hand, and as the "Son of man" he was brought to the throne of the Ancient of Days and was given dominion, glory and a kingdom.

²² Michael's standing up to reign in the midst of his enemies and to go subduing in their midst calls for a war, the like of

19. (a) Does "the king of the north" succeed in his ultimate aim of destroying "the king of the south"? Why? (b) Name one of the methods Jehovah God will use to annihilate the two 'kings' at Armageddon.

20, 21. (a) When does the last chapter of the book of Daniel find fulfillment, and what does verse one foretell? (b) Who is identified as being Michael, and why? (c) How does Michael stand up, and when?

22. Why does Michael's standing up call for an unprecedented time of trouble?

which there has never been before, a time of trouble more distressing than anything previous. This must be so, not just because the war that flamed up in 1914 was earth wide, but because this trouble on earth will surpass even the Noachian flood.—Matt. 24:21-39.

²³ This has also been a time of affliction for Jehovah's holy people, especially in 1918, when they were worn out by persecution and their preaching work was practically silenced by the war-maddened nations. But even this situation gave promise of a grand future for Jehovah's people. Note carefully the words of the angel associate of Michael as he swears with both arms upraised to heaven: "As soon as there will have been a finishing of the dashing of the power of the holy people to pieces, all these things will come to their finish."—Dan. 12:7.

²⁴ History shows that since May and June of 1918, when there was a dashing of the power of Jehovah's people to pieces, God's people have not been crushed again. They went through World War II and survived. Think of that! They are now going through the Communist period and all of its heyday and still Jehovah's people are not crushed, neither will they be crushed by the impending attack of Gog of Magog, because back there in 1918 the crushing of Jehovah's people reached its climax, never to be repeated with success. How Daniel would have rejoiced to understand these prophetic words!

²⁵ But Daniel did not know what all these things meant, and he never did find out, intensely interested though he was: "Now as for me, I heard, but I could not understand; so that I said: 'O my lord,

what will be the final part of these things?'" To those words the angel associate of Michael went on to say: "Go, Daniel, because the words are made secret and sealed up until the time of the end. And as for you yourself, go toward the end; and you will rest, but you will stand up for your lot at the end of the days."—Dan. 12:8, 9, 13.

²⁶ So Daniel was to go his way and rest now in Sheol, the common grave of mankind, and then 'stand up for his lot at the end of the days.' Daniel had already enjoyed wonderful privileges and experiences. Now he had something else to which to look forward. Though Daniel could not live to see the complete fulfillment of his visions and the events just foretold, yet we have been privileged to see them. That faithful prophet has much to which to look forward. His "lot" here does not necessarily mean the princely position he will attain to under the Messianic kingdom, though it could include that. His "lot" means his portion on earth in the New Order of things after Armageddon. Certainly Daniel will find things changed when he comes back in the resurrection. And he will want information on the standing up of the great Prince, Michael. So Jehovah's people will be looking for him in the resurrection, and they will want to get many details from him. Some of Jehovah's servants might discuss with him the contents of the book "*Your Will Be Done on Earth*," which volume contains a detailed discussion of many of Daniel's prophecies. He will be very interested in learning how his wonderful prophecies worked out, to God's glory. We will be interested in his reactions and rejoice with him in his lot. Meanwhile, Jehovah's witnesses have work to do!

23. What came upon Jehovah's people in 1918, and what grand promise was given for the future?

24. What does history show in fulfillment of Daniel 12:7?

25. What request was made by Daniel, and how did God's angel answer him?

26. (a) What is meant by Daniel's 'standing up for his lot'? (b) What will be of great interest to Daniel when he returns in the resurrection?

²⁷ Yes, the angel associate of Michael pointed out a great work for the true followers of the Messianic Prince Michael in this "time of the end." Here is the prophecy: "The ones having insight will shine like the brightness of the expanse; and those who are bringing the many to righteousness, like the stars to time indefinite, even forever." (Dan. 12:3) Here, then, is foretold the work for us today. Spiritually intelligent ones must shine with heavenly light. With the good news of the newborn kingdom of God, Jehovah's

27. What work did God's angel foretell for the true followers of the Messianic Prince Michael? So what must we be doing?

witnesses have shone like the sun, which lets nothing be concealed from its heat all around the globe. In the midnight darkness of this world we must be like stars of light, to help many more of the "other sheep" turn to righteousness, which is the worship and ministry of the grand God, Jehovah. Living as we do in this "time of the end" since Michael the Great Prince stood up in heaven, we are living in a time more highly favored than that of Daniel. Daniel's book has been opened up. Blessed are those who act in harmony with Daniel's words for our day!

Have You Been Studying for Six Months?

ARE you among the over one million persons who are at present being helped by Jehovah's witnesses to learn what the Holy Bible teaches? If you are, likely you are using the Bible-study aid *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life*. Undoubtedly it has helped you to learn many wonderful things about God and his will for mankind.

Those of you who have been studying the Bible for about six months should by now be in position to decide whether you are going to follow through on what you have learned. Do you really want to become a dedicated and baptized worshiper of Jehovah God and do you want to share with others the life-giving truths from God's Word? Your position in this matter is something to be considered very seriously. No one is going to decide for you, not

even the one who is kindly helping you to learn the Bible's message. This decision is yours.

SIX-MONTH BIBLE-STUDY COURSE

The six-month Bible-study program offered by Jehovah's witnesses enables persons to get a good picture of the Bible's message. It puts them in a position to decide intelligently whether they want to accept that message. Yes, six months of study using a book that so pointedly reasons with them is ample time for them to decide whether they want to do something about what they have learned.

This is not saying that six months is all that you need to learn all about Jehovah God's purposes and requirements. No, it will take much longer than that; we will always be learning new things about

our heavenly Father. (Rom. 11:33) However, after six months of regular weekly study a person ought to know whether he really wants to live in harmony with what he has learned from the Bible. Yes, he has laid a fine foundation upon which to base his decision.

What have you decided on the basis of what you have learned thus far? Do you want to learn as much as you can about Jehovah God and share wholeheartedly in doing his will, with the prospect of gaining eternal life in his paradise earth? Have you decided that you want to do the things that please him?

For a moment why not take a glance at the page number in your copy of the *Truth* book where you are to begin your next Bible discussion? Are you near the end of the book? True, not everyone is able to cover material at the same pace. But have you been regular in your studies? or did you allow minor matters to cause you to postpone your Bible-study appointments? Of course, at times emergencies arise. But when that has happened, have you tried to arrange to have your study on another day of the same week? Doing so shows appreciation for God's Word and ensures steady progress.

Another factor that is vital to your advancement in learning is the matter of preparing your lesson. Have you been doing this? Do you carefully read the paragraphs and underline the answers to the questions printed at the bottom of the pages in the *Truth* book? Do you do this before the one who is studying with you comes to your home? Have you looked up in the Bible all the scriptures cited? Such preparation tells the one who is studying with you that you sincerely want to understand God's Word and do His will. It also shows your gratitude for the help you are receiving.

HAS WHAT YOU ARE LEARNING AFFECTED YOUR LIFE?

Among the many fine things you have learned during the past months are matters that involve your course of conduct in life. These have to do with Jehovah's requirements that we all must meet in order to gain his approval. Have you begun to try to live up to them? If you have, then you have found that your thinking and way of doing things have been affected. Why is this?

It is because you are beginning to look at things the way God does and are trying to do things in a way that pleases him. You probably noticed that it took some time to let God's viewpoint influence your thinking on certain matters. Yes, it takes time for one to become sensitive to pleasing God in matters that one simply took for granted before. If this is happening to you, then what you are learning is affecting your life for the good. It is putting you on the way to greater happiness.

For example, one of God's requirements that you have learned has to do with the matter of idolatry. You learned that God abhors the worship of images because it dishonors him. (Ex. 20:4, 5) Also, you learned that he will not give eternal life to anyone who practices this or is tainted with it in any manner whatsoever. In your study of the Bible you learned what others did about the idols they had in their possession or homes. Yes, they obeyed God and destroyed such as he commanded in Deuteronomy 7:25! These individuals wanted Jehovah God's favor and blessing. Do you still have any images in your home or atop the dashboard of your automobile? What about religious pictures that depict something false? What have you decided about these things?

Let us consider another vital matter that you learned. This has to do with separating oneself from religions that are part

of the world empire of false religion, known as Babylon the Great. You learned that God commands all of his people to get out from among such organizations. (Rev. 18:4) Why? In order that his people may not become sharers in the destructive plagues that will befall all false religion shortly. Jehovah is showing love in warning his people of this. Have you heeded his loving warning? Or do you perhaps still attend religious services where falsehoods are taught about God, or where such ideas are believed? Do you think this is pleasing to God? His Word counsels: "Get out from among them, and separate yourselves . . . and quit touching the unclean thing . . . and I will take you in."

—2 Cor. 6:17, 18.

Remember the two angels who were sent by God to Sodom and Gomorrah. They went to Lot's home and told him to leave the city because on the next day Jehovah was going to destroy it. Lot had to decide quickly about leaving everything behind and getting out as soon as possible, or staying with the doomed community. It was an urgent matter that he could not ignore or put off! Do you think that God would have canceled his judicial punishment of those sexually perverted cities if Lot had refused to leave them in time? Of course not! The next morning, though Lot and his family lingered momentarily, they willingly went along with the angels of God who lovingly took them by the hand and hurried them off to safety.

—Gen. 19:1-17.

Are you allowing Jehovah's witnesses to lead you out of the danger zone to a place of safety? The need to act promptly is urgent.

APPRECIATING THE BIBLE MEETINGS OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

No doubt the one with whom you are studying the Bible has invited you to at-

tend the meetings of Jehovah's witnesses. Do you know why he has invited you to come? Because God's own Word instructs us to gather together in this way. (Heb. 10:23-25) At these meetings your knowledge of God will increase. Yes, you will learn many, many things that are not included in your home Bible-study program; points that are, nonetheless, vital to your spiritual growth. By association with others at the meetings your own faith will grow and the desire to serve God will be stimulated. You will find that there is an interchange of encouragement. (Rom. 1:11, 12) Have you responded to this invitation and are you attending these Bible meetings regularly?

Do not let anything hold you back from doing so. Others have had problems, but they overcame these in order to receive the benefits of Christian association. For example, there is a woman in Puerto Rico who began to study the Bible with Jehovah's witnesses. Shortly after she began her studies she realized the need to attend their meetings. Her husband started to oppose her but she resolved to attend regularly. Seeing her determination, he told her that she could go but that she would have to take all *eight* children with her and then come home in time to prepare food for the family. Did this stop her? Even though she was pregnant, she walked the half-hour journey to the Kingdom Hall with all her eight children. Her obvious appreciation for these Bible meetings resulted in her husband's starting to study the Bible.

There are so many other cases of persons who, after only a short time, began attending the meetings of Jehovah's witnesses regularly. Some came to the meetings upon the first invitation and have not stopped coming since. Others even asked the Witnesses if they had a meeting place and if they could come to their meetings.

When they came, it did not take them long to feel right at home and notice the spiritual blessings to be had in being there.

DECISION NOW IS VITAL

The urgency of the times in which we are living requires that we do all we can to bring our lives into harmony with God's will. From what you have learned you know why this system of things is rapidly deteriorating before our eyes. You know the meaning of the unrest and increased violence in all the earth. All this shows that we have approached the very brink of the earth-cleansing destruction of which Jesus and the Bible writers prophesied!

This is the most serious time in human history, and you are living in this time of change. "The world is passing away," the Bible says, but those who do 'the will of God will remain forever.' (1 John 2:17) Your studying the Bible is to equip you to learn that will of God so you can do it. Yes, there is a purpose behind this study; there is a future attached to it.

Carrying out the will of God is not doing what *we think* is right, but doing what God tells us is right. (Matt. 7:21-23) Avoiding fornication, lying, stealing, murdering and other wicked deeds is not all that Jehovah commands us to do. A rich young man said he did all that and yet Jesus told him that he fell short because he failed to see that more is involved in doing the will of God. (Matt. 19:16-22) An essential part of that will, as we have noted, is to meet together regularly with fellow worshipers of Jehovah God. It is also God's will that we tell others about him and his loving purposes. (Matt. 24: 14; 28:19, 20) If we fail to do this, can we truthfully say that we are doing God's will?

Perhaps you have already made a decision to apply these things that you are

learning from the Bible and are doing so. If so, this is truly commendable. If you have not, we urge you to consider the matter prayerfully and then take positive action now, if you sincerely want to be numbered among those who have God's approval.

In view of the short time left in which to do their work, Jehovah's witnesses do not continue to study the Bible with any who fail to respond to its urgent message within six months. The nearness of this system's end compels them to use their time in the most effective way possible. So they feel obligated to spend their time calling on someone else who might respond by attending meetings at the Kingdom Hall and by speaking to others about the Bible truths learned. Thus it may be that if you have not as yet responded by even becoming a regular attender at some of the congregation meetings, the one who is studying the Bible with you may cancel that study arrangement in order to give his time to someone else. This arrangement is not meant to be harsh, but the urgency of the times in which we live demands it. There are millions of persons who need spiritual help and God's servants want to reach all they possibly can.

We, therefore, urge you to consider very carefully your position. You have embarked on a course of study that has opened up to you the magnificent opportunity of life forever in eternal happiness. (John 17:3) If you love God and appreciate his provision for eternal life, do not turn your back on it. Realize that God has shown great consideration for you by making it possible for someone to come to your home to help you learn His will and purposes. Respond to his divine love by deciding now to do his will, along with the entire association of those who are serving God "with spirit and truth."—John 4:23, 24.

"Always rejoice in the Lord"

"NATION will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom . . ." I could not ignore those words of Jesus Christ recorded at Matthew 24:7 after observing the earthshaking events of World War I. They impelled me to find out more about this and other prophecies of the Bible. But first, I had to obtain a copy of the Bible in the language I best understood—Greek. That took two years. In the summer of 1914 I had seen the "Photo-Drama of Creation" in Lewiston, Maine. I was deeply impressed by this remarkable showing of Bible history in slides and moving pictures. But somehow I missed contacting those who were giving this wonderful presentation.

Two years later a special speaker of the Seventh-day Adventist church gave a series of public lectures in our city hall. Again my interest in Bible study was stimulated, especially in the Bible book of Daniel. I started reading the Bible regularly and, in fact, I learned many passages by heart—something that was to prove quite valuable to me in later life. However, I was still failing to gain a clear understanding of the Bible's message. I needed help.

Then in 1917 one of the Bible Students (now known as Jehovah's witnesses) placed with me a book entitled "The Divine Plan of the Ages." Next, I heard a



As told by John P. Sioras

public lecture by J. F. Rutherford, who represented the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, the publishers of this and many other Bible-study aids. It was of special interest to note that this meeting was attended by many clergymen of various denominations.

JOYOUS REVELATIONS

With the end of the war in 1918 I had an excellent opportunity to get down to a thorough reading of the Society's publications, many of which I had by then acquired. I had moved to a small town where there were no Bible Students, but I kept in touch with the Watch Tower Society's Brooklyn office. My daily work lasted from 4 p.m. until midnight each weekday. That gave me an ideal time for study and meditation—in the silence of the night, at least until 4 a.m.

Having been schooled by the Greek Orthodox Church, I had been taught that Christian faith is based on the Holy Scriptures and the traditions of the *Apostolic* fathers, with the Apostolic fathers taking first place. I used to wonder what the apostle Paul meant when he wrote: "Always rejoice in the Lord." (Phil. 4:4) There had been little to rejoice about in my former religion, and the distance seemed so great between us ordinary people and God and Christ. Now what a joy to learn that the hope of salvation taught

in the Bible was something that every repentant sinner could lay hold of—and not merely those on good terms with the "saints" of the Greek church! And now I began to see why the Orthodox priests made no real effort to teach the whole Bible to their parishioners, when I came across the text at 1 Timothy 2:5: "There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, a man Christ Jesus." So all those other "mediators" and "saints" were useless!

Not content with reading the Bible and the Society's helps, I hungered for association. As soon as I learned about it I started to attend a congregation of Bible Students in a town some forty-five miles from my home. Here is where I really began to rejoice as I shared with others in taking in spiritual food. And here I learned about the responsibility that accompanies knowledge of God's purposes. Yes, I came to realize that God and Christ expected me to share with others the good things I was learning—not just selfishly keep them to myself. So, in my own little town I started talking to people and offering them literature. It is difficult to express the joy and satisfaction that I experienced as a result. I was doing God's will, and that was my greatest wish.

The year 1919 was a particularly joyous one to me. I will never forget it, for then was when I attended a Bible Students convention at Cedar Point, Ohio, and then was when, in company with two hundred other believers, I was baptized in token of my dedication of my life to God. That, too, was the year when the Society's new magazine, *The Golden Age*, appeared. I immediately subscribed, and have read every issue of it up to this day. Of course, it is now known as *Awake!*

What has always amazed me is the marvelous way that Jehovah God has ful-

filled toward those who demonstrate their love for him the promise recorded at Proverbs 4:18: "The path of the righteous ones is like the bright light that is getting lighter and lighter until the day is firmly established." Yes, by gradually revealing to them his purposes Jehovah has given his people today reason for rejoicing. And this reminds me of the fact that he made a gradual supply of manna for the Israelites in their wilderness trek. (Ex. 16:21) But ours is a spiritual manna, a rich source of nourishment for heart and mind.

I scanned every issue of the *Watchtower* magazine as it came to hand, for I had learned that the magazine provided information on Bible prophecy that Jehovah wishes his people to have—information that would encourage and strengthen them for the work of preaching the "good news of the kingdom." (Matt. 24:14) Through the years we have rejoiced to receive in its columns verse-by-verse explanations of such Bible books as Daniel, Revelation, Jeremiah, Zechariah, Ruth, Esther, and others. And always, in the course of the years, the understanding became clearer and clearer. We had the joyful assurance that Jehovah was with his people to direct them in the right way.

JOYOUS SERVICE PRIVILEGES

Soon after my dedication to serve God I moved to Detroit, Michigan, where I received more real blessings. I was associated with a large congregation, and there was a much larger field of service—for here were people of all races and nationalities. My eight years in Detroit helped me to mature in knowledge and to learn much about organization of the Kingdom preaching activity. Unless due to circumstances beyond my control, I never missed a meeting. My faith grew strong. I was even privileged to serve fellow members of the congregation in various capacities during

that period of time. Surely more cause for rejoicing!

In October 1929 I received an invitation to come to the Society's headquarters and become a member of its staff, a member of the Bethel family in Brooklyn, New York. Without hesitation I accepted. I had not even hoped for such a privilege. At first I was assigned to make a circuit of Greek-speaking congregations twice a year. It was arranged that I spend three months on the road visiting these groups, and then three months at headquarters engaged in other activities required by the organization.

In 1937 came quite a change—a change, I may say, for the better. All the foreign-language congregations were amalgamated with the English congregations. Greater harmony and greater activity resulted. Of course, my schedule was altered, but there was much other work to be done in a rapidly expanding organization, and I was enjoying my work at the headquarters. Life in Bethel is a joyful one if a person considers the privilege of being there as coming from Jehovah, and if he really wants to live in harmony with Bible principles. And there were many fine examples for us—men and women who came here in their youth and continued loyally until they "died in a good old age, old and satisfied," like Abraham.—Gen. 25:8.

What a vantage point Bethel has been from which to watch the growth of the organization of Kingdom publishers in all the earth! I recall how in 1929, when I came to Bethel, there were but a few publishers in a very few lands. Today the work is being conducted world wide in 200 lands and by a joyous throng of 1,155,826 proclaimers of the good news of God's kingdom. As we have viewed the developments, it has all been so thrilling! God alone could have furnished such wonderful growth and effectiveness.

YOUTH TOO CAN REJOICE

When I look around at the expanding opportunities for youth in Jehovah's grand work, I call to mind my own youth. From an early age I wanted to know more about God and the right way. I was interested in finding out about God's will. Why was there so much wickedness in the world? Why did clergymen show so little concern for the Bible and so much concern about money collections? Were there some genuine Christian ministers somewhere? These are some of the questions I used to think about.

At seventeen years of age I began really searching. I attended different churches, only to be disappointed time after time. The pastors in Christendom had nothing but husks for their flocks. It was not difficult to see these false pastors as the ones spoken about in Bible prophecy at Ezekiel 34:10: "Here I am against the shepherds, and I shall certainly ask back my sheep from their hand and make them cease from feeding my sheep, and the shepherds will no longer feed themselves; and I will deliver my sheep out of their mouth, and they will not become food for them."

Yes, I felt sure God's truth must be somewhere. Surely there must be people studying the Bible with the help of God's spirit and doing so for the unselfish purpose of proclaiming it to others. I thank Jehovah and rejoice that he brought me into contact with his Witnesses while I was still in the vigor of youth! And now it brings me great gladness to see young people eagerly grasping the Kingdom message and quickly arranging their affairs to spend their full time in the preaching of it. Some of them have been aided by godly parents, but others have taken the right course on their own, wisely 'remembering their grand Creator in the days of their

young manhood.' (Eccl. 12:1) They will never regret taking that step.

Personally, as I look back to the time of my dedication in 1919, my heart fills with joy. Just think! Being able to spend the greater part of my life in the service of the Creator, happily rescued from the vain course of life in this old system of things! And to top it off, now beholding this multitude of young folk breaking their ties with the old system and offering themselves willingly for Jehovah's service.

RENEWED STRENGTH

Of course, we grow older and are unable to do as much as we once did in the Lord's work. Does that diminish our rejoicing? No, but it only serves to impress the lesson on our minds that it is in Jehovah's strength and by his power that we can go on overcoming the pressures of Satan's wicked system. We gain his strength by studying his Word and by going to him in prayer. This is how we build a strong faith—the kind of faith that renews our strength in later life, just as the Bible promise expresses it: "Those who are hoping in Jehovah will regain power. They will mount up with wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not tire out." (Isa. 40:31) Remember how it is said of Moses at the age of 120 that "his eye had not

grown dim, and his vital strength had not fled." (Deut. 34:7) His own aged eyes saw the land promised by God to Israel.

Today, too, Jehovah strengthens his servants as they grow old. Not always does this help come in a physical way, but it does come in a spiritual way. Unlike those who are without God, those who get tired of living and feel that they are too old to learn and have something to look forward to, Jehovah's servants are kept mentally and spiritually youthful. Every day offers them privileges of honorable service to the grand Creator. And their future is attractive, yes, inspiring.

What a wonderful and joyous privilege to be alive and in God's service at this most critical hour in human history! God's king is enthroned now in the heavens. Already he has directed a worldwide proclamation of the Kingdom to a point where it is almost completed. The next item on his program is to rise up and destroy all the enemies of truth and righteousness, visible and invisible. That will be a grand salvation for all who love and serve God and Christ. Now is the happy day of which it was foretold: "In that day one will certainly say: 'Look! This is our God. We have hoped in him, and he will save us. This is Jehovah. We have hoped in him. Let us be joyful and rejoice in the salvation by him.'"—Isa. 25:9.

Letter of Appreciation

- A congregation of Jehovah's witnesses in Florida received this heartwarming and encouraging letter:

"I just have to thank you for your kindness in the past, by stopping at my house and leaving copies of your wonderful publication for me. Your unselfishness in the giving of time for a good cause is really something rare in this world."

"I do feel, however, that in order to keep your good work going, those of us who cannot give of their time must also help in some way or other. Please accept, therefore, the herewith enclosed small contribution together with my best wishes."

"And please extend my special thanks and appreciation to Miss S—— K—— for making it a point to see to it that I did receive copies of *The Watchtower* regularly."

ARE you planning to attend an international assembly of Jehovah's witnesses this summer? Will you be joining the tens of thousands of servants of the true God who will gather to avail themselves of a special spiritual feast? Multitudes are busy making preparations to that end. Are you?

One of the vital steps in such preparation may be to obtain release from your secular employment for the period of the assembly. To some this may present a problem, but if the matter is tackled in a positive manner, it may well be that what now looks like a mountain will be reduced to a level plain. So, away with negative thinking on the subject, and let us look at some of the possibilities.

As you prepare to approach your employer for this purpose, it is good to keep in mind that you do not want him to get the impression that this is just an ordinary vacation, something you could easily take at any time that fitted into his schedule. No, for if he gets this idea, you cannot then blame him if he should give someone else first choice of the specific period when the assembly will be in session.

That means that your employer should somehow be informed that attendance at this assembly is important to you and your family. So a casual approach to him on the subject is not going to be effective. It would be better to obtain an interview with him. And when you do, there is the matter of tact to have in mind. Instead of immediately stating your request, why not lead up to it by first explaining that your Christian ministry is the most vital matter in your life; that your family's

WILL YOU REALLY BE *at the* ASSEMBLY?

happiness and welfare depend upon the spiritual strength that is to be gained by assembling with others who have the same faith. Point out that each year there is one outstanding assembly that all of Jehovah's witnesses strive to attend, and this year that assembly comes on certain dates.

If your employer knows how serious you are about getting to the assembly, he is more likely to give serious consideration to your request for time. To that end you could arrange to have with you previous convention reports, with pictures, and show him some of the titles of the discourses—discourses that have as their objective the improvement of men and women. Explain how some lectures deal with such topics as honesty, getting on well with others, discharging responsibilities with a good attitude, and so on. All of this is sure to impress him.

Of course, before approaching your employer it would be good to seek Jehovah's help. In prayer ask for guidance so that you may say the right things. And as you pray, remember never to doubt Jehovah's power and ability to do for you far more than you ask. (Jas. 1:6) God knows how to give good gifts to those who look to him.

SOME STRIKING EXAMPLES

Consider the case of the Witness in El Salvador who was advised by a fellow em-

ployee to lie about the purpose of her request for time off. She refused to lie about the matter, but, rather, told her employer frankly why she wanted the time. His reply: "That is what makes you different from the others. You can have the five days off."

And then there was the father of four children whose employer, not normally lenient, first gave him permission to take time off, and then later tried to retract it. The Witness told him that in that case he would have to find another employee, since it was vital that he get to the assembly. The matter was reconsidered and the Witness with his family did attend the convention.

In Montserrat a schoolteacher applied for permission to have time for an assembly. It was refused because a teachers' seminar would not be concluding until Friday of the assembly week. She was determined to go, so she went ahead and made all preparations; this despite the fact she had been warned she might well lose her position. One hour before she was due to leave she was handed a letter giving her permission. Her determination and faith were surely rewarded.

THE FINANCIAL PROBLEM

Financing the trip to the assembly is another matter that will require thoughtful consideration. Have you calculated how much you will need? If necessary, is there some way in which you can cut down on the cost—say, by traveling some cheaper way? Is it possible that you can even now begin to cut your weekly expense budget and save a little regularly? Perhaps the family might forgo a few luxuries or extras for a time, just to be sure you will have enough funds to cover the expenses of the assembly trip.

And there are other ways of raising the needed funds without too much strain. For

example, you may have a number of unused things around the house—old books, furniture, scrap metal—that could be disposed of. In the Dominican Republic one Witness sold a bicycle so as to have enough to tide him through the assembly. In Australia an elderly Witness sold a piano accordion for the same purpose. Their determination paid off.

A Witness in Western Samoa, elderly, sickly, blind in one eye, and having other handicaps, overcame his financial problem in order to get to an assembly on another island. He gathered coconuts, carried them fifteen or so at a time for two miles, then husked them and laid out the copra to dry. For four weeks he worked alone on the project. When he came to pay his fare, after selling the copra, he was told that the fare had gone up in the meantime. Undiscouraged, he went off and cut more copra. He did not miss the assembly and the rich spiritual feast that he had long anticipated.

Though living under widely varying conditions, these persons knew what benefits awaited them at the assemblies, and they put forth every effort to get there. Obviously Jehovah blessed them. Even some with opposing families have attended assemblies despite the difficulties at home. They had made up their minds that, God willing, they were really going to be at the assembly. Seemingly insurmountable obstacles were overcome. Is there any doubt that Jehovah opened the way for them?

Jehovah knows your need. And he has provided these assemblies for the benefit of all of his worshipers, so they might be improved and strengthened spiritually. If you manifest a strong desire and determination to attend, Jehovah can open the way for you too. What a marvelous and upbuilding experience awaits you!

ROOMING ACCOMMODATIONS

If you are really going to be at the assembly, there is something else that may need your attention too: Rooming accommodations. The Watch Tower Convention Rooming Department will be glad to assist you. Beginning six weeks before the

assembly that you plan to attend, Room Request forms may be sent to Watch Tower Convention in the city where you plan to attend. For your information, we have listed below all the locations where the assemblies will be held, and the address of the Rooming Department in each city.

JULY 6-13: Atlanta, Ga. (English and Spanish), Atlanta Stadium, 521 Capitol Ave. SW. Rooming: 1202 Sullivan Rd., College Park, Ga. 30337.
 Buffalo, N.Y., War Memorial Stadium, Best St. and Jefferson Ave. Rooming: 6710 Main St., Williamsville, N.Y. 14221.
 JULY 7-18: New York, N.Y. (English and Spanish), Yankee Stadium, 157th St. and River Ave. Rooming: 77 Sands St., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201.
 JULY 13-20: Pomona, Calif. (Spanish only), Fairgrounds Grandstand (Gate 17). Rooming: 1546 S. Garey Ave., Pomona, Calif. 91766.
 Vancouver, B.C., Canada, Empire Stadium, Exhibition Park. Rooming: 3280 Grandview Hwy., Vancouver 12, B.C., Can.
 JULY 14-20: Los Angeles, Calif., Dodger Stadium, 1000 Elysian Park Ave. Rooming: 5921 Echo St., Los Angeles, Calif. 90042.
 JULY 18-25: Kansas City, Mo., Municipal Stadium, 22nd St. and Brooklyn Ave. Rooming: 1000 County Line Rd., Kansas City, Kans. 66103.
 JULY 21-27: Chicago, Ill. (English and Spanish), White Sox Park, 324 West 35th St. Rooming: 6317 S. Western Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60636.
 JULY 29-AUGUST 3: London, England, Wembley Stadium. Rooming: Watch Tower House, The Ridgeway, London N.W. 7, England.
 AUGUST 5-10: Paris, France, Colombes Stadium. Rooming: 81, rue du Point-du-Jour, 92 - Boulogne-Billancourt (Hauts de Seine), France.
 Copenhagen, Denmark, Copenhagen Sports Park. Rooming: Kongevejen 207, 2330 Virum, Denmark.
 AUGUST 10-17: Nuremberg, Western Germany, Zeppelinwiese. Rooming: Am Kohlheck, Postfach 13025, (62) Wiesbaden-Dotzheim, Western Germany.
 Rome, Italy, Palazzo dello Sport. Rooming: Via Monte Maloia 32, 00141 Rome, Italy.

AUGUST 13-17: Rome, Italy (Spanish), Palazzo dei Congressi. Rooming: Via Monte Maloia 32, 00141 Rome, Italy.
 OCTOBER 12-16: Seoul, Korea, Changchoong Gymnasium. Rooming: P.O. Box 7, Sodaemun-ku P.O., Seoul, Korea.
 OCTOBER 14-19: Tokyo, Japan, Tokyo Korakuen Cycling Stadium. Rooming: 5-5-8 Mita Minato-Ku, Tokyo, 108, Japan.
 OCTOBER 18-21: Taipei, Taiwan, The National Taiwan Arts Center, 47 Nan Hai Rd. Rooming: No. 1 Lane 73, Ch'ao Chou St., Taipei, Taiwan.
 Hong Kong, China, City Hall Theater. Rooming: 312 Prince Edward Rd., 2nd Floor, Kowloon, Hong Kong.
 OCTOBER 22-26: Manila, Philippine Republic, Rizal Memorial Stadium. Rooming: P.O. Box 2044, Manila 12111, Philippine Republic.
 OCTOBER 24-27: Port Moresby, Papua. Rooming: Box 113, Port Moresby, Papua.
 OCTOBER 26-31: Melbourne, Australia, Melbourne Showgrounds. Rooming: 11 Beresford Rd., Strathfield, N.S.W., Australia.
 NOVEMBER 4-9: Auckland, New Zealand, Auckland Trotting Club. Rooming: 621 New North Rd., Auckland 3, New Zealand.
 NOVEMBER 9-12: Suva, Fiji, Suva Town Hall. Rooming: Box 23, Suva, Fiji. Papeete, Tahiti, Salle de Basket Stade de Fautaua. Rooming: B.P. 518 Papeete, Tahiti.
 NOVEMBER 11-16: Honolulu, Hawaii, Honolulu International Center (Arena). Rooming: 1228 Pensacola St., Honolulu, Hawaii 96814.
 DECEMBER 24-28: Mexico City, Mexico, Mexico Arena. Rooming: Calzada Melchor Ocampo 71, Mexico 4, D.F., Mexico.



• The Bible says that Moses lived to be one hundred and twenty years old. How, then, could he write, in Psalm 90:10, that a man's years are only seventy or eighty?—J. W., England.

The superscription of Psalm 90 reads: "A prayer of Moses, the man of the true God." Jewish Talmudical writers and many scholars concur in crediting this psalm to Moses. For instance, Franz Delitzsch, noted professor at the University of Leipzig, wrote: "There is hardly a literary monument of antiquity, which

can so brilliantly justify the traditional testimony to its origin as this Psalm. Not only in respect to its contents, but also in respect to its literary form, it is thoroughly appropriate to Moses."

In Psalm 90 Moses wrote: "In themselves the days of our years are seventy years; and if because of special mightiness they are eighty years, yet their insistence is on trouble and hurtful things; for it must quickly pass by, and away we fly." (Ps. 90:10) Many have wondered how Moses could write this since he himself lived beyond that age. According to Deuteronomy 34:7: "Moses was a hundred and twenty years old at his death. His eye had not grown dim, and his vital strength had not fled."

This actually presents no serious problem. Though we do not know Moses' age when he composed this psalm, evidently from what he observed he knew that seventy years was a

full life, and eighty years was beyond the normal. Clearly, most of the adult Israelites of the generation that came out of slavery in Egypt were not particularly long-lived. Those over twenty years of age at the time of the exodus perished by the end of the forty years of wandering.

True, there were exceptions, such as Moses (120), Aaron (123), Joshua (110) and Caleb (over 85). Such exceptions, though, do not alter the general age given in Psalm 90:10. And recall that God directly decreed that Joshua and Caleb should live on past those in their generation and so enter the Promised Land. When Caleb was eighty-five he called attention to his age and strength as quite unusual.—Num. 14:30; 33:39; Josh. 14:10, 11; 24:29.

Occasionally we read in the newspapers about someone living to be one hundred years old, or slightly more. There are even certain groups, such as those in the Caucasus Mountains in the Soviet Union, who are noted for their longevity, apparently the result of hereditary factors and their way of life. The publicity given such ex-

amples emphasizes that they are exceptions. The fact remains that the average life-span in many lands today is in the upper sixties or the low seventies, close to the figure at Psalm 90:10.

When considering longevity, many people think that modern science has vastly extended man's life-span. In a sense that is so. By decreasing infant mortality and childhood deaths the average length of life has been increased. In England about the year 1850 it was just under forty years for males, and by 1947 it had increased to sixty. But for an adult the expectation of life at a certain age has remained approximately the same. For instance, in 1850 a forty-year-old man in the United States might be expected to live to be sixty-seven. In 1962, with all of man's medical advances, the expectation for a male of forty was 71.7 years, or an increase of only 4.7 years since 1850.

Consequently, even though there might be some exceptions, such as Moses himself, the inspired statement, "the days of our years are seventy years," is as true today as it was in Moses' day.



ANNOUNCEMENTS



(2 Thess. 1:3) Well, what is faith? It is not mere expectation but is *assured* expectation. The only way to get this assurance is from a study of the Word of God. By regularly feeding upon God's Word, one's expectation regarding all of God's wonderful promises gets all the more certain. Jehovah's witnesses are keenly interested in helping all persons who wish to get more faith. To do this, they offer a free home Bible-study course of six months, using as an aid for such Bible discussion the book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life*. They will be using this book during the month of May in their house-to-house ministry, offering it for only 25c.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

- June 1: Listen to Daniel's Words for Our Day. Page 296. Songs to Be Used: 78, 79.
- June 8: Crushing All Nations in Our Day by God's Kingdom. Page 302. Songs to Be Used: 7, 46.

FIELD MINISTRY

"Give us more faith"—this is the request made at one time to Jesus Christ by his apostles. (Luke 17:5) But how can one get more faith and keep it "growing exceedingly"?