

THE WATCHTOWER
ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

DECEMBER 1, 2007



A UNITED WORLD
Is It Possible?

THE PURPOSE OF *THE WATCHTOWER* is to exalt Jehovah God as Sovereign Lord of the universe. It keeps watch on world events as these fulfill Bible prophecy. It comforts all peoples with the good news that God's Kingdom will soon destroy those who oppress their fellow men and that it will turn the earth into a paradise. It encourages faith in God's now-reigning King, Jesus Christ, whose shed blood opens the way for mankind to gain eternal life. *The Watchtower*, published by Jehovah's Witnesses continuously since 1879, is nonpolitical. It adheres to the Bible as its authority.

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Is World Unity Possible?

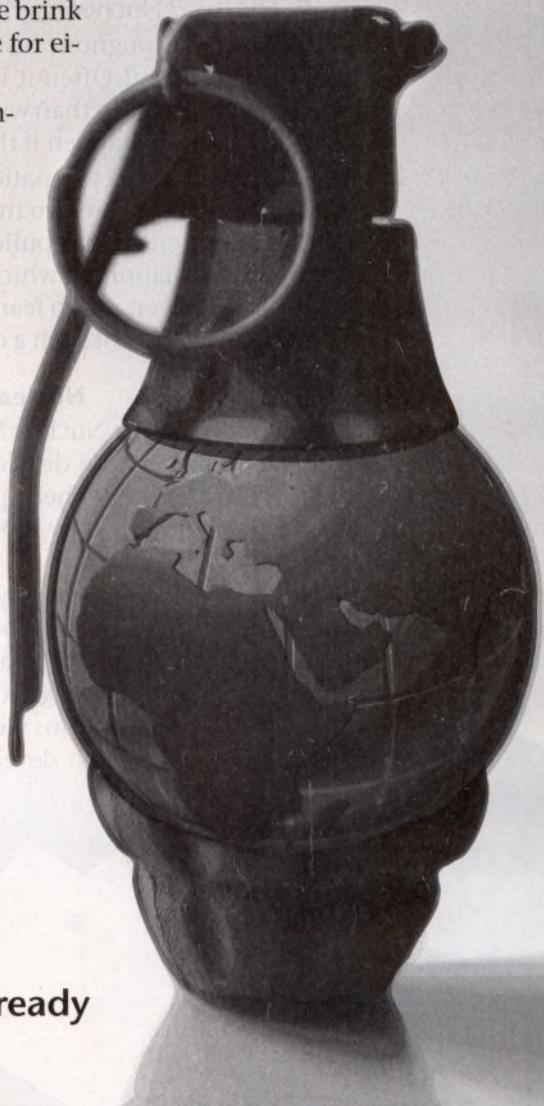
IS OUR world on the threshold of peace or on the brink of disaster? It seems that a case could be made for either view.

On the one hand, some world leaders speak confidently of global peace as an attainable goal—perhaps because the alternatives are too horrifying to contemplate. On the other hand, many tremble at such questions as these: Which nations have weapons of mass destruction? Would they dare to use them? What would happen if they did?

History shows that rivalry and prejudice have long stood in the way of any hope for unity, and religion has often done much to fan the flames of conflict rather than extinguish them. "Anything that divides people can spawn hostility, and religion is one of the strongest dividers," writes journalist James A. Haught. "Despite the universal belief that religion makes people 'good,' it's obvious that it makes some people commit heinous acts." Author Steven Weinberg holds a similar view. "For good people to do evil," he writes, "that takes religion."

Is there any hope that our world will ever be united? Yes! But the source of world unity is not man or man-made religions, as we will see.

Is the world like a grenade ready to blow up?



People Worldwide Are Being United—How?

HOW would you define "unity"? To some, the word simply means the absence of friction or strife. For example, if two or more nations sign a treaty and agree to the terms of peace, it might be said that they are in unity. But is that really the case? Not necessarily.

Consider: Throughout history, thousands of peace treaties have been made and broken. Why? Often it is because world leaders are more concerned with their own supremacy than with peace or unity. Then, too, some nations are fearful of what could happen if they were to fall behind others in military might.

Thus, the fact that two nations are not at war does not mean that they are united in peace. Really, are two men with pistols pointed at each other at peace simply because neither has pulled the trigger? Such a view would be absurd! Yet, that is the situation in which many nations today find themselves. Growing mistrust has given rise to fear that one day weapons will be launched. What has been done to prevent such a disaster?

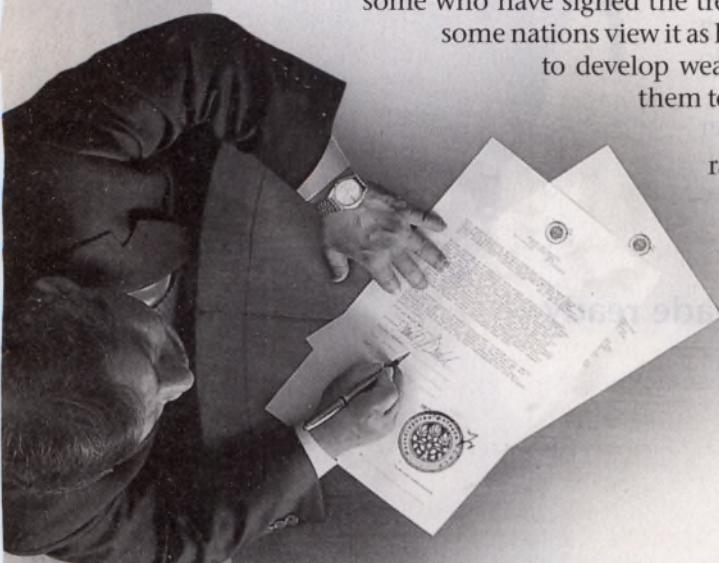
Nuclear Fears—A Threat to Unity

Many look to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Approved in 1968, this treaty forbids the development of nuclear weapons in lands that do not have them and limits their spread in lands that do. The goal of the NPT, which has now been ratified by more than 180 nations, is eventually to achieve complete disarmament.

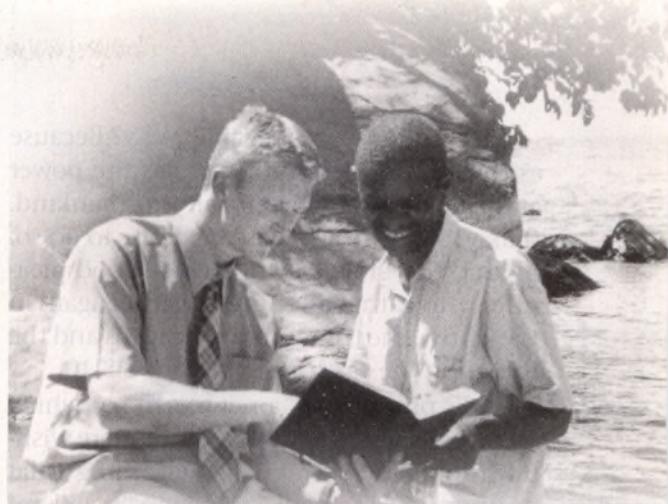
Noble as that objective may sound, some critics see the NPT as little more than an attempt to keep certain countries out of the "nuclear club"—to prevent those nations that do not have weapons from developing them. Thus, it is feared that

some who have signed the treaty might have second thoughts. Indeed, some nations view it as highly unfair that they should be forbidden to develop weapons that in their opinion would enable them to protect themselves.

Compounding the issue—perhaps even raising the risk of danger—is the fact that no nation is prohibited from developing nuclear *energy*. This has caused some to fear that nations that are supposedly using



**Thousands of
peace treaties have been
made and broken**



God's Word points to the Source of true unity

nuclear energy for peaceful purposes might be developing nuclear weapons in secret.

Even nations that already have nuclear weapons may disregard the NPT. Critics say that it would be naive to expect heavily armed nations to eradicate or even reduce their stockpile. According to one source, "to achieve this . . . requires such a level of friendship and trust between countries currently opposed to each other [that it is difficult to believe that] this can ever happen."

Human efforts at unity—no matter how sincere—have proved futile. This comes as no surprise to Bible students, for God's Word says: "It does not belong to man who is walking even to direct his step." (Jeremiah 10:23) The Bible also candidly states: "There exists a way that is upright before a man, but the ways of death are the end of it afterward." (Proverbs 16:25) Human governments can go only so far in achieving unity. Still, we are not left without hope.

The Source of True Unity

The Bible contains God's promise that the world will be unified but not by man's efforts. The Creator, who purposed that mankind would live in peace worldwide, will accomplish what man cannot. To some, all of that might seem far-fetched. Yet, God's purpose from the very beginning has been for mankind to live in peace and harmony.* Many scriptures in the Bible give evidence that bringing the human race into a unified

* For more information on God's purpose for mankind, see chapter 3 of the book *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* published by Jehovah's Witnesses.

condition is still God's purpose. Consider just a few examples:

- “Come, you people, behold the activities of Jehovah, how he has set astonishing events on the earth. He is making wars to cease to the extremity of the earth. The bow he breaks apart and does cut the spear in pieces; the wagons he burns in the fire.”—PSALM 46:8, 9.
 - “They will not do any harm or cause any ruin in all my holy mountain; because the earth will certainly be filled with the knowledge of Jehovah as the waters are covering the very sea.”—ISAIAH 11:9.
 - “He will actually swallow up death forever, and the Sovereign Lord Jehovah will certainly wipe the tears from all faces. And the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth, for Jehovah himself has spoken it.”—ISAIAH 25:8.
 - “There are new heavens and a new earth that we are awaiting according to his promise, and in these righteousness is to dwell.”—2 PETER 3:13.
 - “[God] will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away.”—REVELATION 21:4.

These promises are reliable. Why? Because as the Creator, Jehovah God has the power and the ability to bring unity to mankind. (Luke 18:27) He also has the desire to do so. In fact, the Bible calls it God's "good pleasure . . . to gather all things together again in the Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth."—Ephesians 1:8-10.

God's promise of "a new earth" in which "righteousness is to dwell" is not mere wishful thinking. (2 Peter 3:13) Regarding what he promised, Jehovah God states: "It will not return to me without results, but it will certainly do that in which I have delighted, and it will have certain success in that for which I have sent it."—Isaiah 55:11.

United by God's Word

As noted in the preceding article, religion has often played a role in dividing rather than uniting mankind. This is cause for serious consideration, for if we accept that there is a Creator, is it not reasonable to expect that worshippers of him would be at peace and in unity with one another? Most certainly!

Religion's divisive effect on mankind is no reflection on Jehovah God and his Word. Rather, it is an indictment of religions that promote man-made schemes for unity instead of upholding God's purpose. Jesus called the religious leaders of his day "hypocrites" and said to them: "Isaiah aptly prophesied about you, when he said, 'This people honors me with their lips, yet their heart is far removed from me. It is in vain that they keep worshiping me, because they teach commands of men as doctrines.'"—Matthew 15:7-9.

In contrast, true worship has a unifying effect on people. The prophet Isaiah foretold: "It must occur in the final part of the days that the mountain of the house of Jehovah will become firmly established above the top

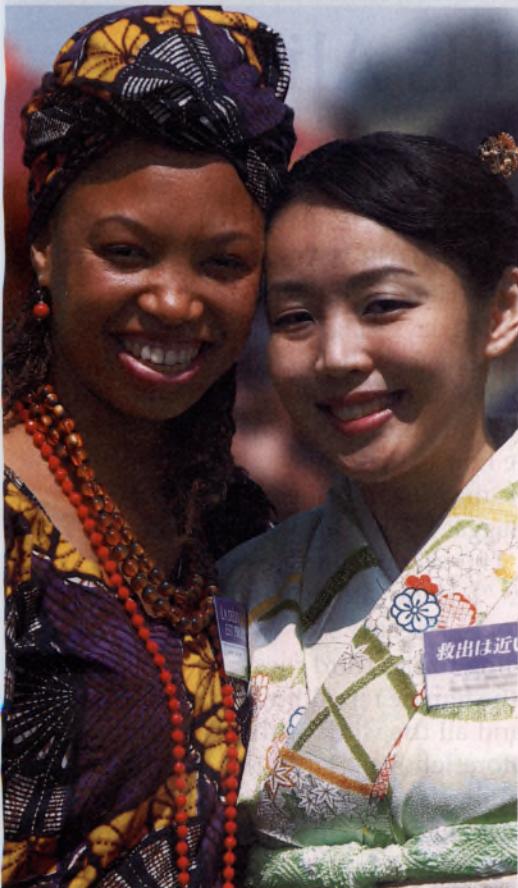
of the mountains, and it will certainly be lifted up above the hills; and to it all the nations must stream. And he will certainly render judgment among the nations and set matters straight respecting many peoples. And they will have to beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning shears. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, neither will they learn war anymore."—Isaiah 2:2, 4.

In more than 230 lands today, Jehovah's Witnesses are responding to the instructions provided by Jehovah God regarding the ways of unity. What is the foundation of their unity? The apostle Paul wrote: "Clothe yourselves with love, for it is a perfect bond of union." (Colossians 3:14) The original-language word that Paul used for "bond" can refer to the ligaments of the human body. Such ligaments are as strong as rope, and they serve two vital functions. They hold body organs in place, and they fasten bones together.

It is much the same with love. This quality does more than simply prevent people from killing one another. Christlike love allows individuals of differing backgrounds to function together in a peaceful manner. For example, it enables people to live in accord with what is commonly called the Golden Rule. As recorded at Matthew 7:12, Jesus Christ stated: "All things, therefore, that you want men to do to you, you also must likewise do to them." Following this guideline has helped many to overcome prejudice.

"Love Among Yourselves"

Jehovah's Witnesses are determined to prove themselves to be Christ's disciples by observing what Jesus said: "All will know that you are my disciples, if you have love among yourselves." (John 13:35) Such love has been demonstrated *in a remarkable way* at times of racial unrest and political tur-



Jehovah's Witnesses from Hutu and Tutsi backgrounds build a place of worship together



The application of Bible principles has accomplished what human governments cannot

moil. For example, during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, Jehovah's Witnesses demonstrated their love for one another. Witnesses of the Hutu tribe put their own lives in jeopardy in order to protect their Tutsi brothers!

Of course, it is unrealistic to expect the nations of the world to develop neighbor love to the extent that it will bring world unity. According to the Bible, that will be achieved by God in his due time. Even now, however, individuals can clothe themselves with love and achieve unity.

During the past year, Jehovah's Witnesses spent more than a billion hours calling on people and talking to them about the Bible and its value in modern-day life. Accurate knowledge of God's Word has united millions, some of whom once harbored hatred for one another. These include Arabs and Jews, Armenians and Turks, Germans and Russians, to name just a few.

Would you like to learn more about the unifying effects of God's Word, the Bible? If so, please contact Jehovah's Witnesses locally, or write to the appropriate address listed on page 2.



Jehovah's Word Is Alive

Highlights From the Books of Haggai and Zechariah

THE year is 520 B.C.E. Sixteen years have passed since the Jewish returnees from Babylonian exile laid the foundation of Jehovah's temple in Jerusalem. Yet, the temple is not completed, and the building work is under ban. Jehovah raises up the prophet Haggai and two months later the prophet Zechariah to speak His word.

Haggai and Zechariah have one objective: Stir up the people to resume the work of rebuilding the temple. The efforts of these prophets succeed, and the temple is completed five years later. What Haggai and Zechariah proclaimed is recorded in the Bible books bearing their names. The books of Haggai and Zechariah were completed in 520 B.C.E. and 518 B.C.E. respectively. Like those prophets, we too have a God-given work, which must be brought to completion before the end of the present system of things. It is the Kingdom-preaching and disciple-making work. Let us see what encouragement we can draw from the books of Haggai and Zechariah.

"SET YOUR HEART UPON YOUR WAYS"

(Haggai 1:1-2:23)

Within 112 days, Haggai delivers four motivating messages. The first is: "Set your heart upon your ways. Go up to the mountain, and you must bring in lumber. And build the house, that I may take pleasure in it and I may be glorified," Jehovah has said." (Haggai 1:7, 8) The people respond favorably. The second message contains the promise: "I [Jehovah] will fill this house with glory."—Haggai 2:7.

According to the third message, their neglect in the temple rebuilding has made 'the people and all the work of their hands' unclean before Jehovah. From the day the repair work begins, however, Jehovah "shall bestow blessing" upon them. As stated in the fourth message, Jehovah shall "annihilate the strength of the kingdoms of the nations" and set Governor Zerubbabel as "a seal ring."—Haggai 2:14, 19, 22, 23.

What was the objective of Haggai's and Zechariah's messages?



Scriptural Questions Answered:

1:6—What is the meaning of the expression “there is a drinking, but not to the point of getting intoxicated”? This expression simply indicates the scarcity of wine. Because of the lack of Jehovah’s blessing, the supply of wine would be limited—definitely not sufficient to cause intoxication.

2:6, 7, 21, 22—Who or what is causing the rocking, and with what effect? Jehovah is ‘rocking all the nations’ by means of the worldwide preaching of the Kingdom message. The preaching work also has the effect of bringing “the desirable things of all the nations” into Jehovah’s house, thus filling it with glory. In time, “Jehovah of armies” is to rock “the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry ground,” causing the entire present wicked system of things to be shaken out of existence.—Hebrews 12:26, 27.

2:9—In what ways could ‘the glory of the later house become greater than that of the former’? This was to be in at least three ways: the number of years the temple was in existence, who taught there, and who flocked there to worship Jehovah. Although Solomon’s glorious temple stood for 420 years, from 1027 B.C.E. to 607 B.C.E., the “later house” was in use for over 580 years, from its completion in 515 B.C.E. to its destruction in 70 C.E. Moreover, the Messiah—Jesus Christ—taught in the “later house,” and more people came to it than to “the former” in order to worship God.—Acts 2:1-11.

Lessons for Us:

1:2-4. Resistance to our preaching work should not cause us to shift our priorities from “seeking first the kingdom” to seeking first our own interests.—Matthew 6:33.

1:5, 7. It is good for us to ‘set our heart upon our ways’ and reflect on how what we are doing with our life affects our relationship with God.

1:6, 9-11; 2:14-17. The Jews in Haggai’s day were working hard in personal pursuits but not enjoying the fruits of their labor. They were neglecting the temple, so they did not have God’s blessing. We should give priority to spiritual pursuits and render God whole-souled service, remembering that whether we have little or much in a material way, ‘the blessing of Jehovah is what makes rich.’—Proverbs 10:22.

2:15, 18. Jehovah urged the Jews to set their hearts from that day forward, not on their past negligence, but on the rebuilding work. We should likewise strive to be forward-looking as we worship our God.

‘NOT BY POWER, BUT BY MY SPIRIT’

(Zechariah 1:1-14:21)

Zechariah begins his prophetic activity with a call to the Jews to ‘return to Jehovah.’ (Zechariah 1:3) The eight visions that follow ensure divine backing on the work of rebuilding the temple. (See the box “Zechariah’s Eight Allegorical Visions.”) The building work will come to completion, “not by a military force, nor by power, but by [Jehovah’s] spirit.” (Zechariah 4:6) The man named Sprout “will certainly build the temple of Jehovah” and “must become a priest upon his throne.”—Zechariah 6:12, 13.

Bethel sends a delegation to ask the priests about the observance of fasts commemorating Jerusalem’s destruction. Jehovah tells Zechariah that the mourning during the four fasts held in remembrance of the calamity that befell Jerusalem will be changed into “an exultation and a rejoicing and good festal seasons.” (Zechariah 7:2; 8:19) The two pronouncements that follow include judgments against nations and false prophets, Messianic prophecies, and a message of the restoration of God’s people.—Zechariah 9:1; 12:1.

Scriptural Questions Answered:

2:1—Why was a man measuring Jerusalem with a rope? Evidently, this action suggested the building of a protective wall around the city. The angel informs the man that Jerusalem is to expand and have Jehovah's protection. —Zechariah 2:3-5.

6:11-13—Did the crowning of High Priest Joshua make him a king-priest? No, Joshua was not from the royal line of David. His crowning, though, made him a prophetic type of the Messiah. (Hebrews 6:20) The prophecy concerning "Sprout" has its fulfillment in the heavenly King-Priest Jesus Christ. (Jeremiah 23:5) As Joshua served the returned Jews as high priest at the rebuilt temple, so Jesus is the High Priest for true worship at Jehovah's spiritual temple.

8:1-23—When are the ten pronouncements mentioned in these verses fulfilled? Each pronouncement follows the expression "this is what Jehovah of armies has said" and is God's promise of peace for his people. Some of these pronouncements were fulfilled in the sixth century B.C.E., but all of them have either been fulfilled since 1919 C.E. or are now in the course of fulfillment.*

8:3—Why is Jerusalem called "the city of trueness"? Before its destruction in 607 B.C.E., Jerusalem was "the oppressive city," populated by corrupt prophets and priests and unfaithful people. (Zephaniah 3:1; Jeremiah 6:13; 7:29-34) With the temple rebuilt and the people committed to wor-



How are those in positions of oversight "like a fiery torch"?

shipping Jehovah, however, the truths of pure worship were to be spoken there, and Jerusalem was to be called "the city of trueness."

11:7-14—What is signified by Zechariah's cutting up a staff called "Pleasantness" and another called "Union"? Zechariah is portrayed as one sent to "shepherd the flock meant for the killing"—sheeplike people exploited by their leaders. In his role as a shepherd, Zechariah foreshadowed Jesus Christ, who was sent to God's covenant people but was rejected by them. The cutting up of "Pleasantness" symbolized that God would end the Law covenant with the Jews and stop dealing pleasantly with them. The cutting up of "Union" meant breaking up the theocratic bond of brotherhood between Judah and Israel.

12:11—What is "the wailing of Hadadrimmon in the valley plain of Megiddo"? King Josiah of Judah was killed in a battle with Pharaoh Necho of Egypt in "the valley plain of Megiddo," and his death was bemoaned 'in dirges' over the years. (2 Chronicles 35:25) Therefore, "the wailing of Hadadrimmon" may refer to the mourning over Josiah's death.

Lessons for Us:

1:2-6; 7:11-14. Jehovah is pleased with and returns to those who repently accept reproof and return to him by rendering him whole-souled worship. On the other hand, he does not respond to a call for help from those who 'keep refusing to pay attention, keep giving a stubborn shoulder, and make their ears unresponsive' to his message.

* See *The Watchtower*, January 1, 1996, pages 9-22.

4:6, 7. No obstacles proved too great for Jehovah's spirit to overcome in bringing the work of rebuilding the temple to a successful finish. Whatever problems we may encounter in our service to God can be overcome by exercising faith in Jehovah.—Matthew 17:20.

4:10. Under Jehovah's scrutiny, Zerubbabel and his people completed the temple according to God's high standards. Living up to Jehovah's expectations is not too difficult for imperfect humans.

7:8-10; 8:16, 17. To gain Jehovah's favor, we must exercise justice, carry on loving-kindness, practice mercy, and speak truth to one another.

8:9-13. Jehovah blesses us when 'our hands are strong' in doing the work he has assigned us to do. These blessings include peace, security, and spiritual advancement.

12:6. Those in positions of oversight among Jehovah's people should be "like a fiery torch"—outstandingly zealous.

13:3. Our loyalty to the true God and his organization should surpass loyalty to any human, no matter how close.

13:8, 9. Those apostates whom Jehovah rejected were a large number, two parts of the land. Only a third part underwent refinement as through fire. In our day Christendom, constituting the majority of those who claim to be Christian, has been rejected by Jehovah. Only a small number, the anointed Christians, 'have called upon Jehovah's name' and submitted themselves to the refining process. They and their fellow believers prove to be much more than Witnesses of Jehovah in name only.

Moved to Zealous Action

How does what Haggai and Zechariah proclaimed affect us today? When we reflect on how their message stirred the Jews to give attention to the work of temple reconstruction, are we not moved to have a zealous share in

the Kingdom-preaching and disciple-making work?

Zechariah foretold that the Messiah would come "riding upon an ass," that he would be betrayed for "thirty pieces of silver," that he would be struck, and that "those of the flock [would] be scattered." (Zechariah 9:9; 11:12; 13:7) What an impact meditation on the fulfillment of such Messianic prophecies of Zechariah has on our faith! (Matthew 21:1-9; 26:31, 56; 27:3-10) Our confidence in the Word of Jehovah and in his provisions for our salvation is strengthened.—Hebrews 4:12.

ZECHARIAH'S EIGHT ALLEGORICAL VISIONS

1:8-17: Guarantees the completion of the temple and shows that Jerusalem and other cities in Judah will be blessed.

1:18-21: Promises the end of 'four horns that dispersed Judah,' that is, all governments that opposed Jehovah's worship.

2:1-13: Indicates that Jerusalem will expand and that Jehovah will become to her "a wall of fire all around"—a protection.

3:1-10: Shows that Satan was involved in opposing the work on the temple and that High Priest Joshua is delivered and cleansed.

4:1-14: Gives assurance that mountain-like obstacles will be leveled and that Governor Zerubbabel will complete the construction of the temple.

5:1-4: Pronounces a curse on evildoers who have gone unpunished.

5:5-11: Foretells the end of wickedness.

6:1-8: Promises angelic oversight and protection.



ON COURSE TOWARD A NEW WORLD

AS TOLD BY
JACK PRAMBERG

Outside of Arboga, a small picturesque town in central Sweden, Jehovah's Witnesses have a branch office with over 80 volunteers.

This is where my wife, Karin, and I live and work.

How did we come to be here?

TOWARD the end of the 19th century, a 15-year-old Swedish girl immigrated to the United States. At an immigrant shelter in New York City, she met a Swedish sailor. This led to a romance, a marriage, and the birth of a son—me. That occurred in Bronx, New York, U.S.A., in 1916, during World War I.

Shortly afterward, we moved to Brooklyn, just a few blocks from Brooklyn Heights. My fa-



ther later told me that he and I sailed a model ship near the Brooklyn Bridge, which was right in view of the world headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses. Little did I realize how the activities there would affect my life.

In 1918, World War I ended, and for the time being, the meaningless slaughter in Europe was over. Soldiers returned home to face a new kind of enemy—unemployment and poverty.

On my mother's knee

ty. My father thought it best to return to Sweden, which we did in 1923. We ended up in Erikstad, a little village near a railway station, in the Dalsland region. There my father started an engineering workshop, and there I grew up and went to school.

A Seed Was Sown

My father's business did not go well. So in the early 1930's, he again became a sailor. We were left alone—my mother with many worries and I with the managing of the workshop. One day, Mother visited her brother-in-law, my uncle Johan. Filled with apprehension about world conditions, she asked: "Johan, is it always going to be this way?"

"No, Ruth," he said. He went on to tell her about God's promise to put an end to wickedness and bring about righteous rule over the earth by means of a Kingdom with Jesus Christ as King. (Isaiah 9:6, 7; Daniel 2:44) He explained that the Kingdom for which Jesus taught us to pray was the righteous rule, or government, that would bring about a paradise earth.—Matthew 6:9, 10; Revelation 21:3, 4.

Those Bible promises went straight to Mother's heart. She headed for home, thanking God at every step she took. However, neither Father nor I liked it that Mother was becoming religious. About this time, in the mid-1930's, I moved to Trollhättan in western Sweden, where I got a job at a large workshop. Soon Mother along with Father, who had recently returned from life at sea, moved to the same place. So our family was united again.

To satisfy her spiritual hunger, Mother sought out Jehovah's Witnesses in the area. At the time, they met in one another's homes, just as the first Christians did. (Philemon 1, 2) One day, it was Mother's turn to host the meeting. Anxiously, she asked Fa-

ther if she could invite her friends. He answered, "Your friends are my friends."

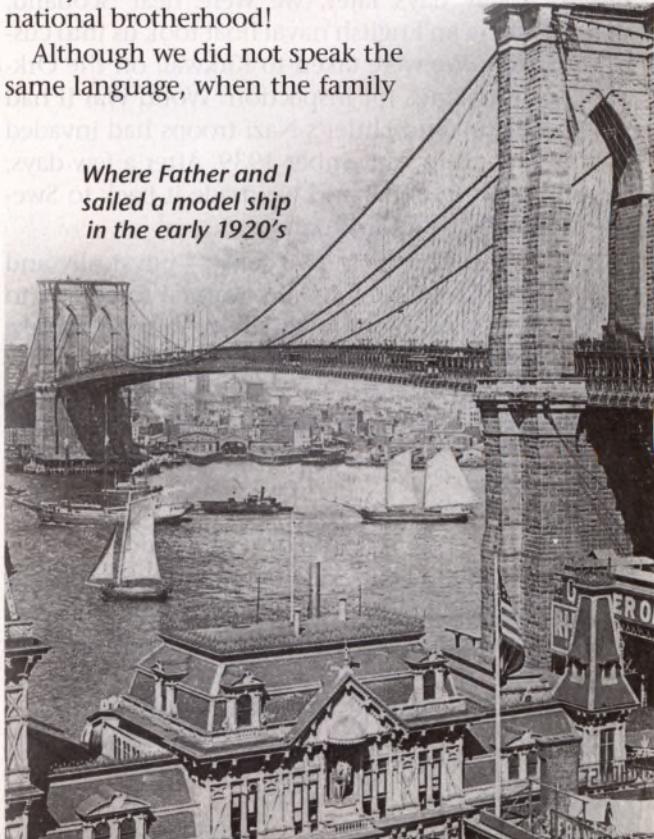
So the door to our home was opened. As people came in through the door, I left. It was not long, however, before I stayed. The warmth of the Witnesses and their realistic, down-to-earth reasoning broke down all the prejudice in my mind. In my heart a seed started to grow—a hope for the future.

Going to Sea

I must have inherited some saltwater in my blood from Father, for I too went to sea. I also became increasingly aware of my spiritual need. When we were in harbor, I always tried to get in touch with Jehovah's Witnesses. In Amsterdam, Holland (now Netherlands), I went into a post office to ask where I could find them. After some negotiating, I received an address to which I headed immediately. A ten-year-old girl warmly welcomed me at the door. I was a stranger, yet right away I felt a bond with her and her family—a taste of a wonderful international brotherhood!

Although we did not speak the same language, when the family

Where Father and I sailed a model ship in the early 1920's



pulled out a calendar and a railway schedule and started drawing a map, I understood that an assembly was going to be held in the nearby town of Haarlem. I went, and despite not being able to understand a word, I loved it. When I saw the Witnesses passing out invitations for the public talk on Sunday, I felt the urge to participate. So I picked up invitations that people discarded and passed them out once again.

Once, we docked in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and there I found the branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses. Inside was an office and a storeroom. At a desk, a woman sat knitting, and a little girl, probably her daughter, was playing with a doll. It was late at night, and a man was taking some books from a shelf, including the book *Creation* in Swedish. Seeing their happy, welcoming faces, I knew that I wanted to be a part of these people.

On the voyage home, our ship picked up the crew from a Canadian military plane that had crashed off the coast of Newfoundland. A few days later, we were near Scotland, where an English naval boat took us into custody. We were taken to Kirkwall on the Orkney Islands for inspection. World War II had begun, and Hitler's Nazi troops had invaded Poland in September 1939. After a few days, we were freed, and we made it back to Sweden without mishap.

I was home in two senses—physically and spiritually. Now I really wanted to belong to God's people and did not want to forsake gathering together with them. (Hebrews 10:24, 25) It makes me happy to recall that as a sailor, I always witnessed to other sailors, and I know that one of them also became a Witness.

A Special Form of Service

Early in 1940, I visited the branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses in Stockholm. I was welcomed by Johan H. Eneroth, who was then

taking the lead in overseeing the preaching work in Sweden. When I told him that I wanted to share in the preaching work full-time as a pioneer minister, he looked at me intently and asked, "Do you believe that this is God's organization?"

"Yes," I replied. That led to my baptism on June 22, 1940, and I began serving at the branch in that lovely environment with fine fellow workers. Our weekends were spent in the ministry. In the summer, we often cycled out to distant territories and used the entire weekend for preaching, sleeping in haystacks at night.

Mostly, however, we preached from house to house in and around Stockholm. Once, I saw a man in his basement, working frantically on his boiler. So I rolled up my sleeves and helped him. When the leak was stopped, the man looked at me with gratitude and said: "I think that you probably came for another reason. So let us go up and wash our hands and have a cup of coffee." We did, and over that cup of coffee, I witnessed to him. In time, he became a fellow Christian.

Despite the country's official position of neutrality, the Swedish people were affected by the war. An increasing number of men were called to military service, including me. When I refused to perform military drills, I was imprisoned for short periods. Later, I was sentenced to a work camp. Young Witnesses were often summoned before judges, and we were able to bear witness regarding God's Kingdom. This was true to Jesus' prophecy: "You will be haled before governors and kings for my sake, for a witness to them and the nations."—Matthew 10:18.

My Life Changes

In 1945 the guns went silent over Europe. Later that year, Nathan H. Knorr, who was then taking the lead in the worldwide work, visited us from Brooklyn, along with his

secretary, Milton Henschel. Their visit turned out to be of great importance for the reorganization of the preaching work in Sweden—and for me personally. When I heard about the possibility of attending the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead, I immediately applied.

The following year, I was sitting in a classroom at the school, then located just outside South Lansing, New York. During the five-month course, I received training that deepened my appreciation for the Bible and for God's organization. I found that those taking the lead in the worldwide preaching work were approachable and considerate. They worked hard, right alongside the rest of us. (Matthew 24:14) Although this did not surprise me, it made me happy to see it with my own eyes.

The time soon came—February 9, 1947—for the eighth class of Gilead School to graduate. Brother Knorr announced which countries we students would be sent to. When my turn came, he said, "Brother Pramberg is going back to Sweden to serve his brothers there." I did not feel too enthusiastic about going home, I must confess.

Meeting a Great Challenge

When I returned to Sweden, I learned about a new work commencing in many countries throughout the world—the district work. I was appointed to serve as the first district overseer in Sweden, and my assignment was to cover the entire country. I arranged for and oversaw what came to be called circuit assemblies, which were held in cities and towns throughout Sweden. Since this arrangement was completely new, my instructions were meager. Brother Enerothen and I sat down and put together a program in the best way we could. I trembled in the face of the



*With Herman Henschel (Milton's father)
at Gilead, 1946*

assignment and approached Jehovah many, many times in prayer. For 15 years, I had the privilege of serving in the district work.

In those days, it was hard to find suitable meeting places. We had to make do with dance halls and the like, which were often poorly heated and sometimes shabby. An assembly in Rökiö, Finland, was typical. The hall was an old community center that had been abandoned for some time. There was a snowstorm, and it was four degrees below zero Fahrenheit. So we started a fire in two giant heating stoves constructed of oil drums. Little did we know, however, that birds had built nests in the chimney. The smoke engulfed us! Yet, wrapped in topcoats and with eyes stinging, everybody remained seated. It just made that assembly especially memorable.

Among the instructions for organizing these three-day circuit assemblies was direction to provide food for the delegates. At first, we had no equipment and no experience in handling such an undertaking. But we had wonderful brothers and sisters who happily

*We were married at Yankee
Stadium on July 20, 1953*

took up the challenge. On the day before the assembly, you could see them bent over a tub, peeling potatoes while relating experiences and having a wonderful time. Many lasting friendships began on those occasions while the brothers and sisters worked hard together.

Marching with placards advertising these circuit assemblies was another feature of our work then. We walked in procession through a town or a village, inviting the residents to the public talk. People in general were most often kind and respectful. Once in the town of Finspång, the street was lined with workers who were pouring out of a factory. Suddenly, one of them shouted: "Here boys, you see the gang that Hitler couldn't beat!"

A Great Event in My Life

My life as a traveling minister was soon to change after I met Karin, a wonderful young woman. Both of us were invited to attend the international convention at Yankee Stadium, New York City, in July 1953. There, between sessions on Monday the 20th, Milton Henschel performed our wedding. It was an unusual event in this stronghold of the baseball world. After serving together in the traveling work until 1962, Karin and I were invited to join the Sweden Bethel family. At first, I worked in the Magazine Department. Then, because of my training as a mechanic, I was assigned to look after the printing presses and other machines at the branch. Karin



worked for several years in the laundry. For many years now, she has been serving in the Proofreading Department.

What an eventful, meaningful, happy life we have enjoyed in our more than 54 years of service to Jehovah as a married couple! Jehovah has truly blessed his organization of loving, hardworking servants. Back in 1940 when I started serving at the branch, there were only 1,500 Witnesses in Sweden. But now there are over 22,000. The growth has been even greater in other parts of the world, so that earth wide we now number over six and a half million.

Jehovah's spirit is behind our work, constantly filling our sails, as it were. With eyes of faith, we gaze out over the restless sea of mankind, but we are not disturbed. Straight ahead on our course, we clearly see God's new world. Karin and I thank God for all his goodness and pray every day for the strength to keep our integrity and finally reach our goal—God's approval and eternal life!—Matthew 24:13.

Teach Your Child to Be Peaceable

Thrilled about her family's cross-country move, eight-year-old Nicole regularly updated her close friend Gabrielle on every detail. One day, Gabrielle suddenly blurted out to Nicole that she could not care less about her leaving. Deeply hurt and angry, Nicole told her mother, "I never want to see Gabrielle again!"

CHILDHOOD crises like Nicole and Gabrielle's often require parental intervention—not just to soothe hurt feelings but also to show how to handle the matter. Young children naturally display "the traits of a babe," and they are often unaware of the harm that their words and actions can cause. (1 Corinthians 13:11) They need help to develop the qualities that can contribute to peaceful relations with others in the family and elsewhere.

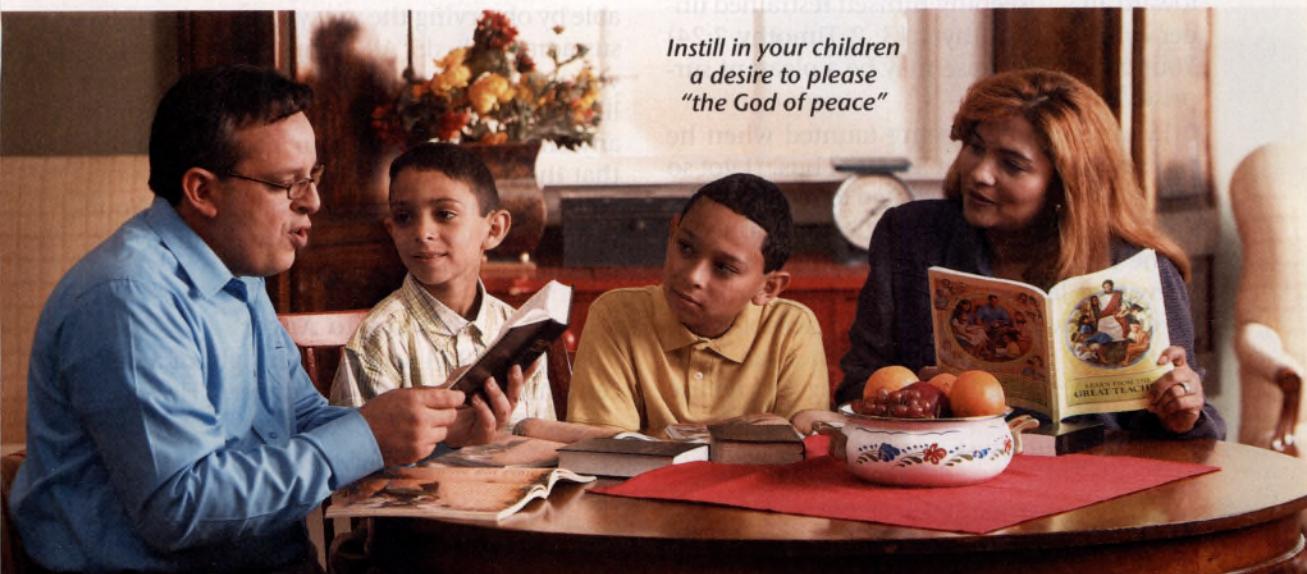
Christian parents are keenly interested in training their children to "seek peace and pursue it." (1 Peter 3:11) The happiness that results from being a peacemaker is worth all the effort needed to conquer feelings of suspicion, frustration, and animosity. If you are a parent, how can you teach your children to be peaceable?

Build a Desire to Please "the God of Peace"

Jehovah is called "the God of peace" and is identified as the one who "gives peace." (Philippians 4:9; Romans 15:33) Thus, wise parents skillfully use God's Word, the Bible, to instill in their children the desire to please God and to imitate his qualities. For example, help your children to picture what the apostle John saw in a striking vision—a magnificent emerald-green rainbow surrounding the throne of Jehovah.* (Revelation 4:2, 3) Explain that this rainbow represents the peace and serenity that surround Jehovah and that such blessings will extend to *all* who obey him.

* See the picture on page 75 of the book *Revelation—Its Grand Climax At Hand!* published by Jehovah's Witnesses.

Instill in your children a desire to please "the God of peace"





Take time to correct hurtful speech and actions

Jehovah also provides guidance through his Son, Jesus, who is called the “Prince of Peace.” (Isaiah 9:6, 7) Therefore, read and discuss with your little ones Bible accounts in which Jesus taught valuable lessons about avoiding fights and disputes. (Matthew 26:51-56; Mark 9:33-35) Explain why Paul, once “an insolent man,” changed his ways and wrote that “a slave of the Lord does not need to fight, but needs to be gentle toward all, . . . keeping himself restrained under evil.” (1 Timothy 1:13; 2 Timothy 2:24) Your child’s response may be a pleasant surprise.

Evan remembers being taunted when he was seven by a boy on a school bus. “I got so mad at the boy that I wanted to retaliate!” he says. “Then I remembered a lesson learned at home about those who try to pick fights. I knew that Jehovah wants me to ‘return evil for evil to no one’ and to ‘be peaceable with all men.’” (Romans 12:17, 18) Evan then found the strength and courage to defuse

this explosive situation by responding in a mild manner. He wanted to please the God of peace.

Be a Peaceable Parent

Is your home a place where a peaceful atmosphere prevails? If so, your children can learn much about peace even when you do not say a word. Your effectiveness in teaching your children to be peaceable depends largely on the extent to which you imitate the peaceful ways of God and Christ.—Romans 2:21.

Russ and Cindy work hard at training their two sons, exhorting them to act in a loving way when others irritate them. Says Cindy, “The attitude that Russ and I display toward the boys and others when difficulties arise plays a *big* part in how our boys end up handling similar situations.”

Even when you make a mistake—and what parent does not?—you can still use the opportunity to teach valuable lessons. “There were times when my wife, Terry, and I overreacted and disciplined our three children before we had all the facts,” admits Stephen. “When that happened, we apologized.” Terry adds: “We let our children know that we too are far from perfect and that we make mistakes. We feel that this has not only contributed to peace in our family but also helped the children learn how to pursue peace.”

Are your children learning how to be peaceable by observing the way you treat them? Jesus admonished: “All things, therefore, that you want men to do to you, you also must likewise do to them.” (Matthew 7:12) Despite any shortcomings on your part, be assured that the love and affection that you show to your children will produce good results. Your young ones will respond more readily when direction is given in love.

Be Slow to Anger

Proverbs 19:11 says: “The insight of a man certainly slows down his anger.” How can

you help your children cultivate such insight? David describes a practical approach that he and his wife, Mariann, find helpful with their son and daughter. He says: "When they get upset with someone who says or does something hurtful, we help them to have fellow feeling. We ask them such simple questions as: 'Did the person have a hard day? Could he be jealous? Has someone hurt him?'" Mariann adds, "This tends to calm the children instead of allowing them to dwell on negative thoughts or to debate who is right or wrong."

Such training can yield marvelous results. Note how Nicole, mentioned at the beginning of this article, was helped by her mother, Michelle, in a way that went beyond simply mending the rift with her friend Gabrielle. "Nicole and I read chapter 14 of the book *Learn From the Great Teacher*," says Michelle.* "Then I explained what Jesus meant when he said that we should forgive someone 'up to seventy-seven times.' After I carefully listened to Nicole as she expressed her feelings, I helped her to *feel* Gabrielle's sadness and frustration because her best friend was moving so far away."—Matthew 18:21, 22.

Nicole's newfound insight into what might have led to Gabrielle's outburst helped her to develop fellow feeling and motivated her to phone Gabrielle to apologize. "Since that time," says Michelle, "Nicole finds happiness in being considerate of others' feelings and in doing nice things for them to make them feel better."—Philippians 2:3, 4.

Help your children to avoid becoming agitated by mistakes and misunderstandings. Perhaps you will have the satisfaction of seeing

your youngsters express genuine goodwill and tender affection to others.—Romans 12:10; 1 Corinthians 12:25.

Encourage the Beauty of Forgiveness

"It is beauty... to pass over transgression," states Proverbs 19:11. Jesus, in his most agonizing moment, imitated his Father and displayed a forgiving attitude. (Luke 23:34) Your children can learn the beauty of forgiveness when they personally feel the comfort of *your* forgiveness.

For example, five-year-old Willy loves to color pictures with his grandmother. On one occasion, Grandma suddenly stopped, gave Willy a sharp rebuke, and walked away. Willy was distressed. His father, Sam, said: "Willy's grandmother suffers from Alzheimer's disease. So we explained this to Willy in language that he could understand." After reminding Willy that he had been forgiven on numerous occasions and that he should do the same to others, Sam was amazed at Willy's reaction. "Can you imagine how my wife and I felt," says Sam, "as we watched our little son go to his 80-year-old grandmother, talk to her in an apologetic tone, and then lead her by the hand back to the table?"

It is beauty indeed when children learn to "continue putting up with" the shortcomings and mistakes of others and to forgive

Your children should learn to apologize and to forgive



* Published by Jehovah's Witnesses.

A POSITIVE INFLUENCE?

An essay published by the Media Awareness Network entitled "Violence in Media Entertainment" observes: "The notion of violence as a means of problem solving is reinforced by entertainment in which both villains and heroes resort to violence on a continual basis." Only about 10 percent of the TV shows, movies, and music videos that were analyzed considered the conse-

quences of violence. Instead, states the essay, "the violence was simply presented as justifiable, natural and inevitable—the most obvious way to solve the problem."

Do you see the need to make adjustments regarding TV viewing in your home? Do not allow media entertainment to undermine your efforts to teach your children to be peaceable.

them. (Colossians 3:13) Even when people purposely behave in disruptive ways, assure your child that a peaceful response can be powerful, for "when Jehovah takes pleasure in the ways of a man he causes even his enemies themselves to be at peace with him."—Proverbs 16:7.

Keep Helping Your Child to Be Peaceable

When parents use God's Word to instruct their children "under peaceful conditions" and as "those who are making peace," they

are a source of true blessing to their children. (James 3:18) Such parents are equipping their offspring with what they need to resolve conflicts and to be peaceable. This contributes immeasurably to their happiness and satisfaction throughout life.

Dan and Kathy have three teenagers who are all doing well spiritually. "Although there were challenges in training them during their early years," says Dan, "we are thrilled that our children have turned out well. They now get along with others, and they freely forgive others when something threatens peace." Says Kathy, "This is especially encouraging to us, since peace is part of the fruitage of God's spirit."—Galatians 5:22, 23.

With good reason, then, as Christian parents, do not "give up" or "tire out" in teaching your children to live peaceably—even if progress at first seems to be slow. As you do so, be assured that "the God of love and of peace will be with you."—Galatians 6:9; 2 Corinthians 13:11.

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

Compassion in a Cruel World

Can a Pagan Holiday Be Made Christian?

Are You Ready for Jehovah's Day?



JEHOVAH'S SOVEREIGNTY AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD

"Yours, O Jehovah, are the greatness and the mightiness and the beauty and the excellency and the dignity . . . Yours is the kingdom, O Jehovah."

—1 CHRONICLES 29:11.

JEHOVAH himself has firmly established his throne in the very heavens; and over everything his own kingship has held domination.” (Psalm 103:19) With those words, the psalmist pointed to the fundamental concept of rulership. Jehovah God, being the Creator, is rightfully the Sovereign Ruler of the universe.

² Of course, for a ruler to exercise his sovereignty, there need to be subjects. To begin with, Jehovah exercised his dominion over spirit creatures whom he brought into existence—first his only-begotten Son and then the angelic hosts. (Colossians 1:15-17) Far down the stream of time, the prophet Daniel was given a glimpse of the heavenly scene. He reported: “I kept on beholding until there were thrones placed and the Ancient of Days sat down. . . . There were a thousand thousands that kept ministering to him, and ten thousand times ten thousand that kept standing right before him.” (Daniel 7:9, 10) For aeons Jehovah, “the An-

cient of Days,” presided as Sovereign over his immense and orderly family of spirit sons, who served as “ministers” doing his will.—Psalm 103:20, 21.

³ Eventually, Jehovah extended his rulership by bringing into existence the vast and intricate physical universe, including the earth. (Job 38:4, 7) To an observer on earth, the heavenly bodies operate with such order and precision that they seem to need no one to guide or govern them. Yet, the psalmist declared: “[Jehovah] himself commanded, and they were created. And he keeps them standing forever, to time indefinite. A regulation he has given, and it will not pass away.” (Psalm 148:5, 6) All along, Jehovah has been exercising his sovereignty in directing, regulating, and governing the operations of the spirit realm and the physical universe.—Nehemiah 9:6.

⁴ With the creation of the first human pair, God exercised his sovereignty in yet another way. Besides providing humans

1. Why is Jehovah the rightful Sovereign of the universe?
2. How did Daniel describe Jehovah's spirit domain?

3. How did Jehovah's sovereignty extend over the physical universe?
4. How does Jehovah exercise his sovereignty over humans?

with everything they needed to live a purposeful and satisfying life, Jehovah granted them dominion over the lower creatures of the earth—a delegation of authority. (Genesis 1:26-28; 2:8, 9) Thus, it is clear that not only is God's rulership benevolent and kind but it also accords its subjects honor and dignity. As long as Adam and Eve submitted themselves to Jehovah's sovereignty, they had the prospect of living forever in an earthly paradise home.—Genesis 2:15-17.

⁵ What can we conclude from all of this? First, Jehovah has always been exercising his sovereignty over all his creation. Second, God's rulership is benevolent and dignifying. Finally, our obeying and supporting God's rulership will result in eternal blessings. It is no wonder that King David of ancient Israel was moved to say: "Yours, O Jehovah, are the greatness and the mightiness and the beauty and the excellency and the dignity; for everything in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O Jehovah, the One also lifting yourself up as head over all." —1 Chronicles 29:11.

Why a Kingdom of God?

⁶ Since Jehovah, the Universal Sovereign, has always been exercising his power and mightiness, why is there a need for the Kingdom of God? A sovereign generally exercises his authority through an agency that is placed over his subjects. The Kingdom of God, therefore, is an expression or exercise of God's universal sovereignty toward his creatures, a means or an agency used by him to carry out his rulership.

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5. What can we say about Jehovah's exercise of sovereignty?
 6. What is the relationship between God's sovereignty and his Kingdom?

⁷ Jehovah has expressed his sovereignty in different ways at different times. He instituted a new expression of his sovereignty in response to a new development. This was when a renegade spirit son of God, Satan, succeeded in influencing Adam and Eve to rebel against Jehovah's rulership. That rebellion constituted a challenge to God's sovereignty. In what way? By telling Eve that she 'positively would not die' if she ate the forbidden fruit, Satan insinuated that Jehovah was untruthful, thus untrustworthy. Satan further told Eve: "God knows that in the very day of your eating from it your eyes are bound to be opened and you are bound to be like God, knowing good and bad." Satan was suggesting that Adam and Eve could do better by ignoring God's command and going their independent way. (Genesis 3:1-6) That was a direct challenge to the rightfulness of God's rule. What would Jehovah do?

⁸ What do we expect that a ruler would do when there was an outright rebellion in his realm? Those who are familiar with history can recall some such instances. Rather than ignoring the matter, usually a sovereign—even a benevolent ruler—would render judgment against the rebels, declaring them guilty of treason. Then the ruler might empower someone to subdue the rebel forces and restore peace. Similarly, Jehovah showed that he was in full control of the situation when he took immediate action and pronounced judgment upon the rebels. He pronounced Adam and Eve unworthy of the gift of everlasting life, and He drove them out of the garden of Eden. —Genesis 3:16-19, 22-24.

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7. Why did Jehovah institute a new expression of his sovereignty?
 8. 9. (a) How would a human sovereign deal with rebellion in his realm? (b) What did Jehovah do in response to the Edenic rebellion?

⁹ In pronouncing his judgment against Satan, Jehovah revealed a new expression of his sovereignty, a means by which he would restore peace and order to all his realm. To Satan, God said: "I shall put enmity between you and the woman and between your seed and her seed. He will bruise you in the head and you will bruise him in the heel." (Genesis 3:15) Thus Jehovah revealed that it was his purpose to empower a "seed" to crush Satan and his forces and to prove the rightfulness of His sovereignty.—Psalm 2:7-9; 110:1, 2.

¹⁰ That "seed" turned out to be Jesus Christ, along with a distinct group of associate rulers. Together they form God's Messianic Kingdom. (Daniel 7:13, 14, 27; Matthew 19:28; Luke 12:32; 22:28-30) All of this, however, was not revealed immediately. In fact, the outworking of the first prophecy remained a "sacred secret which [had] been kept in silence for long-lasting times." (Romans 16:25) For centuries, men of faith longed for the time when "the sacred secret" would be revealed and the first prophecy fulfilled to the vindication of Jehovah's sovereignty.—Romans 8:19-21.

"The Sacred Secret" Progressively Revealed

¹¹ As time went on, Jehovah progressively made known aspects of "the sacred secret of the kingdom of God." (Mark 4:11) Among those to whom Jehovah did so was the man Abraham, who was called "Jehovah's friend." (James 2:23) Jehovah promised Abraham that He would "make a great nation" out of him. Later, God further made known to Abraham: "Kings will

10. (a) Who did the "seed" turn out to be?
(b) What did Paul say about the outworking of the first prophecy?

11. What did Jehovah make known to Abraham?

come out of you," and "by means of your seed all nations of the earth will certainly bless themselves."—Genesis 12:2, 3; 17:6; 22:17, 18.

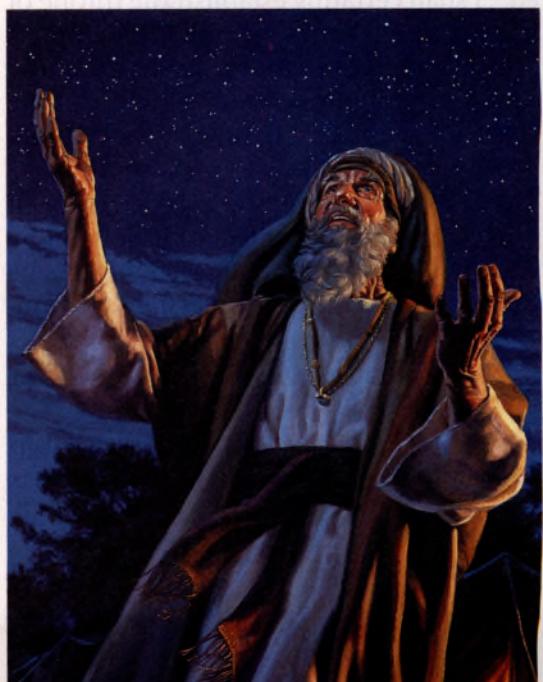
¹² By Abraham's time, there had already been human attempts at rulership and domination. For example, concerning Nimrod, the great-grandson of Noah, the Bible says: "He made the start in becoming a mighty one in the earth. He displayed himself a mighty hunter in opposition to Jehovah." (Genesis 10:8, 9) Clearly, Nimrod and other self-appointed rulers were puppets in Satan's hands. They and their supporters became part of Satan's seed.—1 John 5:19.

¹³ In spite of Satan's efforts to produce human rulers, Jehovah's purpose moves forward. Through Abraham's grandson Jacob, Jehovah revealed: "The scepter will not turn

12. How did Satan's seed manifest itself after the Flood?

13. What did Jehovah point forward to through Jacob?

What did Jehovah point forward to through Abraham?



aside from Judah, neither the commander's staff from between his feet, until Shiloh comes; and to him the obedience of the peoples will belong." (Genesis 49:10) The term "Shiloh" means "He Whose It Is; He to Whom It Belongs." Thus, these prophetic words indicated that there would come one who had the legal right to receive "the scepter," or sovereignty, and "the commander's staff," or rulership, over "the peoples," or all mankind. Who would this One be?

"Until Shiloh Comes"

¹⁴ Of the descendants of Judah, the first one to be chosen by Jehovah to be king over his people was the shepherd David, son of Jesse.* (1 Samuel 16:1-13) In spite of his sins and errors, David found favor with Jehovah because of his loyalty to Jehovah's sovereignty. Shedding more light on the Edenic prophecy, Jehovah made a covenant with David, saying: "I shall certainly raise up your seed after you, which will come out of your inward parts; and I shall indeed firmly establish his kingdom." That would involve more than David's son and successor, Solomon, for the covenant stated: "I shall certainly establish the throne of his kingdom firmly to time indefinite." That Davidic covenant made clear that the promised Kingdom "seed" would in time come through the family line of David. —2 Samuel 7:12, 13.

¹⁵ With David was started a dynasty of kings who were anointed with holy oil by the high priest. These kings could thus be called anointed ones, or messiahs. (1 Sam-

* Saul, the first one chosen by God to rule over Israel, was of the tribe of Benjamin.—1 Samuel 9:15, 16; 10:1.

14. What covenant did Jehovah make with David?
15. Why could the kingdom of Judah be viewed as a pattern of God's Kingdom?

uel 16:13; 2 Samuel 2:4; 5:3; 1 Kings 1:39) They were said to sit on Jehovah's throne and rule as kings for Jehovah in Jerusalem. (2 Chronicles 9:8) In that sense, the kingdom of Judah represented God's Kingdom, an expression of Jehovah's sovereignty.

¹⁶ When the king and the people submitted to Jehovah's sovereignty, they enjoyed His protection and blessing. The reign of Solomon was in particular a time of peace and prosperity beyond compare, providing a prophetic glimpse of the rule of God's Kingdom when Satan's influence will be completely removed and Jehovah's sovereignty vindicated. (1 Kings 4:20, 25) Sadly, most of the kings in the Davidic line failed to measure up to Jehovah's requirements, and the people fell into idolatry and immorality. Finally, Jehovah allowed the kingdom to be destroyed by the Babylonians in 607 B.C.E. Satan appeared to have gained the upper hand in his attempt to discredit Jehovah's sovereignty.

¹⁷ The overthrow of the Davidic kingdom—and the earlier overthrow of the northern kingdom of Israel—furnished proof, not of any deficiency or failure of Jehovah's sovereignty, but of the sorry consequences of Satan's influence and man's independence from God. (Proverbs 16:25; Jeremiah 10:23) To show that he was still exercising his sovereignty, Jehovah declared through the prophet Ezekiel: "Remove the turban, and lift off the crown. . . . A ruin, a ruin, a ruin I shall make it. As for this also, it will certainly become no one's until he comes who has the legal right,

16. What were the results of the reign of the Judean kings?
17. What shows that Jehovah was still in full control in spite of the overthrow of the Davidic kingdom?



Why is the overthrow of the Davidic kingdom no proof of any failure of Jehovah's sovereignty?

and I must give it to him." (Ezekiel 21:26, 27) Those words indicate that the promised "seed," the One "who [had] the legal right," was yet to come.

¹⁸ Let us move forward to about the year 2 B.C.E. The angel Gabriel was sent to Mary, a virgin girl in Nazareth, a city of Galilee in northern Palestine. He declared: "Look! you will conceive in your womb and give birth to a son, and you are to call his name Jesus. This one will be great and will be called Son of the Most High; and Jehovah God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule as king over the house of Jacob forever, and there will be no end of his kingdom."—Luke 1:31-33.

¹⁹ At last, the time for revealing "the sacred secret" had drawn near. The principal One of the promised "seed" was soon to appear. (Galatians 4:4; 1 Timothy 3:16)

18. What proclamation did the angel Gabriel make to Mary?

19. The time for what exciting events had drawn near?

He would be bruised in the heel by Satan. But that "seed," in turn, will bruise Satan's head, putting him and all his cohorts out of action. He would also bear witness that by means of the Kingdom of God, all the damage done by Satan will be undone and Jehovah's sovereignty vindicated. (Hebrews 2:14; 1 John 3:8) How would Jesus accomplish this? What example did he leave for us to imitate? We will find the answers in the following article.

Can You Explain?

- What makes Jehovah the rightful Sovereign of the universe?
- Why did Jehovah purpose to institute the Kingdom?
- How did Jehovah progressively make known "the sacred secret"?
- What shows that Jehovah was in full control in spite of the overthrow of the Davidic kingdom?

ARE YOU FOR JEHOVAH'S SOVEREIGNTY?

"Say among the nations: 'Jehovah himself has become king.'"—PSALM 96:10.

AMOMENTOUS event, one that had never before been seen on earth, occurred about October 29 C.E. The Gospel writer Matthew reports: "After being baptized Jesus immediately came up from the water; and, look! the heavens were opened up, and [John the Baptizer] saw descending like a dove God's spirit coming upon [Jesus]. Look! Also, there was a voice from the heavens that said: 'This is my Son, the beloved, whom I have approved.'" This was one of the few events that was recorded by all four Gospel writers.—Matthew 3:16, 17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21, 22; John 1:32-34.

² The visible outpouring of holy spirit upon Jesus identified him as the Anointed One, which term means Messiah, or Christ. (John 1:33) At long last, the promised "seed" had appeared! Standing before John the Baptizer was the one whose heel was to be bruised by Satan and who was to bruise the head of that archenemy of Jehovah and His sovereignty. (Genesis 3:

15) From that point on, Jesus was fully aware that he must endeavor to fulfill Jehovah's purpose regarding His sovereignty and the Kingdom.

³ To be prepared for the task at hand, "Jesus, full of

1, 2. (a) What momentous event occurred about October 29 C.E.? (b) What meaning did that event have for Jesus?

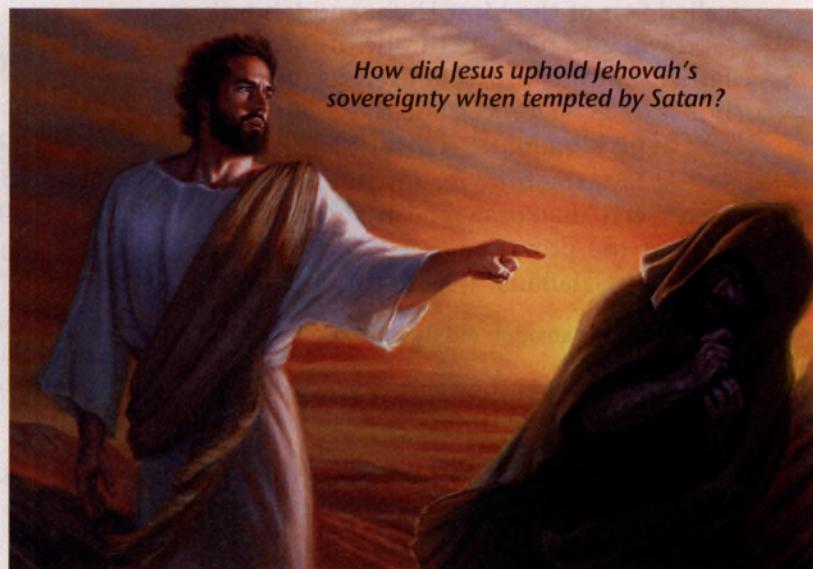
3. How did Jesus prepare himself for the role he was to play in upholding Jehovah's sovereignty?

holy spirit, turned away from the Jordan, and he was led about by the spirit in the wilderness." (Luke 4:1; Mark 1:12) There, for 40 days Jesus had time to meditate deeply on the issue of sovereignty raised by Satan and on the course that He had to take to uphold Jehovah's sovereignty. That issue involves all intelligent creatures—in heaven and on earth. So we do well to consider Jesus' faithful course and see what we must do to show that we too wish to uphold Jehovah's sovereignty.—Job 1:6-12; 2:2-6.

Issue of Sovereignty Brought to the Fore

⁴ Of course, none of the events just mentioned escaped Satan's notice. Wasting no time, he launched his attack on the principal "seed" of God's "woman." (Genesis 3:15) Satan tempted Jesus three times, proposing

4. What action did Satan take that brought the issue of sovereignty to the fore?



How did Jesus uphold Jehovah's sovereignty when tempted by Satan?

that Jesus should do what seemed advantageous to him instead of what his Father wanted him to do. The third temptation in particular brought the issue of sovereignty to the fore. Showing Jesus "all the kingdoms of the world and their glory," Satan blatantly said to Jesus: "All these things I will give you if you fall down and do an act of worship to me." Fully aware that the Devil did indeed have control over "all the kingdoms of the world," Jesus showed where He stood on the issue of sovereignty by replying: "Go away, Satan! For it is written, 'It is Jehovah your God you must worship, and it is to him alone you must render sacred service.'"—Matthew 4:8-10.

⁵ Jesus' life course demonstrated clearly that for him, upholding Jehovah's sovereignty was the paramount objective. Jesus well knew that he must remain faithful until death at Satan's hand—prophetically foretold as the bruising of the heel of the woman's "seed"—in order to prove the rightfulness of God's sovereignty. (Matthew 16:21; 17:12) He also had to bear witness to the fact that the Kingdom of God is the instrument empowered by Jehovah to subdue the rebel Satan and to restore peace and order to all creation. (Matthew 6:9, 10) What did Jesus do to fulfill this challenging mission?

"The Kingdom of God Has Drawn Near"

⁶ To begin with, "Jesus went into Galilee, preaching the good news of God and saying: 'The appointed time has been fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has drawn near.'" (Mark 1:14, 15) In fact, he said: "I must declare the good news of the kingdom of God,

5. What challenging mission did Jesus have to fulfill?

6. How did Jesus make known that the Kingdom is the means that God will use to "break up the works of the Devil"?

because for this I was sent forth." (Luke 4:18-21, 43) Jesus traveled the length and breadth of the land, "preaching and declaring the good news of the kingdom of God." (Luke 8:1) Jesus also performed many powerful works—feeding the crowds, taming the elements, curing the sick, and raising the dead. By means of these miracles, Jesus proved that God can undo all the damage and suffering that resulted from the Edenic rebellion and thus "break up the works of the Devil."—1 John 3:8.

⁷ To have the Kingdom good news declared to the fullest extent possible, Jesus gathered a group of faithful followers and trained them in that work. First, he commissioned his 12 apostles and "sent them forth to preach the kingdom of God." (Luke 9:1, 2) Then, he sent forth 70 others to declare the message: "The kingdom of God has come near to you." (Luke 10:1, 8, 9) When these disciples returned and reported to Jesus the success they had had in the Kingdom-preaching work, he responded: "I began to behold Satan already fallen like lightning from heaven."—Luke 10:17, 18.

⁸ Jesus spared no effort and passed up no opportunity to bear witness to the Kingdom. He worked incessantly, laboring day and night, even forgoing the normal comforts of life. "Foxes have dens and birds of heaven have roosts, but the Son of man has nowhere to lay down his head," he said. (Luke 9:58; Mark 6:31; John 4:31-34) Shortly before his death, Jesus boldly stated before Pontius Pilate: "For this I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth." (John 18:37) Jesus' entire life course demonstrated that he came, not simply to

7. What did Jesus instruct his followers to do, and with what result?

8. What did Jesus' life course clearly demonstrate?

be a great teacher or a miracle worker or even just a self-sacrificing Savior, but to uphold Jehovah's sovereign will and to bear witness to God's ability to fulfill that will through the Kingdom.—John 14:6.

"It Has Been Accomplished!"

⁹ All that Jesus did with regard to the Kingdom did not sit well with the Adversary, Satan the Devil. Repeatedly, by means of the earthly part of his "seed"—both political and religious—Satan attempted to silence the "seed" of God's woman. From the time of his birth to the end of his earthly life, Jesus was the target of Satan and his cohorts. Finally, in the spring of 33 C.E., the time had come for the Son of man to be delivered into the hands of the Adversary to be bruised in the heel by him. (Matthew 20:18, 19; Luke 18:31-33) The Gospel accounts clearly show how people—from Judas Iscariot to the chief priests, scribes, Pharisees, and Romans—were manipulated by Satan to condemn Jesus and subject him to a painful death on a torture stake.—Acts 2:22, 23.

¹⁰ What comes to your mind when you think of Jesus on the torture stake suffering a slow and agonizing death? Perhaps you remember the ransom sacrifice that Jesus unselfishly gave in behalf of sinful mankind. (Matthew 20:28; John 15:13) You may marvel at the great love that Jehovah showed in

9. How did Satan finally succeed in bruising the heel of the "seed" of God's woman?

10. What did Jesus primarily accomplish by his death on the torture stake?



What was accomplished by Jesus' death?

providing that sacrifice. (John 3:16) Perhaps you feel as did the Roman army officer who was moved to say: "Certainly this was God's Son." (Matthew 27:54) All of these surely are fitting responses. On the other hand, recall that Jesus' last words on the torture stake were: "It has been accomplished!" (John 19:30) What had been accomplished? While Jesus achieved many things by his life and death, was it not primarily for settling the issue of Jehovah's sovereignty that Jesus came to earth? And was it not foretold that as the "seed," he would suffer the extreme test at Satan's hands so as to clear Jehovah's name of all reproach?

(Isaiah 53:3-7) These were weighty responsibilities, yet Jesus fulfilled them in every respect. What an accomplishment!

¹¹ For his faithfulness and loyalty, Jesus was resurrected, not as a human, but as "a life-giving spirit." (1 Corinthians 15:45; 1 Peter 3:18) Jehovah's promise to his glorified Son was: "Sit at my right hand until I place your enemies as a stool for your feet." (Psalm 110:1) The "enemies" include the chief culprit, Satan, and all those making up his "seed." As King of Jehovah's Messianic Kingdom, Jesus Christ will take the lead in bringing all rebels to nothing, in heaven and on earth. (Revelation 12:7-9; 19:11-16; 20:1-3, 10) Then will come the complete fulfillment of the prophecy at Genesis 3:15 as well as of the prayer that Jesus taught his followers: "Let your kingdom come. Let your will take

11. What will Jesus do to fulfill the Edenic prophecy completely?

place, as in heaven, also upon earth."—Matthew 6:10; Philippians 2:8-11.

A Model to Follow

¹² Today, the good news of the Kingdom is being preached in many lands, as Jesus prophesied it would be. (Matthew 24:14) As a result, millions of people have dedicated their life to God. They are excited about the blessings that the Kingdom will bring. They look forward to living forever in peace and security on a paradise earth, and they joyfully tell others about their hope. (Psalm 37:11; 2 Peter 3:13) Are you one of these Kingdom proclaimers? If so, you are to be commended. There is, however, something else that each one of us must consider.

¹³ The apostle Peter wrote: "Christ suffered for you, leaving you a model for you to follow his steps closely." (1 Peter 2:21) Note

12, 13. (a) What response to the Kingdom good news is seen today? (b) What must we consider in following Christ's steps?

that in this instance, Peter mentioned, not Jesus' zeal in preaching or his skill in teaching, but his suffering. As an eyewitness, Peter was well-aware of the extent to which Jesus was willing to suffer in order to submit to Jehovah's sovereignty and prove Satan to be the liar that he is. In what ways, then, can we follow Jesus' steps? We must ask ourselves: 'To what extent am I willing to suffer in order to support and honor Jehovah's sovereignty? Do I show by the way I live my life and carry out my ministry that upholding Jehovah's sovereignty is my foremost concern?'—Colossians 3:17.

¹⁴ Every day, we are confronted with trials and decisions, large and small. What should be the determining factor in our response? For example, when we are face-to-face with temptation to do something that would

14, 15. (a) How did Jesus react to misguided suggestions and offers, and why? (b) What issue must we always bear in mind? (Include comments on the box "Stand on Jehovah's Side.")

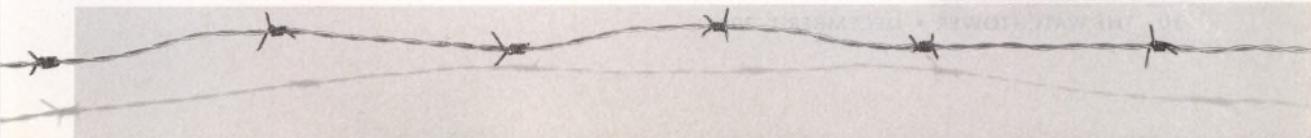
STAND ON JEHOVAH'S SIDE

As many brothers in Korea and elsewhere know, when Christians are face-to-face with severe trials, it is helpful to have clearly in mind the reason why such trials come upon them.

"What helped us to endure," said one of Jehovah's Witnesses who was imprisoned during the former Soviet regime, "was a clear understanding of the issue raised in the garden of Eden—the issue of God's right to rule. . . . We knew that we had an opportunity

to take a stand for Jehovah's rulership. . . . This made us strong and enabled us to keep our integrity."

Another Witness explained what helped him and fellow Witnesses in a labor camp. "Jehovah supported us," he said. "Despite the difficult conditions, we were spiritually awake. We always cheered one another up with the positive thought that we had taken our stand on Jehovah's side on the issue of universal sovereignty."



jeopardize our Christian standing, how do we react? When Peter told Jesus to be kind to himself, what was Jesus' reaction? "Get behind me, Satan!" Jesus exclaimed. "You think, not God's thoughts, but those of men." (Matthew 16:21-23) Or when we are offered opportunities for financial or career advancement at the cost of our spiritual welfare, do we react as Jesus did? When Jesus sensed that those who saw his miracles "were about to come and seize him to make him king," he quickly withdrew from them. —John 6:15.

¹⁵ Why did Jesus react so strongly on these and other occasions? Because he saw clearly that more than his personal safety or advantage was involved. He wanted to do his Father's will and uphold Jehovah's sovereignty at all costs. (Matthew 26:50-54) Thus, if we do not have the real issue clearly in mind at all times, as Jesus did, there is always the danger of compromise or failure. Why so? Because we can easily fall prey to the machinations of Satan, who is a master in making what is wrong appear desirable, as he did when tempting Eve.—2 Corinthians 11:14; 1 Timothy 2:14.

¹⁶ In our ministry, we endeavor to speak to people regarding their concerns and to show them the Bible's answers. This is an effective

16. What should ultimately be our goal in helping others?

Can You Answer?

- How did Jesus keep the issue of God's sovereignty to the fore?
- What did Jesus primarily accomplish by his ministry and his death?
- In what ways can we follow Jesus' example in showing that we are for Jehovah's sovereignty?

way to arouse their interest in studying the Bible. Ultimately, however, our goal is not just to help people to know what the Bible says or what blessings God's Kingdom will bring. We must help them to come to grips with the real issue. Are they willing to become true Christians and pick up their "torture stake" and suffer for the sake of the Kingdom? (Mark 8:34) Are they ready to join the ranks of those who are for Jehovah's sovereignty and thus prove Satan a liar and a slanderer? (Proverbs 27:11) It is our privilege to help ourselves and others to do so. —1 Timothy 4:16.

When God Becomes "All Things to Everyone"

¹⁷ As we do our utmost now to show by our conduct and our ministry that we are for Jehovah's sovereignty, we can look forward to the time when Jesus Christ "hands over the kingdom to his God and Father." When will that be? The apostle Paul explains: "When he has brought to nothing all government and all authority and power. For he must rule as king until God has put all enemies under his feet. . . . Then the Son himself will also subject himself to the One who subjected all things to him, that God may be all things to everyone."—1 Corinthians 15:24, 25, 28.

¹⁸ When God becomes "all things to everyone"—what a glorious time that will be! The Kingdom will have accomplished its mission. All opposers of Jehovah's sovereignty will have been eliminated. Peace and order will have been restored throughout the universe. In the words of the psalmist, all creation will sing: "Ascribe to Jehovah the glory belonging to his name . . . Say among the nations: 'Jehovah himself has become king.'" —Psalm 96:8, 10.

17, 18. What glorious time can we look forward to if we show that we are for Jehovah's sovereignty?

Questions From Readers

How should a Christian view hunting and fishing?

The Bible does not condemn hunting or fishing. (Deuteronomy 14:4, 5, 9, 20; Matthew 17:27; John 21:6) Still, Christians who hunt or fish need to consider several Scriptural principles.

God permitted Noah and his descendants to kill and eat animals, provided they bled the animals before eating them. (Genesis 9:3, 4) This directive emphasized that animal life should be respected as having originated with God. Thus, Christians do not kill animals merely for sport or for fun and with wanton disregard for life.—Proverbs 12:10.

There is an additional aspect involving our attitude. The apostles who were fishermen were likely gratified by a good catch. Yet, there is no indication that they bragged about their prowess at fishing or hunting or that they went fishing or hunting to compete with others, to prove their manhood, or to have the thrill of the chase, the fight, or the kill.—Psalm 11:5; Galatians 5:26.

Thus, we might ask ourselves: 'Am I an example in showing respect for Jehovah's view of life? Does hunting or fishing dominate my thinking and conversation? Does my way of life reflect the hunting culture, or does it show that I am a minister of God? Does hunting or fishing put me in close association with unbelievers or cause me to neglect my family?'—Luke 6:45.

Some who hunt or fish for food may feel justified in putting aside spiritual matters during hunting and fishing seasons. However, we show faith and trust in God when we do not let anything take priority over his interests. (Matthew 6:33) Furthermore, Christians obey all of "Caesar's" laws regarding hunting



and fishing, whether the authorities enforce them or not.—Matthew 22:21; Romans 13:1.

To conform to Jehovah's view of hunting and fishing, some may need to adjust their thinking with regard to his standards. (Ephesians 4:22-24) On the other hand, we need to respect the conscientious decisions of others. Appropriate in this case is the apostle Paul's counsel: "Let us not be judging one another any longer, but rather make this your decision, not to put before a brother a stumbling block." (Romans 14:13) Showing such unselfish love and respect makes for peace in the congregation and pleases our Maker, the Source of all life.—1 Corinthians 8:13.*

* See also "Questions From Readers" in the May 15, 1990, issue of *The Watchtower*.

DID JESUS OWN A BIBLE?

NO, Jesus did not own a Bible. Why? Because the complete Bible as we have it today did not exist in Jesus' time. However, synagogues maintained collections of scrolls containing writings that have since become part of the Bible as we know it. Jesus read from the scroll of Isaiah at the synagogue in Nazareth. (Luke 4:16, 17) The apostle Paul heard "the public reading of the Law and of the Prophets" in Antioch in Pisidia. (Acts 13:14, 15) And the disciple James said that Moses was "read aloud in the synagogues on every sabbath."—Acts 15:21.

Did individuals in the first century own scrolls of the Holy Scriptures? The Ethiopian eunuch of the court of Queen Candace evidently did, for he was "sitting in his chariot and reading aloud the prophet Isaiah" when the disciple Philip met him on the road to Gaza. (Acts 8:26-30) The apostle Paul asked Timothy to bring "the scrolls, especially the parchments." (2 Timothy 4:13) Though Paul did not say what scrolls they were, it is quite

possible that these were portions of the Hebrew Scriptures.

According to Alan Millard, professor of Semitic languages, among the Jews, personal ownership of Scripture scrolls was probably only "for privileged men in Palestine, for all who claimed to be educated, for some of the Pharisees and for teachers like Nicodemus." The reason, in part, was the cost. Millard estimates "a price of six to ten denarii for a copy of Isaiah" and says that a complete Hebrew Bible "would occupy 15 to 20 rolls," or could cost about half a year's wages.

The Bible does not say if Jesus or his disciples owned personal copies of Bible scrolls. However, there is no question that Jesus was well-versed in the Scriptures, able to allude to or recite the Scriptures by heart. (Matthew 4:4, 7, 10; 19:4, 5) Should this not motivate us today to become well-acquainted with the Bible, since it is generally so affordable and so readily available?

