

The WATCHTOWER

FEBRUARY 15, 1965

Semimonthly

FOR WHOM THERE ARE
RESURRECTION HOPES

A UNIVERSAL COURT CASE

DOES JEHOVAH
REQUIRE TOO MUCH?

FINDING ANSWERS
TO YOUR BIBLE QUESTIONS

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Announcing
**JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM**



"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

CONTENTS

Do Not Be Anxious	99
For Whom There Are Resurrection Hopes	101
Part Two	107
A Universal Court Case	115
How Did the Israelites Get Sealskins?	119
Does Jehovah Require Too Much?	120
"I Will by No Means Leave You"	123
Finding Answers to Your Bible Questions	124
Questions from Readers	128

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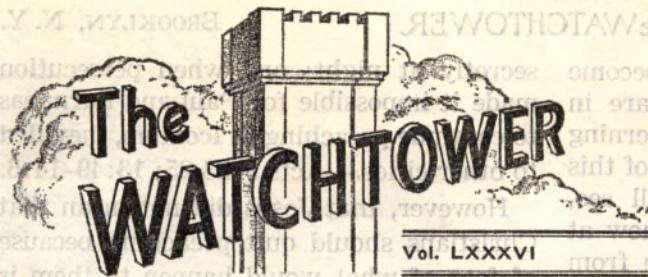
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Announcing
**JEHOVAH'S
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OUR time is one that is full of anxiety. The world staggers from one crisis to another, keeping mankind in a state of constant agitation.

No one can escape being affected by this strife, for it is global. In Asia, Africa, Europe, Central and South America, as well as in the United States, racial hatreds, revolutions, guerrilla wars and other upheavals occur with frightening rapidity. There are food shortages, pestilences, earthquakes and the ever-present threat of a nuclear holocaust.

Persons who put their hope and trust in this system of things are understandably filled with anxiety, for they find the proposed remedies of world leaders failing time and again. As Jesus Christ predicted would be the case, men everywhere are becoming "faint out of fear and expectation of the things coming upon the inhabited earth." Nowhere does there seem to be stability and security.—Luke 21:26.

Yet, in the face of the worsening world conditions, Jesus encouraged Christians not to be in fear, not to be anxious. "As these things start to occur," he said, "lift your heads up, because your deliverance is getting near." And the early Christian apostle Peter said: "The object of their

DO NOT BE ANXIOUS

fear do not you fear, neither become agitated. But sanctify the Christ as Lord in your hearts."—Luke 21:28; 1 Pet. 3:14, 15.

It is not easy to remain fearless and unburdened by anxiety when one's means of

livelihood or one's life is threatened. Firm faith in God is required. A person must believe that Jehovah God exists and that he is concerned about the welfare of those that serve him. Only with this confidence in God and his ability to protect and provide can one remain calm and peaceful when beset by trials and difficulties.

The importance of remaining close to God in prayer cannot be overemphasized, for it is the key to avoiding anxiety. Note how the apostle Paul drew this to the attention of the early Christians at Philippi. He wrote: "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.

If you keep close to Jehovah God by means of prayer and by studying his Word the Bible, you will come to appreciate why world conditions have taken such a turn

for the worse. The evidence will become clear that the present difficulties are in fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy concerning conditions that would mark the end of this wicked system of things. You will see, therefore, that God's kingdom is now at hand and that soon God will wipe from the earth all traces of wickedness and will usher lovers of righteousness into a new order of peace and happiness.—Matt. 24:3-14, 32-34; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; Dan. 2:44; Rev. 21:3, 4.

This knowledge will help you to avoid anxiety. Even should governments change and anti-God elements gain control, you will not panic and necessarily think that one will be better off by fleeing to another location. You will appreciate that there is no physical location of real peace and safety, for trouble can quickly strike anywhere on earth. Therefore, you will look to God for help, and continually pray for his spirit and direction. Yes, in keeping with the apostolic encouragement, you will "throw all your anxiety upon him, because he cares for you."—1 Pet. 5:7; Ps. 55:22.

But in this connection, did not Jesus say: "When they persecute you in one city, flee to another"? (Matt. 10:23) Does this not indicate that Christians should flee from areas of persecution? How is Jesus' instruction to be understood?

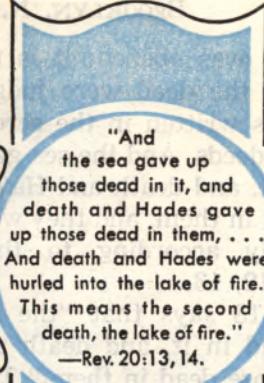
Jesus was not advocating fearful flight. He had just told his disciples to 'shake the dust off their feet' and move to another place when people did not receive them—not because of fear, but in order to reach persons to whom they could preach the Kingdom message. Similarly, when they were persecuted in one city by those who rejected the message, Jesus advised his disciples to flee to another city. So it was that when Paul's life was threatened in Damascus because of his preaching, he left town

secretly at night; and when persecution made it impossible for Paul and Barnabas to continue preaching in Iconium, they fled to other cities.—Acts 9:23-25; 13:49-14:6.

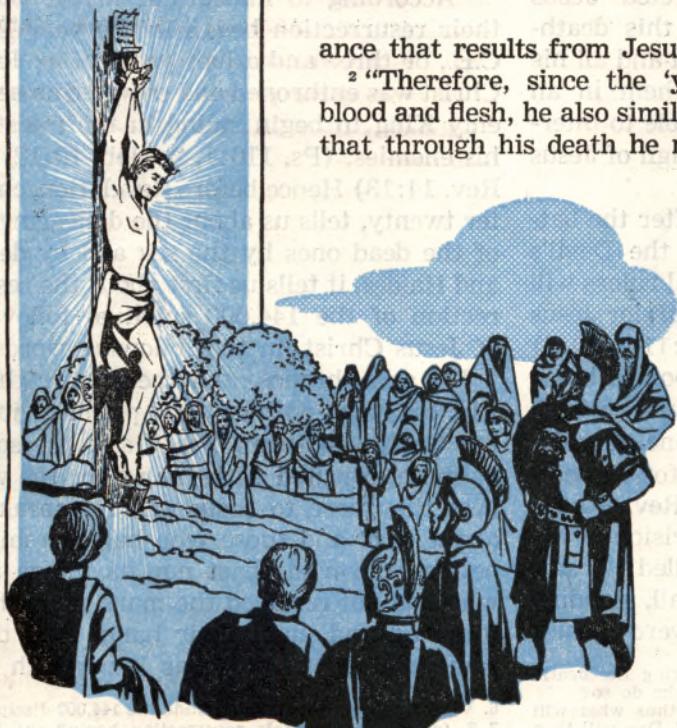
However, that Jesus did not mean that Christians should quit preaching because of fear of what would happen to them is indicated by his following words: "Do not fear them . . . What I tell you in the darkness, say in the light; and what you hear whispered, preach from the housetops. And do not become fearful of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; but rather be in fear of him that can destroy both soul and body in Gehenna. . . . Therefore have no fear."—Matt. 10:26-31.

Mature Christians do not abandon their ministry because they fear men who may kill their physical body. They are not consumed with anxiety over their personal safety or whether they will be able to obtain necessary material provisions. Rather, their chief concern is caring for the spiritual needs of those who show themselves righteously disposed toward God. They are confident that, not some physical location on earth, but "the name of Jehovah is a strong tower. Into it the righteous runs and is given protection."—Prov. 18:10; Matt. 6:25-34; Ps. 37:25, 40; Isa. 41:10.

How evident it is that developing and maintaining strong faith in God is the only way to overcome the anxieties that clutch at the hearts of men! So look to Jehovah. Keep close to him through prayer and obedience to his commandments. Fearlessly continue to preach God's Word of truth, saying "to those who are anxious at heart: 'Be strong. Do not be afraid. Look! Your own God will come with vengeance itself, God even with a repayment. He himself will come and save you people.' "—Isa. 35:4.



R ESURRECTION HOPES



MAN'S great enemy has the power to cause death. He is soon now to be brought to nothing. This is one of the wonderful things that will result from the death of Jesus Christ nineteen hundred years ago. Previous to then Jesus had been the glorious heavenly Son of God, but he humbled himself under his heavenly Father's mighty hand. He set aside his heavenly glory and, by God's power, he was born as a human babe of blood and flesh, as a descendant of the patriarch Abraham through King David of Jerusalem. He became like one of the children of Abraham, by means of a Jewish virgin named Mary, a descendant of King David. On the Passover day of the year 33 of

our Common Era, Jesus died. On that day the Passover lamb was slaughtered by the Jews,

but then Jesus let himself be slaughtered like a lamb by the earthly servants of the

Devil, the one "having the means to cause death." Of the deliver-

ance that results from Jesus' death we read:

² "Therefore, since the 'young children' are sharers of blood and flesh, he also similarly partook of the same things, that through his death he might bring to nothing the one having the means to cause death, that is, the Devil; and that he might emancipate all those who for fear of death were subject to slavery all through their lives. For he is really not assisting angels at all, but he is assisting Abraham's seed."—Heb. 2:14-16.

³ Thus, for sacrificial purposes according to God's will, Jesus Christ was brought down to Sheol or Ha'des, the

1, 2. (a) What power has man's great enemy, and who is he? (b) By whom will he be brought to nothing, and through what course of that one?

3. By his sacrificial death, to what was Jesus Christ brought down, but how was Psalm 16:10 fulfilled toward him?

common grave of the humans who lie dead in the dust of the ground. However, Almighty God did not let Sheol hold his faithful Son forever and thus let his flesh undergo a gradual decay in the memorial tomb. On the third day God raised Jesus Christ from the dead and thus fulfilled Psalm 16:10, as written by King David. The Christian apostle Paul quoted from Psalm 16:10 and said: "Hence he also says in another psalm, 'You will not allow your loyal one to see corruption.' For David, on the one hand, served the express will of God in his own generation and fell asleep in death and was laid with his forefathers and did see corruption. On the other hand, he whom God raised up did not see corruption."—Acts 13:35-37.

⁴ Almighty God raised up Jesus Christ out of Sheol as an immortal spirit person, far mightier than Satan the Devil, "the one having the means to cause death." In God's due time the resurrected Jesus Christ will bring to nothing this death-dealing Devil. He will bind him and all his demon angels and imprison them in an abyss where they will not be able to interfere with the thousand-year reign of Jesus Christ as God's anointed King.

⁵ This will be immediately after the battle of Armageddon, in which the Devil's earthly organization of political rulers will be defeated by the heavenly warrior Jesus Christ and his angels. (Rev. 19:11 to 20:3) It is in this way that the symbolical heaven and earth are made to flee away from before God's great white throne of judgment. This will make room for "a new heaven and a new earth." (Rev. 20:11; 21:1) It will be then that the vision of the Christian apostle John is fulfilled: "I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and scrolls were opened.

4. Why will Jesus Christ be able to bring the death-dealing Devil to nothing, and how will he do so?

5. (a) When will that take place, and thus what will flee away? (b) What vision of Judgment Day will then be fulfilled?

But another scroll was opened; it is the scroll of life. And the dead were judged out of those things written in the scrolls according to their deeds. And the sea gave up those dead in it, and death and Ha'des gave up those dead in them, and they were judged individually according to their deeds."—Rev. 20:12, 13.

⁶ Revelation 20:13 says that "the sea gave up those dead in it, and death and Ha'des gave up those dead in them." This does not include the 144,000 footstep followers of Jesus Christ who are referred to in Hebrews 2:16 as "Abraham's seed," by means of whom all the nations of our earth will procure an everlasting blessing. (Rev. 7:3-8; 14:1, 3; Gen. 12:3; 22:18) Nineteen centuries ago Ha'des or Sheol gave up the dead Jesus Christ, and these 144,000 faithful followers who are his spiritual brothers are made like him in having part in what is called "the first resurrection."

⁷ According to indications in the Bible, ~~their resurrection began in the year 1918 C.E., or three and a half years after Jesus Christ was enthroned and crowned as heavenly King to begin ruling in the midst of his enemies.~~ (Ps. 110:1, 2; Heb. 10:12, 13; Rev. 14:13) Hence before Revelation, chapter twenty, tells us about the delivering up of the dead ones by the sea and by death and Ha'des, it tells us first about the resurrection of the 144,000 spiritual followers of Jesus Christ, in the following words:

⁸ "I saw thrones, and there were those who sat down on them, and power of judging was given them. Yes, I saw the souls of those executed with the ax for the witness they bore to Jesus and for speaking about God, and those who had worshiped neither the wild beast nor its image and who had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand. And they came to life and ruled as kings with the

6. Why does not that vision include the 144,000 disciples?

7, 8. (a) When did their resurrection begin? (b) How does Revelation 20:4-6 picture their resurrection?

Christ for a thousand years. (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection. Happy and holy is anyone having part in the first resurrection; over these the second death [symbolized by the lake of fire] has no authority, but they will be priests of God and of the Christ, and will rule as kings with him for the thousand years."—Rev. 20:4-6, 14; 21:8.

"THE FIRST RESURRECTION"

When we say that Revelation 20:13 does not include the above-mentioned 144,000 joint heirs of Jesus Christ, we do not mean that these 144,000 do not go at death into Ha'des or Sheol, or into death in the sea if they should die at sea and their bodies not be recovered for burial on the dry land. In order to have part in "the first resurrection," they need to be raised out of Ha'des or out of death in the sea. The words of Jesus Christ plainly give us to understand this fact when he told his twelve apostles about building his church or congregation upon himself as the foundation rock, for he said: "On this rock-mass [*petra*] I will build my congregation, and the gates of Ha'des will not overpower it." (Matt. 16:18) And after his own resurrection from the dead, Jesus said in his vision to the apostle John: "I am the First and the Last, and the living one; and I became dead, but, look! I am living forever and ever, and I have the keys of death and of Ha'des." "Let the one who has an ear hear what the spirit says to the congregations: He that conquers will by no means be harmed by the second death," and so he will be resurrected.—Rev. 1:17:18; 2:11.

The resurrected Jesus Christ will

9. (a) Does this mean that the 144,000 joint heirs of Christ never go to Ha'des or Sheol? (b) According to Jesus' words to Peter in Matthew 16:18, what will not overpower the 144,000?

10. (a) As respects death and Ha'des, how does Jesus Christ break their power toward his 144,000 joint heirs? (b) As regards judgment, how does Revelation 20:4 picture the 144,000?

bring to nothing the Devil "having the means to cause death." As Jesus possesses the keys of death and of Ha'des, he will not permit Ha'des to overpower his faithful congregation of 144,000 spiritual brothers. After his heavenly enthronement as King in 1914 C.E., he breaks the power of death and of Ha'des and releases the dead members of his congregation to take part in "the first resurrection." By this invisible, spiritual resurrection, the 144,000 join him in the heavens as his joint heirs to reign and be priests and judges with him for the thousand years that Satan the Devil is bound in the abyss. They are not pictured as standing before the "great white throne" to be judged. Instead, Revelation 20:4 says that they sat down on thrones and "power of judging was given them." Thus their death in Ha'des does not become an endless death, an everlasting death, which is what is signified by the expression "the second death."

11. Repeatedly Jesus Christ assured his faithful disciples that death and Ha'des would not overpower them forever. As God's instrument for resurrecting, he would see to it that their death in faithfulness to him did not become everlasting. He said:

12. "This is the will of him that sent me, that I should lose nothing out of all that he has given me but that I should resurrect it at the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone that beholds the Son and exercises faith in him should have everlasting life, and I will resurrect him at the last day." "No man can come to me unless the Father, who sent me, draws him; and I will resurrect him in the last day. Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood [by means of faith], you have no life in yourselves. He that feeds on my flesh and

11, 12. How, in John 6:39-54, did Jesus assure his disciples that death and Ha'des would not overpower them forever?

drinks my blood has everlasting life, and I shall resurrect him at the last day."—John 6:39, 40, 44, 53, 54.

¹³ Even on earth Jesus Christ gave us examples of his coming resurrection power. He brought back to life his dear friend Lazarus, who was then in Sheol for the fourth day. Just before that Jesus said to Martha, the sister of Lazarus: "I am the resurrection and the life. He that exercises faith in me, even though he dies, will come to life; and everyone that is living and exercises faith in me will never die at all." After that Jesus had the stone taken away from in front of the memorial tomb and then called Lazarus back to life and out of the tomb. In this miraculous way Martha got her brother Lazarus back sooner than she expected, for she had said to Jesus: "I know he will rise in the resurrection on the last day."—John 11:24-44.

¹⁴ Of course, Lazarus died again, presumably as a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ. So he returned to Sheol or Ha'des. But Ha'des will not overpower him as a member of the faithful Christian congregation, for it could not overpower him on that day when Jesus came to Bethany to awaken him from his four-day sleep of death. Only this time, after he is raised from Ha'des with the rest of the Christian congregation by Jesus Christ when ruling as King in God's kingdom, Lazarus will never die again.—John 11:26.

¹⁵ Since Revelation 20:5, 6 speaks of "the first resurrection," it indicates that there is a certain order followed in the resurrection as a whole. This is clearly told to us in 1 Corinthians 15:20-23, which speaks to us about the resurrection of the 144,000 disciples who will have a glorious, heavenly, spiritual resurrection. Those verses cit-

ed read: "Now Christ has been raised up from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep in death. For since death is through a man, resurrection of the dead is also through a man. For just as in Adam all are dying, so also in the Christ all will be made alive. But each one in his own rank: Christ the first fruits, afterward those who belong to the Christ during his presence."

¹⁶ Revelation, chapter twenty, also indicates order by depicting for us first the coming to life of the 144,000 joint heirs of Jesus Christ, who are made happy in the first resurrection, and later the deliverance from the sea and from Ha'des of all the other dead who get the opportunity for eternal life on earth.

"A BETTER RESURRECTION"

¹⁷ In Hebrews 11:35 occurs this interesting expression about people who lived before the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ: "Women received their dead by resurrection; but other men were tortured because they would not accept release by some ransom, in order that they might attain a better resurrection."

¹⁸ This verse is found in a chapter that tells us about exploits of "so great a cloud of witnesses," running from the time of John the Baptist all the way back to the first faithful witness for Jehovah, Abel the younger brother of Cain, the son of Adam and Eve. (Heb. 11:4 to 12:1) The resurrection of these ancient men and women of godly faith is certain, for the Christian writer of Hebrews, chapter eleven, proves that they believed that "God was able to raise . . . even from the dead," and at the close of this chapter he says to his Christian readers: "And yet all these, although

13. Of what power did Jesus give an example in connection with his friend Lazarus, and how?

14. What happened to Lazarus later on, but what is our expectation for him?

15. By "first resurrection," what is indicated regarding resurrection as a whole, and how does 1 Corinthians 15:20-23 prove it?

16. How does Revelation, chapter twenty, also indicate order as to resurrection?

17. In Hebrews 11:35, to whom is the expression "better resurrection" applied?

18. About whose exploits does Hebrews, chapter eleven, tell us, and how does it show their resurrection to be certain?

they had witness borne to them through their faith, did not get the fulfillment of the promise, as God foresaw something better for us, in order that they might not be made perfect apart from us."—Heb. 11:19, 35, 39, 40.

¹⁹ The 144,000 faithful disciples of Jesus Christ are all going to be "made perfect" by resurrection from the dead, even as Jesus Christ himself was. Apart from such Christians, or before such Christians are "made perfect" in the heavens, the resurrection of the "cloud of witnesses" of pre-Christian times could not take place. This is so because the faithful 144,000 joint heirs of Jesus Christ take part in "the first resurrection," a resurrection that is first in time as well as in quality and importance.

²⁰ Hence the "better resurrection" that the ancient "cloud of witnesses" will have will not be better than the resurrection of the 144,000 heirs of God's heavenly kingdom. It will be better than that of the persons who were raised from the dead by the prophets Elijah and Elisha. Yes, even better than the resurrection of those whom Jesus Christ and his apostles raised from the dead.* How "better"? Because all those whom these servants of God raised to life had to die again in the flesh and go into Ha'des or Sheol. Why so? Because God's heavenly kingdom by his Son Jesus Christ had not yet begun its rule, inasmuch as the "times of the Gentiles" for ruling the earth were not due to end until the year 1914 C.E. The "better resurrection" of the ancient "cloud of witnesses" will take place under God's heavenly kingdom, which has now been established. When Jesus Christ the heavenly King uses the "keys of death

and of Ha'des" and brings those ancient witnesses forth from Ha'des or Sheol, they will not need to die again. Why not?

²¹ By keeping their names written on the "scroll of life" through their continued godly faith and obedience they will be gradually lifted up to human perfection. Finally they will be given the prize of everlasting life in human perfection on our earth transformed into a Paradise. They will not be "hurled into the lake of fire," that is to say, into the "second death." Since they are persons of faith to begin with at their resurrection, they should all the more easily make progress toward human perfection then.

²² For instance, there was the prophet Daniel. "In the third year of Cyrus the king of Persia" God's angel gave to Daniel a marvelous prophecy concerning this "time of the end." He ended this prophecy by saying to Daniel: "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. 10:1 to 12:13)* Daniel is no doubt one of those referred to in Hebrews 11:33, who "stopped the mouths of lions." He will "stand up" for his lot by a resurrection under God's kingdom.—Ezek. 14:14, 20; 28:3; Matt. 24:15.†

²³ When the first one of that ancient "cloud of witnesses," namely, Abel, was killed by his brother Cain and was buried, he went down to Sheol. Whether Abel was put in a memorial tomb, the Bible does not state. (Matt. 23:35; Luke 11:51; Heb. 12:

* Daniel 12:2 has been applied to Christians who were merely spiritually dead and who were awakened from their religiously dead condition after the year 1918 C.E. —Compare with Revelation 11:7-13.

† In the Greek Septuagint translation of Daniel 12:13 the Greek word for "stand up" is *anastēsei*, from which is derived *anastasis*, meaning "resurrection," in the Christian Greek Scriptures.

21. Why after resurrection will those ancient witnesses not need to die again?

22. Of what was Daniel assured in Daniel 12:13, at what time?

23. (a) To what did Abel go down at his murder?

(b) What will happen to those whose memorial tombs perished before the Flood or have perished since the Flood?

* See 1 Kings 17:17-24; 2 Kings 4:17-37; 13:20, 21; Matthew 10:8; 9:18-26; Luke 7:11-15; John 11:38-44; Acts 9:36-41; 20:7-12.

19. In what way does their resurrection not take place "apart from us" (the 144,000)?

20. (a) Will it be "a better resurrection" in comparison with that of the 144,000? (b) In what way will it be "a better resurrection"?

24; Gen. 4:8-11) Doubtless many memorial tombs were made for the dead from Abel's time down to the earth-wide flood of Noah's day, but, for the most part, those memorial tombs were wiped out by that destructive flood. However, the all-knowing God Jehovah knows and remembers all those who went down into Sheol or Ha'des before the Flood, "both the righteous [like Abel and Enoch] and the unrighteous." Jehovah will cause Ha'des or Sheol to deliver up all those dead under his kingdom by Jesus Christ. The same will be true regarding the many graves and memorial tombs that have disappeared since that flood in 2370 B.C.E. down to our own day.

GEHENNA, "THE VALLEY OF HINNOM"

²⁴ In the year 33 C.E., when Jesus was speaking about the "righteous blood spilled on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Barachiah," he spoke of men then living who at death would go, not to Ha'des or Sheol, but to another place, to Gehenna. For that reason it would mean "woe" to them. Who were those men? In the twenty-third chapter of Matthew, Jesus specified who they were, saying:

²⁵ "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because you shut up the kingdom of the heavens before men; for you yourselves do not go in, neither do you permit those on their way in to go in. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because you traverse sea and dry land to make one proselyte, and when he becomes one you make him a subject for Gehenna twice as much so as yourselves. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because you build the graves of the prophets and decorate the memorial tombs of the righteous ones, and you say, 'If we had been in the days of our forefathers,

we would not have been sharers with them in the blood of the prophets.' Therefore you are bearing witness against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. . . . Serpents, offspring of vipers, how are you to flee from the judgment of Gehenna?"—Matt. 23:13-15, 29-33.

²⁶ Thus those religious persons who were subjects for Gehenna and who were liable to the judgment of Gehenna were the unrepentant Jewish scribes and Pharisees and their proselytes. They were persons who were unrepentant and who refused to enter into the kingdom of the heavens. Jesus showed this by next saying: "For this reason, here I am sending forth to you prophets and wise men and public instructors. Some of them you will kill and impale, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city; that there may come upon you all the righteous blood spilled on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Barachiah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar. Truly I say to you, All these things will come upon this generation."—Matt. 23:34-36.

²⁷ Some Pharisees did repent and quit shutting up the kingdom of the heavens, like Saul of Tarsus who became the Christian apostle Paul. (Acts 7:58; 8:1-3; 9:1-30; 22:1-5; 23:6; Phil. 3:4-6) Also, Acts 2:10; 8:27-39 speaks of circumcised proselytes, and Acts 6:7 says: "The number of the disciples kept multiplying in Jerusalem very much; and a great crowd of priests began to be obedient to the faith." These gave up all religious hypocrisy and stayed faithful to the Christian faith. Thus they successfully fled from the judgment of Gehenna to which they had been liable. They proved that they were not "serpents, off-

24, 25. (a) Jesus spoke of some men as going to what different place at death, and what would this mean for them? (b) In Matthew 23:13-33, whom did Jesus specify those men to be?

26. Why were such ones subjects for Gehenna or liable to its judgment, and how did Jesus then show this?

27. How does the book of Acts show whether some of such liable ones fled from the judgment of Gehenna?

spring of vipers," sons of the Devil as a religious father, offspring of the "original serpent, who is the Devil and Satan." —John 8:44; Rev. 20:2.

²⁸ Just what is this place called Gehenna, or what does it symbolize? The Greek word "Gehenna" is a transliteration of the Hebrew expression Gei-Hinnom, meaning "the valley of Hinnom." In the Greek word Gehenna the syllable "Ge" stands for the Hebrew word Gai (גַּן) meaning "Valley," and the addition "henna" stands for Hinnom, the name of a man in the days of Judge Joshua.

²⁹ This Valley of Hinnom or Hinnom Valley is first mentioned in the Bible in Joshua 15:8 as marking the boundary between the territories of the tribes of Judah and of Benjamin, and it is associated with Jerusalem: "The boundary [of Judah] went up to the valley of the son of Hinnom to the slope of the Jebusite at the south, that is to say, Jerusalem; and the boundary went up to the top of the mountain that faces the valley of Hinnom [Gei-Hinnom, Hebrew; Ge-Ennom, Latin] to the west, which is at the extremity of the low plain



of Rephaim to the north." Here the Greek Septuagint translation calls it the Pharanx of Onom, that is to say, the Cleft (Chasm, Ravine, Gully) of Onom. Hinnom Valley or Valley of Hinnom is also mentioned in Joshua 18:16, in connection with the territorial boundary of the tribe of Benjamin.

³⁰ The Valley of Hinnom, lying to the west and southwest of ancient Jerusalem, came to be misused by the backsliding Jews. In 2 Chronicles 28:3 we read about King Ahaz of Jerusalem: "He himself made sacrificial smoke in the valley of the son of Hinnom [Gai-ben-nom, LXX] and proceeded to burn up his sons in the fire." (Also, 2 Chron. 33:6; Jer. 7:31, 32; 32:35) Faithful

King Josiah saw good to defile this Valley of Hinnom because it had been used for the idol worship of Baal and for offering human sacrifices to this false god. In 2 Kings 23:10 it says of Josiah: "And he made unfit for worship Topheth, which is in the valley of the sons of Hinnom, that no one might make his son or his daughter pass through the fire to [the false god] Molech."* The modern name of the valley is Wadi el-Rababi.

* See also Nehemiah 11:30; Jeremiah 19:2, 6. Hinnom Valley is mentioned thirteen times in the inspired Hebrew Scriptures.

30. How did Gehenna come to be misused by the Israelites, and how was it made unfit for such misuse?

PART TWO

GEHENNA, or the Valley of Hinnom, is mentioned twelve times in the Christian Greek Scriptures. In the days of Jesus Christ on earth it was a fiery place

and, being a valley outside the walls of Jerusalem, it was on earth. It became a symbol of the worst punishment that could befall a person. For instance, in Matthew 5:22, in his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus

1. In Jesus' day, what was Gehenna, and of what punishment was it used as a symbol?

said: "Everyone who continues wrathful with his brother will be accountable to the court of justice; but whoever addresses his brother with an unspeakable word of contempt [Raca] will be accountable to the Supreme Court; whereas whoever says, 'You despicable fool!' will be liable to the fiery Gehenna." Thus Jesus grades the "fiery Gehenna" as third and worst. Why? Because the one who called another a despicable fool and who was sentenced to the fiery Gehenna is put to death and not given a burial. His corpse is burned up in the fires of Gehenna and the ashes are never collected for preserving in an urn. So he was pictured as not going to Ha'des.

² A few verses later on in the same Sermon on the Mount Jesus shows that the sinner's corpse is thrown into Gehenna as a crematory. In Matthew 5:29, 30 Jesus says:

³ "If, now, that right eye of yours is making you stumble, tear it out and throw it away from you. For it is more beneficial to you for one of your members to be lost to you than for your whole body to be pitched into Gehenna. Also, if your right hand is making you stumble, cut it off and throw it away from you [not, torment it]. For it is more beneficial for one of your members to be lost to you than for your whole body to land in Gehenna."

⁴ From this language we see that Jesus used in a symbolical manner the ancient Gehenna that was located outside the walls of Jerusalem. Jesus did not mean that his followers should pluck out a literal eye or chop off a literal right hand. Rather, Jesus was talking about something precious that causes us to sin with the right eye or the right hand. Accordingly, then, as the eye and right hand were spoken of symbolical-

ly, Gehenna must also have been spoken of in a symbolical way, not literally.

⁵ Notice how Jesus contrasts one's being thrown into Gehenna with one's entering into life. This indicates that the *symbolical* Gehenna is a place of no life at all. In Matthew 18:8, 9 Jesus said: "If, then, your hand or your foot is making you stumble, cut it off and throw it away from you; it is finer for you to enter into life maimed or lame than to be thrown with two hands or two feet into the everlasting fire. Also, if your eye is making you stumble, tear it out and throw it away from you [not, torment it]; it is finer for you to enter one-eyed into life than to be thrown with two eyes into the fiery Gehenna." In this "fiery Gehenna" is where the "everlasting fire" burns, symbolically speaking.

⁶ Jesus reminds us that in the Gehenna outside Jerusalem there were also worms or maggots, not, of course, in the fire, but on decaying organic matter near the fire. These are, of course, not earthworms such as crawl through the ground and feed on human bodies buried in graves. They are like the worms from which King Herod Agrippa I died, according to these words of Acts 12:23: "Instantly the angel of Jehovah struck him, because he did not give the glory to God; and he became eaten up with worms and expired." Using this same Greek word (*skólex*), Jesus said:

⁷ "If ever your hand makes you stumble, cut it off; it is finer for you to enter into life maimed than with two hands to go off into Gehenna, into the fire that cannot be put out. And if your foot makes you stumble, cut it off; it is finer for you to enter into life lame than with two feet to

2, 3. What does Matthew 5:29, 30 show as to a sinner's corpse?

4. In what sense did Jesus there use Gehenna, and how is this shown?

5. In Matthew 18:8, 9, with what does Jesus contrast one's being thrown into the symbolical Gehenna?

6, 7. (a) Besides fire, what other destructive things were present in the Gehenna outside Jerusalem?

(b) How did Jesus point this out in Mark 9:43-48?

be pitched into Gehenna. And if your eye makes you stumble, throw it away; it is finer for you to enter one-eyed into the kingdom of God than with two eyes to be pitched into Gehenna, where their maggot [skólex] does not die and the fire is not put out."—Mark 9:43-48; Isa. 66:24.

⁸ So, if the dead body pitched into the Gehenna outside Jerusalem did not land in the fire mingled with sulphur, it would be consumed anyhow. How? By the maggots from the eggs that flies would lay in the decaying corpse. Gehenna was thus a place of total destruction or consumption, into which the dead bodies of those persons who were considered unworthy of being buried in a marked grave or memorial tomb were pitched. Concerning Gehenna, page 764 of Volume 3 of the *Cyclopaedia* by M'Clintock and Strong says:

In consequence of these abominations the valley was polluted by Josiah (2 Kings 23:10); subsequently to which it became the common lay-stall of the city, where the dead bodies of criminals, and the carcasses of animals, and every other kind of filth was cast, and, according to late and somewhat questionable authorities, the combustible portion consumed with fire. From the depth and narrowness of the gorge, and, perhaps, its ever-burning fires, as well as from its being the receptacle of all sorts of putrefying matter, and all that defiled the holy city, it became in later times the image of the place of everlasting punishment, "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched;" in which the Talmudists placed the mouth of Hell: "There are two palm-trees in the valley of Hinnom, between which a smoke ariseth . . . and this is the door of Gehenna."

* On page 18 of the Alphabetical Appendix to the New Testament of *The Emphatic Diaglott* by Benjamin Wilson we read:

"GEHENNA, the Greek word translated *hell* in the common version, occurs 12 times. It is the Grecian mode of spelling the Hebrew words which are translated, 'The valley of Hinnom.' This valley was also called *Tophet*, a detestation, an abomination. Into this place were cast all kinds of filth, with the carcasses of beasts, and the unburied bodies of criminals who had been

8. Thus Gehenna was pictured as a place of what, and how does M'Clintock and Strong's *Cyclopaedia* speak about Gehenna?

WHAT IT SYMBOLIZES

⁹ Regardless of what any reference authorities have to say regarding Gehenna, what did Jesus Christ, the Son of God, have to say about it? What did it mean for the person sentenced by God the Almighty to the symbolical Gehenna? Jesus plainly answered when he sent his twelve apostles out on missionary work and said: "And do not become fearful of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; but rather be in fear of him that can destroy both soul and body in Gehenna." (Matt. 10:28) On another occasion Jesus said to a crowd of thousands: "Moreover, I say to you, my friends, Do not fear those who kill the body and after this are not able to do anything more. But I will indicate to you whom to fear: Fear him who after killing has authority to throw into Gehenna. Yes, I tell you, fear this One." (Luke 12:4, 5) When Almighty God destroys both body and soul of a human creature, what is left? There is complete destruction; and, because this destruction is everlasting, such destruction of human body and soul is an everlasting punishment. There is no resurrection out of such destruction.

¹⁰ Jesus thus used Gehenna as a symbol of complete, endless destruction, just as fire is destructive. Because the destruction

executed. Continual fires were kept to consume these. . . . Gehenna, then, as occurring in the New Testament, symbolizes death and utter destruction, but in no place signifies a place of eternal torment."

Under HINNOM the *Cyclopaedia* by M'Clintock and Strong says:

"We learn from Josephus that the last terrible struggle between the Jews and Romans took place here (War, VI, 8, 5), and here, too, it appears the dead bodies were thrown out of the city after the siege (V, 12, 7). . . . Most commentators follow Buxtorf, Lightfoot, and others, in asserting that perpetual fires were kept up for the consumption of the bodies of criminals, carcasses of animals, and whatever else was combustible; but the combined authorities usually brought forward in support of this idea appear insufficient. . . ."—Volume 4 (edition of 1891), page 266.

9. (a) What did Jesus say about Gehenna in Matthew 10:28 and Luke 12:4, 5? (b) When God destroys both body and soul, what results?

10. What is to be understood by the "fire" of the symbolic Gehenna's being an "everlasting fire"?

is everlasting, the fire of the symbolic Gehenna is said to be "everlasting fire." This means that such a Gehenna will always exist; it will never give up those in it; it will never be emptied, never be wiped out as Adamic death and Ha'des will be. (Rev. 20:13) Figuratively speaking, the symbolic Gehenna always burns and will always be available for executing any who rebel against God throughout everlasting time, all eternity.

¹¹ Since the symbolic Gehenna is the place of everlasting destruction, Jesus correctly set a person's entering into Gehenna as the opposite of one's entering into life. Hence if anyone enters into the symbolic Gehenna, in which God destroys both body and soul, how can anyone have a resurrection to an opportunity for everlasting life in God's heavenly kingdom or in Paradise restored here on earth under God's kingdom? There is no resurrection from the symbolic Gehenna.

¹² Because fiery Gehenna is destructive, the disciple James ties it in with the uncontrolled human tongue, in these words: "Well, [like the little fire setting afame a great woodland] the tongue is a fire. The tongue is constituted a world of unrighteousness among our members, for it spots up all the body and sets the wheel of natural life afame and it is set afame by Gehenna."—Jas. 3:6.

¹³ Hence, all the world of mankind, not one particular person, has to watch the tongue, for all the world is born in unrighteousness. The tongue, by its propaganda that spreads from tongue to tongue, can inflame a whole world of people and incite them to unrighteousness. It spots up not just the mouth in which it wags, but all the human body; so that, if one has a beautiful body but an uncontrolled tongue, it

11. Why is there no resurrection from the symbolic Gehenna?
 12, 13. (a) The uncontrolled tongue can inflame how many and spot up what? (b) Like Gehenna, what can it cause?

takes away from the fine impression made by the attractive body. This is especially so before God, because, as Jesus tells us, by our words we shall be declared righteous and by our words we shall be condemned. (Matt. 12:37) Like Gehenna, the tongue can cause destruction that is beyond repair.

¹⁴ One's whole round of living can be affected by fiery words that defile the speaker's body, inflaming it to destructive action. James 3:8 well says: "But the tongue, not one of mankind can get it tamed. An unruly injurious thing, it is full of death-dealing poison." The tongue, when "set afame by Gehenna," can cause the user to be sentenced by God to go to the symbolic Gehenna, as it denotes a bad heart condition.—See Psalm 5:9; Romans 3:13.

THE "LAND OF NO RETURN"

¹⁵ In the last book of the Bible, A Revelation to John, the word "Gehenna" does not occur. However, what Gehenna stands for is there symbolized by "the fiery lake that burns with sulphur," or, "the lake of fire and sulphur," "the lake of fire," "the lake that burns with fire and sulphur." (Rev. 19:20; 20:10, 14, 15; 21:8) We know what the effect of fire mingled with sulphur is upon combustible things. In the days of Abraham and his nephew Lot, as Genesis 19:24 tells us, "then Jehovah made it rain sulphur and fire from Jehovah, from the heavens, upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah." How this affected Sodom and Gomorrah Jesus tells us, saying: "On the day that Lot came out of Sodom it rained fire and sulphur from heaven and destroyed them all."—Luke 17:29.

¹⁶ Moreover, Sodom was close to the
 14. To what can the tongue, when "set afame by Gehenna," cause one to be sentenced?
 15. (a) How is what Gehenna stands for symbolized in Revelation? (b) How did fire and sulphur from heaven affect Sodom and Gomorrah?
 16. (a) In Sodom's case, how was a lake associated with fire and sulphur? (b) What was the temporary effect and the final effect of the fire and sulphur rained down on the people?

Dead Sea or Sea of Salt. This is a big inland lake in which nothing alive exists; which fact adds to the thought of the complete deadness caused by the literal fire and sulphur that rained down upon the cities of that district. Thus, too, as in Revelation, we have a deadly lake associated with fire and sulphur (brimstone). The people upon whom the fire and sulphur rained may have been tormented for the time that they continued conscious, but the final effect of the fire and sulphur together was to destroy them.* This destruction preceded by torment is the thought conveyed in Revelation 14:10, 11, and also in Psalm 11:5, 6, where fire and sulphur are mentioned together, evidently in a symbolic sense.

^{bi}¹⁷ Among the destructive forces that God will pour down upon the army of Gog of the land of Magog when it attacks Jehovah's restored people, "fire and sulphur" are included, in Ezekiel 38:22. While these elements may torment and agonize the army of Gog for a while, they at last destroy the enemy army, killing them off. That this is the case is shown in the next chapter, in Ezekiel 39:11-20, which describes how the dead bodies of the army of Gog of Magog are disposed of down to the very last bone.

* Since the elements making up the human body are over 90 percent water, it would require a fire with volcanic heat, a fire reaching a temperature of from 3000 to 5000 degrees Fahrenheit, to destroy it. Thus we can appreciate why sulphur (brimstone) was added to the fires burning in the Gehenna outside the walls of ancient Jerusalem in order to speed up and effect as far as possible the total destruction of the dead bodies pitched into it.

Dr. Wilton Krogman, professor of physical anthropology at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, has said that he has watched a body in a crematorium burn at 2000 degrees Fahrenheit for more than eight hours, burning under the best possible conditions as regards heat and combustion, everything being controlled; but at the end of that time he saw scarcely a bone that was not still present and altogether recognizable as a human bone. True, it was calcined, but it had not become an ash or powder. It was only at more than 3000 degrees Fahrenheit that he saw a bone turn liquid and run and become volatile.—See the article "The Baffling Burning Death," by Allan W. Eckert, in the magazine entitled "True The Man's Magazine," as of May 1964, pages 33, 105-112.

17. What will be rained down upon the army of Gog of Magog, and what will be the effect of this?

^{alt}¹⁸ From all the foregoing it is unmistakably evident that Ha'des or Sheol is different from Gehenna and the "lake that burns with fire and sulphur." Otherwise, how could Revelation 20:14 state: "Death and Ha'des were hurled into the lake of fire"? This verse also shows the meaning of the "lake of fire," saying: "This means the second death, the lake of fire."

¹⁹ Thus the death that spread to all men by birth from Adam will be put to death in the "second death." Death will be destroyed in the "second death" and will not be tormented there forever. Neither will Ha'des be forever tormented in the "second death," but it will be destroyed forever in this symbolic "lake of fire." This "lake of fire" or "second death" never delivers up "death and Ha'des" that are hurled into it. Hence Gehenna or the lake that burns with fire and sulphur is a Bible picture of eternal or absolute destruction from which there is no resurrection. That is why resurrected persons who have been given up by inherited death and by Ha'des can later be "hurled into the lake of fire" and undergo the "second death," because they do not get their names written on the scroll of life.—Rev. 20:15.

²⁰ According to Revelation 19:20, the symbolic "wild beast" and the "false prophet" are to be "hurled into the fiery lake that burns with sulphur" during the coming "war of the great day of God the Almighty." This occurs just before the Devil, Satan, and his demons are bound and cast into the abyss for the thousand years of Christ's reign. At the end of the thousand years the symbolic "wild beast" and the "false prophet" are still in that symbolic "lake of fire and sulphur" and are not re-

18. In Revelation 20:14, how is the difference between Ha'des or Sheol and the lake of fire and sulphur shown?

19. (a) Does the "second death" ("lake of fire") deliver up those hurled into it? (b) Hence of what is Gehenna or the lake of fire and sulphur a symbol?

20. (a) Into what are the "wild beast" and the "false prophet" hurled, when, and for how long? (b) What is symbolized thereby?

leased from it even when Satan and his demons are released from the abyss to try to mislead mankind. The symbolic "wild beast" and the "false prophet" are never released from that place of destruction, "the second death," but they are still there when they are joined by all those who are later on hurled into the "lake of fire." (Rev. 20:10, 15) Thus in the coming "war of the great day" at Armageddon the symbolic "wild beast" and the "false prophet" are to be destroyed for all time, with no hope of resurrection ever.

²¹ At the end of the thousand years of Christ's successful rule over redeemed mankind, Satan and his demons will be released from the abyss. Thus, in effect, that abyss will cease to exist, being emptied of them. During their little time of freedom they try to mislead into destruction as many of the earthly subjects of God's kingdom as they can. After that they are hurled into the "second death," where the "wild beast" and the "false prophet" have been all this time. (Rev. 20:1-3, 7-10) In this way it is that Jehovah God works out his glorious purpose through his self-sacrificing Son Jesus Christ, "that through his death he might bring to nothing the one having the means to cause death, that is, the Devil." (Heb. 2:14) This punishment of "everlasting destruction" is what is symbolized by the "everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his angels," to which also the cursed goatish people of the earth will be sent at Armageddon, according to Jesus' words in Matthew 25:31-33, 41, 46.

UNDESERVING OF RESURRECTION

²² Nineteen centuries ago, in his days as a man on earth, Jesus Christ warned the

21. (a) Where is Satan the Devil hurled after his brief release from the abyss, and how is Hebrews 2:14 thus completely fulfilled? (b) How is his place of everlasting punishment symbolized in Matthew 25:41?

22, 23. (a) In what terms did Jesus warn the Jewish religious leaders, but with what effect? (b) How did Stephen's words to the Jerusalem Sanhedrin show whether those judges had heeded Jesus' warning?

Jews of that generation of the danger of their going into everlasting destruction symbolized by Gehenna. He told the hypocritical religious leaders of the Jews that they made the Gentile people whom they proselytized a "subject for Gehenna twice as much so as yourselves." He called the hypocritical Jewish scribes and Pharisees serpents and offspring of vipers, thus identifying them as children of Satan the Devil the "original Serpent." Then he asked how they could "flee from the judgment of Gehenna" when they willfully kept on opposing God's kingdom and the preachers of that kingdom. (Matt. 23:13-15, 29-36) They kept on in the lying, murderous deeds of their "father the Devil." (John 8:44) And just before they killed Stephen, "a man full of faith and holy spirit," he said to the Jewish judges in the courtroom:

²³ "Obstinate men and uncircumcised in hearts and ears, you are always resisting the holy spirit; as your forefathers did, so you do. Which one of the prophets did your forefathers not persecute? Yes, they killed those who made announcement in advance concerning the coming of the righteous One, whose betrayers and murderers you have now become, you who received the Law as transmitted by angels but have not kept it."—Acts 6:5; 7:51-60.

²⁴ Any of such Jewish religious leaders as did not repent of this course of resisting the holy spirit and of opposing God's Messianic kingdom and of persecuting the Kingdom preachers did not "flee from the judgment of Gehenna." At their death, whenever this occurred, they went into Gehenna. For this reason they will have no resurrection on earth under God's kingdom. They may have been honored with solemn funeral rites but they did not go to Ha'des or Sheol. From God they suffered the "judgment of Gehenna." They were

24. (a) Into what did the unrepentant Jewish religious leaders go at death, and with what possibility of resurrection? (b) Who went there with them, according to Matthew 15: 12-14?

"blind guides," and the religiously blinded Jews and proselytes who followed these hypocritical blind guides in such a course ended up with them in Gehenna. Both guides and guided ones "will fall into the pit," said Jesus in Matthew 15:12-14. They go into "second death," and Christ's sacrifice does not procure for them a resurrection from the dead. He did not die for those who go to Gehenna.—Matt. 23:16, 17, 19, 24, 26.

²⁵ What about that generation of Jews as a whole, scattered throughout the then known inhabited earth, in that first century of our Common Era? Because of not becoming Christians with a heavenly hope, did they all come under a Jewish community responsibility that doomed them to Gehenna at death, making them all undeserving of a resurrection? To help us to the right answer, Jesus made a comparison of that Jewish generation with others and referred to the prophet Jonah and the queen of Sheba, saying:

²⁶ "A wicked and adulterous generation keeps on seeking for a sign, but no sign will be given it except the sign of Jonah the prophet. For just as Jonah was in the belly of the huge fish three days and three nights, so the Son of man will be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights. Men of Nineveh will rise up [anastesontai] in the judgment [krisis] with this generation and will condemn it; because they repented at what Jonah preached, but, look! something more than Jonah is here. The queen of the south will be raised up in the judgment with this generation and will condemn it; because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, but, look! something more than Solomon is here."

—Matt. 12:39-42; Luke 11:29-32.

25, 26. (a) What question arises as to the entire Jewish generation throughout the earth in that day? (b) According to Jesus' words in Matthew 12:39-42, by whom would that generation be condemned?

¹⁹ ²⁷ For the "men of Nineveh" to rise up or come forward in the judgment as witnesses it will be necessary for them to have a resurrection from the dead. Nineveh was the royal capital of ancient Assyria. We remember that Ezekiel 32:21, 22 reveals to us that it is in Sheol or Ha'des "where Assyria and all her congregation are. His burial places are round about him." Inasmuch as Ha'des or Sheol will give up all the dead people in it on the day of judgment (Rev. 20:11-15), we can appreciate that this will mean a resurrection of the dead Ninevites from their burial places on earth during the thousand-year reign of Jesus Christ.

²⁸ Examining the language of Jesus, we note that he said that the men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment "*with* this generation," not *against* this generation. This indicates that not all the Jews of that generation in the days of Jesus and his apostles were sentenced with the "judgment of Gehenna" at their death. Under God's mercy they went to Ha'des or Sheol, despite the fact that they did not die Christian converts. They will be resurrected the same as the Assyrians and Ninevites will be, to stand alongside one another in the judgment before the "great white throne." Then by their mere conduct long ago in Jonah's day those Ninevites of the eighth century before our Common Era will condemn those Jews of Jesus' day. Why? Because the Assyrian Ninevites repented at the preaching by Jehovah's prophet Jonah, although they did not become Jewish proselytes, whereas the Jews did not repent at the preaching of Jesus Christ, who was far greater and more important than Jonah.

²⁹ The Ninevites will thus condemn the

27. For the Assyrian Ninevites to do this, what will they have to have, agreeably to other scriptures?

28. Would the Ninevites do such condemning without the resurrection of that generation of Jews, and how would they condemn these?

29. (a) Will the condemning by the Ninevites mean the sentencing of the Jews? (b) How will it be proved whether they came forth in a resurrection to adverse judgment or not?

Jews of that generation for their unbelief and hardheartedness, but they will not sentence such Jews to Gehenna. Only the heavenly Judge, Jehovah God, and his Deputy Jesus Christ, can do that. By what the Jews of that condemned generation do on earth during the remaining years of the millennial reign of Christ, they will prove one of two things. What? Whether they deserve to be sentenced to Gehenna or the "lake of fire," "the second death," or deserve to have their names entered on the "scroll of life." They will thus have to prove whether they came forth from Ha'des or Sheol to a resurrection of life or to a resurrection of adverse judgment.—John 5:28, 29.

³⁰ Similar condemnation of those Jews of Jesus' day will come from another quarter besides that of the men of Assyrian Nineveh, namely, from the "queen of the south." According to 1 Kings 10:1-10 and 2 Chronicles 9:1-9, she was the queen of Sheba. Her country, Sheba or the land of the Sabaeans, lay over a thousand miles to the south of Jerusalem, in southwest Arabia, probably in the eastern area of what is today known as Yemen. Her land or people is not named in Ezekiel, chapters 31 and 32, among those nations whose dead are declared to be in Sheol or Ha'des, but her land was in that general land area. This queen of the south or of Sheba will "be raised up in the judgment with [not, against] this generation." This will require a resurrection of her, and it is not reasonable to think that she will be the only one of her people to rise up in that judgment before the "great white throne" during the thousand years of Christ's reign. Like those others whom Ezekiel named, the queen of the south and her people are in Sheol or Ha'des and will therefore have a resurrection.

30. (a) By whom else will a condemnation come upon that Jewish generation? (b) To that end what will the queen of Sheba have to have?

³¹ Among her resurrected people the queen in particular will condemn the Jewish generation of Jesus' day, by her conduct a thousand years before Jesus' day. She came all that distance by the transportation of that time to hear the wisdom of King Solomon and to behold his works at Jerusalem; and as a result she acknowledged the God of King Solomon. But Jesus Christ was far greater and more important than King Solomon; and yet the Jewish generation of Jesus' day, for the most part, would not listen to his heavenly wisdom. So, on the judgment day during Christ's reign, the contrast between them and the queen of the south will be something additional to humiliate them. This ought to help them to be obedient to the millennial kingdom of the Greater Solomon.

³² The queen of Sheba will be favored with a resurrection from Sheol or Ha'des, but what about King Solomon whom she visited? His father David is mentioned in Hebrews 11:32 as being among the approved ancient witnesses of Jehovah, but Solomon, the wisest king of ancient times and the writer of three Bible books, is not mentioned there. Some time after the queen of Sheba visited him, he yielded to the influence of his hundreds of wives and concubines and fell away to the foolish worship of pagan idols. (1 Ki. 11:1-8; Neh. 13:25, 26; Rom. 1:25) However, both 1 Kings 11:43 and 2 Chronicles 9:31 say that "Solomon lay down with his forefathers" and was buried "in the city of David his father." So, since Solomon lay down to sleep in death with his forefathers, including David, that puts him in Sheol or Ha'des, with the prospect of being brought forth therefrom under the kingdom of the Greater Solomon.—Compare Deuteronomy 31:16; 2 Samuel 7:12; 1 Kings 1:21; 2 Kings 20:21.

31. (a) Why was the queen of the south's conduct condemnatory of the Jewish generation of Jesus' days? (b) How should this affect them on Judgment Day? 32. What question arises as to King Solomon himself, and how do 1 Kings 11:43 and 2 Chronicles 9:31 throw light upon the matter?

DID you know that there is a universal court case now being tried? that witnesses are being called and arguments being heard? In this case almost everyone is interested, though he may not understand all the issues thoroughly; and everyone is involved, whether he knows it or not. Everyone is a witness in this case, for one side or the other. The question at issue is: Is there a true God who has the power and the willingness to deliver mankind from their present distressful and seemingly inextricable condition and bring about the right kind of government?

People are bearing witness for their gods and are holding them up as the means by which the world will be saved. Babylon the Great, the empire of worldly religion, is especially interested in this controversy, particularly the part of Babylon known as Christendom, which represents a trinitarian god. Looked to also as deliverers are communism, science and national governments. Then there are Jehovah's witnesses, Christians who are most active in bearing witness, who say that Jehovah is the name of the true God and that he will bring deliverance and peace to the earth. They point out that the Bible explains this God and his purposes and that he is no trinitarian god, but alone is supreme and is the

A Universal Court Case

Universal Sovereign.

In order to make a decision on a case, lawyers and judges always look for precedents, especially those set by decisions of higher courts. On this universal case, in which even the heavens are interested, we therefore look for a precedent. We find a very conclusive one, in which we have a record of the testimony of witnesses, the arguments in the case, the decision and ruling of the court. Moreover, we find that it is a judgment of the highest Court, the Supreme Court over the universe.

So if we want to take the right side in this matter we can check; we do not have to guess or be left in doubt; we can thoroughly investigate all the litigants, all the events involved, all the evidence and the arguments; and we will find that they exactly correspond with the factors existing and the arguments presented in the controversy today, enabling us to see the issue and know the correct position to take. We find this precedent in what took place between ancient Israel and Babylon.

The one used to make a court record of that case is the prophet Isaiah, who did his prophesying and his writing between about 775 and 732 B.C.E. The Israelites had been witnesses of a great deliverance by Jehovah from Egypt centuries before, but now they were to be witnesses of some-

thing greater. Since they themselves had become blind in failing to see or recognize God and deaf as to hearing his commands with obedience, they would suffer adverse judgment and be scattered, but he would regather them for his glory. (Isa. 43:1-7) In the court session that Jehovah would call, they would be his witnesses. On the opposing side would be the worldly nations, supporting gods of their own making. In this judicial inquiry the point to be proved before everyone was, Who is the true God?

Let us look in on the courtroom. On one side are Jehovah's people Israel; on the other side, the worldly nations. We shall listen to the testimony and the arguments presented in the case.

GODS OF THE NATIONS CHALLENGED

Jehovah is the first speaker. He addresses the officers of the crowded courtroom: "Bring forth a people blind though eyes themselves exist, and the ones deaf though they have ears. Let the nations all be collected together at one place, and let national groups be gathered together. Who is there among them that can tell this? Or can they cause us to hear even the first things? Let them furnish their witnesses, that they may be declared righteous, or let them hear and say, 'It is the truth!'" Jehovah here issues a challenge directed, not against the nations, but against their gods. —Isa. 43:8, 9.

The worldly nations come to the witness stand. They feverishly discuss the matter with one another. It is not a question of what *they* can do, but a question concerning what their *gods* can do. They search the records. Can anyone of their gods tell the first things, that is, the things still ahead in the future? If they can find an instance where that has been done, then they can find a witness among their number, or perhaps more than one, to relate how and where their gods foretold the future correctly, and can say: "It is the

truth!" Our gods have spoken the truth and proved themselves true gods.'

But the court, despite all the clamor and confusion of the devotees of the worldly rival gods whom Jehovah challenges, hears only silence from the worldly nations as to the issue. Not one can produce any evidence that his god is a living, true god, able to make prophecy or to bring about any reliable, accurate statement concerning the future. On the other hand, there is plenty of evidence that their gods are impotent; for example, the trial that God's prophet Elijah had carried out years before with the priests of Baal.—1 Ki. 18:21-40.

Jehovah speaks again, turning to his people Jacob or Israel, whom he created and formed, and makes plain to them their responsibility in this universal controversy over the question, Who is God? He says: "'You are my witnesses,' is the utterance of Jehovah, 'even my servant whom I have chosen, in order that you may know and have faith in me, and that you may understand that I am the same One. Before me there was no God [El] formed, and after me there continued to be none. I—I am Jehovah, and besides me there is no savior. I myself have told forth and have saved and have caused it to be heard, when there was among you no strange god. So you are my witnesses,' is the utterance of Jehovah, 'and I am God [El].'"—Isa. 43:10-12.

JEHOVAH THE ONLY ETERNAL GOD

But before Jehovah's people answer, the nations are put on the stand as to the age of their gods. They have rejected Jehovah and have formed gods of their own, but none of them can show where they have formed a god who was ahead of Jehovah. The strongest testimony these nations can give is that they can trace their own existence only since the flood of Noah's day.

Jehovah has witnesses prior to that, all the way back to Abel, the second son of Adam. And Jehovah himself had no beginning; he always existed.—Heb. 11:1-7; 12:1; Ps. 90:1, 2.

Jehovah's people Israel can testify that he had already said, through Isaiah: "I am Jehovah. That is my name; and to no one else shall I give my own glory, neither my praise to graven images." (Isa. 42:8) So he had certainly not formed any god [el] superior or equal to himself. The Israelites are also witnesses to the fact that in past deliverances it was Jehovah who saved them, because he acted in their behalf only when they had cleaned out all other gods, 'when there was no strange god among them.' They therefore knew that Babylon would experience the truth of God's statement: "Also, all the time I am the same One; and there is no one effecting deliverance out of my own hand. I shall get active, and who can turn it [my hand] back?"—Isa. 43:13.

ONLY JEHOVAH KNOWS THE FUTURE

Jehovah now puts himself on record as forecasting something that his people would be able to bear witness to in the future when he says: "This is what Jehovah has said, the Repurchaser of you people, the Holy One of Israel: 'For your sakes I will send to Babylon and cause the bars of the prisons to come down, and the Chaldeans in the ships with whining cries on their part. I am Jehovah your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King.'"—Isa. 43:14, 15.

Babylon was a commercial and manufacturing people and did much business on land and sea. According to Huet's *History of Commerce (Histoire du Commerce)*, chapter 11, Babylon is said to have had a fleet of three thousand galleys. Boats, or barges, were provided for the Babylonian gods to use on Babylon's waterways. These

ships would be overthrown when God would release his people. Then he would bring his people back home to Palestine, and they would have new things to bear witness to, and evidence that he had wiped out their transgressions and remembered their sins no more.—Isa. 43:16-28.

Jehovah shows his people that when this deliverance and return should take place they would be glad to be known as his people. He says: "And now listen, O Jacob my servant, . . . This is what Jehovah has said, your Maker and your Former, who kept helping you even from the belly, 'Do not be afraid, O my servant Jacob, . . . I shall pour out my spirit upon your seed, and my blessing upon your descendants. And they will certainly spring up as among the green grass, . . . This one will say: 'I belong to Jehovah.' And that one will call himself by the name of Jacob, and another will write upon his hand: 'Belonging to Jehovah.' And by the name of Israel one will betitle himself.'"—Isa. 44:1-5.

Why does Jehovah do most of the speaking in this case? Because when the nations are called upon they fail to have an answer. Jehovah makes the challenge stronger to prompt an answer from them: "This is what Jehovah has said, the King of Israel and the Repurchaser of him, Jehovah of armies, 'I am the first and I am the last, and besides me there is no God [Elohim]. And who is there like me? Let him call out, that he may tell it and present it to me. From when I appointed the people of long ago, both the things coming and the things that will enter in let them tell on their part."

But no answer is forthcoming from the nations.

This is something that should encourage Jehovah's people to become even more bold in their testifying to him and to his sovereignty. He encourages them: "Do not be in dread, you people, and do not become

stupefied. Have I not from that time on caused you individually to hear and told it out? And you are my witnesses. Does there exist a God [Eloah] besides me? No, there is no Rock. I have recognized none.”

—Isa. 44:6-8.

DEVOTEES OF WORLDLY GODS ASHAMED

The witnesses for the gods of the worldly nations have rejected Jehovah and his Word, so they should have something to say to justify their gods. But the trouble is, the gods they have they have manufactured for themselves, and the worshipers are like the gods they have made—they are nothing, and hear nothing in proof of godship on the part of their man-made deities, and are therefore put to shame. Why are they in this embarrassed state? Jehovah explains: “The formers of the carved image are all of them an unreality, . . . and as their witnesses they see nothing and know nothing, in order that they may be ashamed. Who has formed a god or cast a mere carved image? Of no benefit at all has it been. Look! All his partners themselves will be ashamed, . . . They will all of them collect themselves together. They will stand still. They will be in dread. They will be ashamed at the same time.”—Isa. 44:9-11.

The witnesses out of the worldly nations stand absolutely stupefied and silent before the court. There is no point in calling further on them for evidence; so Jehovah spurs his witnesses on to speak out and calls upon all heaven and earth to rejoice at what he has to say about the coming liberation of his forgiven people from Babylon. He says to them: “Remember these things, O Jacob, and you, O Israel, because you are my servant. I have formed you. You are a servant belonging to me. O Israel, you will not be forgotten on my part. I will wipe out your transgressions just as with a cloud, and your sins just as with a

cloud mass. Do return to me, for I will repurchase you.”

In forgiving his people he hides their transgressions from him, just as though a cloud blocked his vision. And then he says: “Joyfully cry out, you heavens, for Jehovah has taken action! Shout in triumph, all you lowest parts of the earth! . . . For Jehovah has repurchased Jacob, and on Israel he shows his beauty.”—Isa. 44:21-23.

And now, by a powerful forecast that brings the test to a climax to show that he is the one true God, Jehovah prophesies: “This is what Jehovah has said, your Repurchaser and the Former of you from the belly: ‘I, Jehovah, am doing everything, stretching out the heavens by myself, laying out the earth. Who was with me? I am frustrating the signs of the empty talkers, and I am the One that makes diviners themselves act crazily; the One turning wise men backwards, and the One that turns even their knowledge into foolishness; the One making the word of his servant come true, and the One that carries out completely the counsel of his own messengers; the One saying of Jerusalem, “She will be inhabited,” and of the cities of Judah, “They will be rebuilt, and her desolated places I shall raise up”; the One saying to the watery deep, “Be evaporated; and all your rivers I shall dry up.”’”—Isa. 44:24-27.

JEHOVAH AND HIS WITNESSES VINDICATED

The fortunetellers, the diviners, the astrologers, the political forecasters who made unfavorable predictions toward Jehovah’s people (particularly the forecasters of Babylon)—all these Jehovah has proved to be frustrated fools, having things backward. At the same time he has proved his own servants, his messengers, his witnesses like Isaiah and Jeremiah, to be true by fulfilling the inspired counsel he gave through these prophets. Even though Ju-

dah and Jerusalem were absolutely desolate without human inhabitant for seventy years, they would be rebuilt at Jehovah's command. What if the Euphrates River, the "watery deep," formed the main defense of the walled city of Babylon? It would be as though it evaporated. The tributaries of the Euphrates would pour their water into it for nothing. Babylon would fall.

The facts corroborate the prophecy. Ancient Babylon, the Third World Power, is no more. What, then, was the Supreme Court's decision on this ancient issue? That Jehovah alone is the one living and true God who fulfills his prophetic word. We can review the record even more thoroughly, and we shall find that history proves Jehovah God true.*

After our reviewing the record, what stand will we take as individuals? is the question. We can and must become wit-

nesses for one side or the other. Our choice determines our own destiny, because even though God proved himself true in connection with Babylon and his people Israel, the issue is now alive on a larger scale and is being pressed for settlement. Babylon the Great stands now as the foremost earthly opponent of God in this case. Do we, then, want to be witnesses for the gods of Babylon the Great, and prove ourselves false witnesses, frustrated fools? In God's law to his ancient people Israel, a witness who lied about God or blasphemed him was put to death. Will we, after reviewing the facts, make the proper choice and be true witnesses of Jehovah? If so, then God will be our Repurchaser. He is both able and willing to help us and to give us life. The Supreme Court is sitting. Jehovah the Judge calls on all to bring forth their testimony. There is no middle ground. We are either actively for Jehovah God or actively or tacitly for the gods of this world. Make your choice, and know that your decision means life or death for you.

* For fuller discussion, see the book "*Babylon the Great Has Fallen!*" *God's Kingdom Rules!*, published by Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, Brooklyn, New York.

How Did the Israelites Get Sealskins?

♦ We often associate seals with the Arctic and the Antarctic regions, but the Bible says that the Israelites, when they were on the Sinai Peninsula, used sealskins in building the Tabernacle. (Ex. 36:19) How was that possible? Some seals favor warmer climates and even today the monk seals inhabit part of the Mediterranean Sea, as well as other warmer waters. Over the centuries man has greatly reduced the number of seals and whales, so undoubtedly in Bible times seals were very abundant in the Mediterranean and in the Red Sea. The ancient Greek geographer Strabo is cited by M'Clintock and Strong's *Cyclopædia* to show that seals were numerous on the shores of the peninsula of Sinai. (Strabo, *Geography*, xvi. 776) Even as late as 1832 Calmet's *Dictionary of the Holy Bible* stated:

"On many of the small islands of the Red Sea, around the peninsula of Sinai, are found seals."

The ancient Egyptians carried on commerce on the Red Sea and, of course, received goods from many of the Mediterranean regions. So the Egyptians would have access to sealskins, which, on account of their durability, could be used to protect valuable things from the weather. When the Israelites left Egypt, they would have taken with them the sealskins they already had, and more of these skins were likely obtained when the Egyptians gave into the hands of the Israelites an abundance of valuable things. Later, some of these sealskins were used, according to Jehovah's direction, for constructing the Tabernacle.

DOES *Jehovah* REQUIRE TOO MUCH?

SOME think so. Some think that abiding by all of God's commandments is a little too much. 'If I am a parent and have to earn a living for my family,' some may say, 'and if I have to take care of my house and if I am going to read and study the Bible regularly and attend the congregation meetings and make time to share the good news of God's kingdom with others—isn't all that too much?'

Well, does Jehovah really require too much? Let us go to the Authority on the matter of Christianity, the Lord Jesus Christ, and see how he viewed matters. He tells us: "Come to me, all you who are toiling and loaded down, and I will refresh you. Take my yoke upon you and become my disciples, for I am mild-tempered and lowly in heart, and you will find refreshment for your souls. For my yoke is kindly and my load is light."—Matt. 11:28-30.

Jesus Christ, when speaking those words, was not bragging but assuring his listeners that they would get the proper treatment if they became his disciples. He described what type of teacher he was, that he was not oppressive or harsh, but kind. His words were an invitation to come to him, this mild-tempered teacher. His disciples could come and they would not have to be ill at ease to be taught by him, for Jesus showed understanding, patience, never lording it over his followers. One could approach him and cast his burdens upon Jesus himself. He would not be like the religious leaders of whom he spoke: "Woe

also to you who are versed in the Law, because you load men with loads hard to be borne, but you yourselves do not touch the loads with one of your fingers!" (Luke 11:46) How different it would be for the followers of Jesus Christ! They would have a relatively easy course in life, for Jesus' yoke would be, comparatively speaking, a light one.

Today those who are weary of the sin, greed and wickedness of this system of things find great encouragement in Jesus' words. How weary right-hearted persons are of the burdens of false religion—the hypocrisies, the constant money-raising schemes, the traditions, rites and ceremonies that do nothing to answer their questions or impart faith! These have brought no real refreshment to the people, but true Christianity brings "refreshment for your souls." So becoming a true follower of Jesus Christ frees one from the heavy bondage to Satan's system of things and opens up the way to life everlasting.

NOT TOO MUCH FOR US TO EXERT OURSELVES

Now, it is to be expected that God has requirements that life seekers must meet. He sets down the requirement, for example, to take in knowledge of God and of his Son, for that "means everlasting life." (John 17:3) This takes effort, true, but does it not require energy and effort to attain anything that is worth while? If one is too lazy to study the very words inspired of God, or if one does not make time for the Word of life, how can he please God? How can one gain "refreshment for his soul" if he spurns regular study of God's words, both privately and in association with God's people? The provision is there. To the extent that we personally avail ourselves of it, we will be refreshed.

Yes, anything worth while takes effort. If one wants to be an accomplished pianist, he cannot play just once a week or once a month and expect to achieve his goal. If one wants to be a good painter, it takes effort. So with meeting God's requirements for life; it takes effort on our part. Since mankind in general is born in sin and under condemnation, is it too much for God to require us to accept his provisions for everlasting life? No, of course not. Once a certain man asked Jesus: "Lord, are those who are being saved few?" Jesus told him: "Exert yourselves vigorously to get in through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will seek to get in but will not be able." (Luke 13:23, 24) If people exert themselves vigorously in many kinds of worldly pursuits—sports, hobbies, careers, pleasures, and so on—then how much more so should one exert himself for the most worthwhile purpose in the world—faithfully doing God's will! This brings the reward of life everlasting, "for God is not unrighteous so as to forget your work."—Heb. 6:10.

In times past those who pleased God worked, exerting themselves vigorously in doing the divine will, but they did not feel that God was requiring too much. Take Noah, for example. He had a family, had to provide for them, yet he was told to build the ark. This was a vast ark of three stories, almost one-half the length of the Queen Mary! That would take a lot of effort. Yet Noah did not say, 'Jehovah, I have never even built a rowboat, let alone a vast ark, a chest like this'; no, but he went ahead and worked at it. And while he was working, he did not say, 'Jehovah, I'm just so busy working at building this ark that I have no time to preach to these people.' No, he did not feel that way. For the Bible record is clear that he was also "a preacher of righteousness," as well as a builder and a family provider. (2 Pet. 2:5)

Do you think that was easy? Or do you think he had to exert himself vigorously? Yes, Noah exerted himself vigorously, but it was not too much. It meant preservation for him and his family.

JESUS' MINISTRY—ONE OF EXERTION

The most striking example in the Bible of one who never complained that Jehovah required too much is Jesus Christ. Why, he himself said: "My food is for me to do the will of him that sent me and to finish his work." (John 4:34) He delighted in doing the will of his Father and he worked hard at preaching the good news of the Kingdom. But some today may say, 'Oh this is just getting to be too much, keeping up with my studies, meeting together and my ministry. If I were perfect like Jesus!' What did you say? Jesus was perfect, true, but even he got tired out at times. He got tired physically, so much so that once he fell asleep in a boat while crossing a lake, as a result of exertion in the ministry. (Luke 8:22, 23) On another occasion Jesus wanted to take his disciples privately into a lonely place so they could "rest up a bit." So many were coming and going that it was not even convenient to eat a meal. But the people learned where Jesus was going; so a great crowd greeted them when Jesus and his apostles arrived by boat. Now, did Jesus say, 'Well, we are just too tired to teach all of you about God's kingdom'? No, but the Bible account says "he was moved with pity for them, because they were as sheep without a shepherd. And he started to teach them many things." (Mark 6:30-34) What a wonderful example!

So it is with the true followers of Jesus Christ. They have full schedules, and at times they need to get away to rest up a bit. But their main concern is the service of God, and they have deep concern for the people to whom they minister. Like Jesus, their food, the thing that sustains and re-

freshes them, is doing the will of their Father in heaven.

Shortly before Jesus was to go through the supreme test, he found his disciples sleeping. "Could you men not so much as watch one hour with me? Keep on the watch and pray continually, that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit, of course, is eager, but the flesh is weak." (Matt. 26:40, 41) Yes, though we have a desire, our flesh may be weak. But what did Jesus, a perfect man, do? He went to his heavenly Father in prayer, and the account shows he prayed three times.

So when we get a little weak and tired or discouraged because we cannot do all that we want to do and are striving to do, we should not be surprised. Why not? Because if the Son of God looked to Jehovah for strength and turned to him, why should we not expect to do the same? Prayer gives us strength to continue. Pray rather than say, 'Jehovah, you have given us too much to do—to take in knowledge, to care for a family, to meet together and to preach your kingdom.' Actually, what Jehovah has given us is for our protection—the abundance of Kingdom assignments and requirements keeping us so busy we have no time to get ourselves into trouble with worldly things.

Look, moreover, at the example of the early Christians. They were thrown to the lions for faithfully serving Jehovah. They could have said, 'Well, what's the harm in putting a pinch of incense before a bust of Caesar? That's nothing. Jehovah is requiring too much of us.' No, they were willing to be thrown to the lions rather than to compromise. They did not view God's requirement of integrity as being too much. They knew that he could give them life again by a resurrection from the dead.

PAUL'S VIEW OF THE MATTER

At times we may feel it is too much to go to a meeting in bad weather or to go

out in the ministry. Perhaps we do not have the best of health. But just think what the apostle Paul went through and then we will appreciate that our problems are, in most cases, molehills by comparison: "Are they ministers of Christ? . . . I am more outstandingly one: in labors more plentifully, in prisons more plentifully, in stripes to an excess, in near-deaths often. By Jews I five times received forty strokes less one, three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I experienced shipwreck, a night and a day I have spent in the deep; . . . in labor and toil, in sleepless nights often, in hunger and thirst, in abstinence from food many times, in cold and nakedness." (2 Cor. 11: 23-27) Yes, and Paul also said: "Besides those things of an external kind, there is what rushes in on me from day to day, the anxiety for all the congregations." (2 Cor. 11:28) Besides all the difficulties Paul had, he was concerned with the congregations! How much like overseers and servants today who are often up late at night trying to figure out what they can do to help this one or that one, or how to care for the needs of the congregation!

Certainly it was not easy for Paul to go through those difficulties, yet he did not say it was too much. He knew he was doing God's will, and he found satisfaction in being of service to his Christian brothers. So he said: "I am filled with comfort, I am overflowing with joy in all our affliction."

—2 Cor. 7:4.

RIGHT VIEW OF GOD'S REQUIREMENTS

Sometimes we may feel that what we are accomplishing in the ministry is not enough. It is not spectacular. But Jehovah is not asking for the spectacular. He just wants us to preach this good news of the Kingdom to the best of our ability and keep on progressing in knowledge and growing in the fruitage of his holy spirit.

Yet one may say, 'I'm so weak; I wish I had the strength. If I were young again!' But do not feel that way. Remember how Paul expressed it: "I take pleasure in weaknesses, in insults, in cases of need, in persecutions and difficulties, for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am powerful." (2 Cor. 12:10) When we have difficulties and physical weakness, is that bad? Not necessarily. When we realize we cannot do it in our own strength, then we come to be powerful in Jehovah, in his spirit and in his Word.

The fact that God has given us encouragement to do plenty in the work of the Lord requires that we be honest with ourselves. (1 Cor. 15:58) Jesus said: "Everyone to whom much was given, much will be demanded of him." (Luke 12:48) What have we been given in the way of assets, such as energy and health and time for Bible study and the ministry? If we have been given much, much will be required, but not too much. We are required to exert ourselves according to our peculiar circumstances, making room to do more as we are able, even praying that circum-

stances will favor us with the opportunity to do more.

Since the career of a Christian is likened by the apostle Paul to a race course, God requires that we "run with endurance the race that is set before us" and reach the goal line. God tells us how to run the race to win—by avoiding whatever will burden us or weigh us down. If the race is too much at times, it may be that you are making it that way by staying up too late too often for recreation, rather than making it an occasion to renew your strength. Never lose sight of the goal. Jehovah does not require too much—just enough to show where our heart is and just enough to win the prize.—Heb. 12:1.

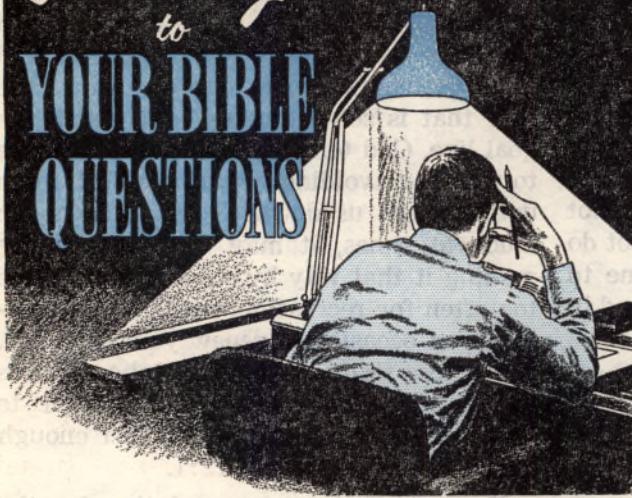
Keep strong your appreciation for the truth; never cease to make known to God your gratitude for the privilege of being numbered among his servants and having the hope of everlasting life in his righteous new order; keep in mind the urgent need of others to learn the truth and take their stand on Jehovah's side now. Be balanced in caring for your responsibilities. If you do, you will never get to feeling that Jehovah requires too much.

"I WILL BY NO MEANS LEAVE YOU"

- The Watch Tower Society has maintained in Brazil, as in other countries of the world, a special school called the Kingdom Ministry School for training congregation overseers. Although free, it has often involved great difficulties for the overseers, as they still needed to support their families while they were away for a month taking the course.

One of such overseers, in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil, who has a wife and four children, thought that his situation in this respect was so difficult that he would not be able to take the course. Two weeks before his group was to begin, he still had no solution. So he prayed to Jehovah God, and the exact answer can be summed up in the words of Hebrews 13:5, where Jehovah promises: "I will by no means leave you nor by any means forsake you." Several brothers, knowing the overseer's financial difficulties, took good care of his family in a material way, while he, although poor in this world's wealth, became richer in knowledge of God and received training so that he could give more and more help to the brothers in his congregation.

Finding Answers to YOUR BIBLE QUESTIONS



SOME treasure hunters seek gold or silver; some, precious stones, and some, hidden treasures. A more rewarding treasure hunt is the search in God's Word, the Holy Bible, for accurate knowledge, that one may have true wisdom. So we are told at Proverbs 2:4, 5: "If you keep seeking for it as for silver, and as for hid treasures you keep searching for it, in that case you will understand the fear of Jehovah, and you will find the very knowledge of God."

The invaluable treasures of "the very knowledge of God" are for those who, like a persistent treasure hunter, are willing to seek them. Are you diligent in finding answers to your Bible questions? How can you improve your efficiency in doing so?

You can always ask someone else. But is that what the Bible student should think of first? No, for God's Word says we should "keep seeking" and it also says: "Do your utmost to present yourself approved to God, a workman with nothing to be ashamed of, handling the word of the truth aright." (2 Tim. 2:15) What about those who always ask others? It is unlikely that they have done their utmost to find answers, at least in many instances. This is indicated, it seems, by the fact that the Watch Tower Society receives fre-

quent inquiries on a multitude of points from certain persons, whereas others rarely inquire. So work hard to find answers to your Bible questions. But to assure success in your search for treasures of knowledge in the Word of God, what can you do?

READ THE BIBLE ACCOUNT, CHECK THE CONTEXT

One of the most important ways to find answers is one of the most neglected: That is to go to the Bible account that may have given rise to the question. Examine it thoroughly, not neglecting to read the context, the surrounding material. Here is one commonly asked Bible question that could be answered if people did this: Where did Cain, the first son of Adam and Eve, get his wife?

For the answer why not go to the Bible account? Study it, not just quickly perusing it. Read chapters four and five of Genesis. You will note that Genesis 4:16 says merely that Cain "took up residence in the land of Fugitiveness," not that he went there to get a wife. The next verse says: "Afterward Cain had intercourse with his wife and she became pregnant and gave birth to Enoch." Now if you continue reading you will come to Genesis 5:4, which says: "Meanwhile he [Adam] became father to sons and daughters." So Adam had daughters as well as sons born to him by Eve. And, since the Bible account makes it plain that God created only one man and one woman, Cain must have obtained his wife from among his sisters, perhaps marrying his oldest sister. Of course, the human family was close

to perfection at that time and such a union would not have had the same detrimental effects then as it would have now. In fact, God later forbade the Israelites to enter such marriages. (Lev. 18:11) However, as you see, by reading the Bible account along with the context you can often arrive at the only logical answer to your Bible question.

Then there is the question about Genesis 18:22, concerning the three angelic visitors who appeared as men and visited Abraham to tell him his wife Sarah would give birth to a son. "At this point the men turned from there and got on their way to Sodom; but as for Jehovah, he was still standing before Abraham." Someone might ask, How was Jehovah standing before Abraham, now that the men, the angels, had left? By carefully reading the context you learn that it does not say that the *three* angels who appeared as men left. Rather, you note at the beginning of the next chapter that it says: "Now the two angels arrived at Sodom by evening." So only *two* angels left the presence of Abraham and went to Sodom, not three. The logical answer, then, must be that one angel remained behind, standing before Abraham, and this angel represented Jehovah. Jehovah's angelic representative had not yet withdrawn and disappeared from Abraham's presence but was still standing before him and was able to be viewed by Abraham.

Still another example illustrating the need to read the context carefully is the question, Who sold Joseph into Egypt? Some have quickly read Genesis 37:28: "Now men, Midianite merchants, went passing by. Hence they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the waterpit and then sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty silver pieces. Eventually these brought Joseph into Egypt." Some have drawn the conclusion from this text that it was actually the

Midianite merchants who took Joseph from the pit and that these merchants, in turn, sold Joseph to another group, the Ishmaelites, who brought him to Egypt. But is that correct?

By reading the context carefully, you will note that verse 27 of that chapter says that the brothers of Joseph were the ones who determined to sell Joseph to the Ishmaelites. Now when you read the last verse of the chapter, "The Midianites sold him into Egypt," to what conclusion do you come? Either the Midianites were also called Ishmaelites or the Midianite merchants were men traveling in the Ishmaelite caravan; and Joseph was sold to them by his brothers. If you read farther you get more confirmation at Genesis 45:4, 5, where Joseph himself says: "I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt." So by reading the entire account you get the right viewpoint—namely, that the Midianite merchants did not make off with Joseph and then sell him to the Ishmaelites but that Joseph's brothers themselves sold him to the merchants. The Ishmaelites and Midianites were related to each other through Abraham their forefather.

BIBLE DICTIONARIES

If you have a Bible dictionary in your library, you could use it to confirm the answer to the aforementioned question about Joseph. For instance, many Bible dictionaries will tell you under "Midianites" or "Ishmaelites" that the two names are sometimes used interchangeably. Or if you look up, for example, "Joseph" in Douglas' *The New Bible Dictionary*, you will find this:

"Who sold Joseph into Egypt? . . . The caravan was Ishmaelite, including under this designation Midianites or Medanites; the terms overlap. This interchange of terms is most plainly exhibited by Jdg. viii. 24 [Judges 8:24] which explicitly states that the Midianites beaten by Gideon 'had golden earrings, because they were Ishmaelites.'

So Bible dictionaries can be helpful, especially in regard to information on people of the Bible, Bible history, names, geography, daily life of peoples, occupations, and so forth. However, they should be used cautiously, especially when they touch upon matters of Biblical doctrine.

CROSS-REFERENCES

An aid that is of special value is that of Biblical cross-references. A number of Bibles have cross-references, but the one that is most helpful is the large-print edition of the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*. In the margin are scriptures, and reference is drawn to them by symbols, such as *, □, △, ♀, +, ⊕, #, k to n, r to z. The foreword of the Bible, on page 24, says that these symbols "will lead you to helpful information, such as parallel passages, geographical and biographical points, passages quoted from, etc."

So by making use of these cross-references in that edition of the *New World Translation*, you will often find helpful information. In fact, with that very question about Joseph, you would find a cross-reference after the words "Midianite merchants" that refers the reader to Genesis 25:2. There one learns that Midian was one of Abraham's sons by Keturah. This is helpful because you can learn that the Ishmaelites and Midianites had a common forefather, namely, Abraham; thus it is more understandable that they would be closely associated and that the names might even be used interchangeably.

By using such cross-references a vast amount of information may be obtained. One may ask why Jesus at the time just before his death said: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46) If the inquirer uses the cross-reference Bible, he will note a reference to Psalm 22:1, and by reading that he will note that this was foretold in the psalm; and Jesus, in ful-

fillment of prophecy, uttered those words at the time when it appeared outwardly that he was forsaken by God.

CONCORDANCES

Another help in finding answers to your Bible questions is a Bible concordance, which is an alphabetical index of words, showing the places in the text of the Bible where certain words may be found. Some are large and exhaustive, others are small, using only principal words. A major help in this regard is the section entitled "Important Bible Words for Quick Reference," found at the back of the 1961 edition of the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*.

This section of the Bible can be used in many ways. For example, suppose you desire information on the subject "Faith." To find some of the most important scriptures on the subject, all you need do is turn to the back of the Bible and look up the key word "faith." There you will find a number of helpful scriptures, such as Hebrews 11:6: "Without faith it is impossible to please" God well, and James 2:26: "Faith without works is dead."

Perhaps you remember the words of Jesus Christ, "All those who take the sword will perish by the sword." But where is it found in the Bible? The concordance comes to your aid. By looking under the key word "sword," for example, you can find the Biblical reference. It is Matthew 26:52. You found it by using the section "Important Bible Words for Quick Reference" at the back of the 1961 edition of the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*. So use Bible concordances, and you will benefit, indeed.

"WATCH TOWER PUBLICATIONS INDEX"

One of the most valuable aids of all in finding answers to Bible questions is the *Watch Tower Publications Index*, 1930-

1960, along with its yearly supplements. By using the *Index*, which has both a subject and a scripture index, you have a treasure map to direct you to a wealth of information to answer questions.

Suppose you are reading the Bible and come to 2 Chronicles 36:20, 21, about the seventy-year desolation that Judah was to experience "to fulfill Jehovah's word by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had paid off its sabbaths." One might ask, Why did Jehovah require seventy years? Was it that the Israelites failed to keep exactly that many sabbath years or is the number figurative? By going to the 1963 *Index* supplement, you will find under the scripture index at 2 Chronicles 36:21 a reference to the book "*Babylon the Great Has Fallen!*" *God's Kingdom Rules!* It points out on page 164 that the number seventy is figurative. Further, checking in the *Index* for 1930-1960 draws your attention to the book "*The Kingdom Is at Hand*," where you learn:

"During the times that the Israelites were faithful to their covenant, they observed these land sabbaths as they fell due. How many all together is not disclosed. But the number seventy represents completeness, it being a multiple of 10×7 ; 10 symbolizing earthly completeness, and 7 symbolizing spiritual completeness. Hence Jehovah God let the number 70 stand as a figure to represent comprehensively all the sabbath-year rests of the land they had failed to observe. Then he let 70 years of enforced desolation of the land offset or make up for all those unkept sabbath-years."—Pp. 169, 170.

But the "scripture index" feature of the *Watch Tower Publications Index* is not all; there is also the "subject index" feature. With many of your questions it may be best to look here. Suppose, for example, you had a question, Was Jesus impaled ac-

COMING IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- Who Will Be Resurrected from the Dead?
- Materialism—a Deadly Philosophy.
- Basis for Reliance on Prophecy.
- Do Not Withhold Praise.

cording to the Jewish or Roman custom? By simply looking under the word "Impalement," you find a subheading "Jewish procedure," and are directed to *The Watchtower* of April 1, 1952, page 223, where you learn the facts about both Jewish and Roman procedures of impalement. The Jewish method was to impale a criminal after he had been put to death; the Roman procedure was to hang the victim on the stake alive. Jesus was thus impaled according to Roman custom.

So the *Watch Tower Publications Index* can direct you to answers to many of your Bible questions. Do you have one? If so, do you use it, along with its supplements? You can make the *Index* especially fruitful by saving your copies of the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines or by obtaining the bound volumes at the end of the year. Even if you do not have a variety of *Watch Tower* publications, the *Index* will help you greatly, for most of the publications will probably be available in the library of the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's witnesses nearest you.

So make good use of the many ways to find "the very knowledge of God." Do not forget to read the context when a question centers around a certain scripture. Bible dictionaries may help you. Use Biblical cross-references and a concordance; and, if at all possible, never fail to check the *Watch Tower Publications Index*. If you use these aids, you will seldom have to ask others. Furthermore, you will have not only the answer but also the satisfaction that you know how to find answers to your Bible questions. Then, too, your spiritual maturity will be enhanced. Treasures abundant await you! Be an adept researcher and be enriched!

Questions from Readers

- What kind of priest was Jethro, who is referred to at Exodus 3:1?

According to Exodus 3:1, "Moses became a shepherd of the flock of Jethro, the priest of Midian, whose son-in-law he was." Jethro was evidently the patriarchal leader of a tribe of Midianites and, as such, in keeping with the custom of those times, was responsible to teach and lead them in all religious and secular matters. How pure the practice of their religion was we are not informed by the Scriptures. It should be kept in mind, however, that they had descended from Abraham by Keturah, the wife he took sometime after the death of Sarah. In Moses' day they would still have memories of the pure worship that Abraham always enjoined upon his household, the worship of the true God, Jehovah. Indeed, the account in Exodus 18:1-24 indicates considerable appreciation of Jehovah as God on the part of Jethro, for he blesses Jehovah, offers sacrifice to him, and, in company with Moses and Aaron and the older men of Israel, eats bread before him. More than that, he gave Moses very good advice as to appointing "capable

men, fearing God, trustworthy men, hating unjust profit," to assist him in judging the people, and with this Moses immediately complied. At best, Jethro's position as a priest was one of either natural inheritance from his forefathers or by appointment by his tribe, rather than by any special appointment by God.

- What is the significance of the command found in Exodus 23:19, "You must not boil a kid in its mother's milk"?

This statute, in common with a number of others, seems to emphasize that there is a proper and fitting order in all matters, and that this should be adhered to. God provided the milk of the mother for the purpose of nourishing her young. To use it to boil her offspring would be using it to its harm and its death, the very opposite of that intended.

Another lesson that seems to be here intended for his covenant people is that they should be compassionate, not acting in a heartless manner. Jehovah has shown himself to be compassionate in all his dealings with his creatures, and he calls upon them to emulate his perfect example.

Still another possibility is that Jehovah was here steering his people clear of the senseless and hurtful practices of the heathen nations round about. According to *The Bible and Archaeology* (1940) by Sir Frederic Kenyon, the seething or boiling of a kid in its mother's milk was a pagan ritual for producing rain.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FIELD MINISTRY

To help many to become God's "men of good will," Jehovah's witnesses will be diligent in calling on people everywhere during February to stimulate their appreciation for Bible truth. In addition to talking to them personally and pointing out in the Bible the grand hope that Jehovah God has set before mankind, they will offer a year's subscription for this magazine, *The Watchtower*, along with three Scriptural booklets, on a contribution of \$1.

GET ACCURATE KNOWLEDGE FOR YOURSELF

Few books ever published have aided so many persons to obtain the basic knowledge of the Bible as has "*Let God Be True*." Its

wide appeal is clearly evident in the more than 18,900,000 copies that have been printed and circulated in fifty-four languages. For a book of its kind this distribution record is second only to that of the Bible itself. Its twenty-six chapters cover the basic doctrines of the Bible in a clear and understandable way that brings new life and appreciation to your Bible study. Send for your copy today. It is hard bound, contains 320 pages, subject and scripture indexes. It is only 50c.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

March 21: For Whom There Are Resurrection Hopes. Page 101.
March 28: Part Two. Page 107.