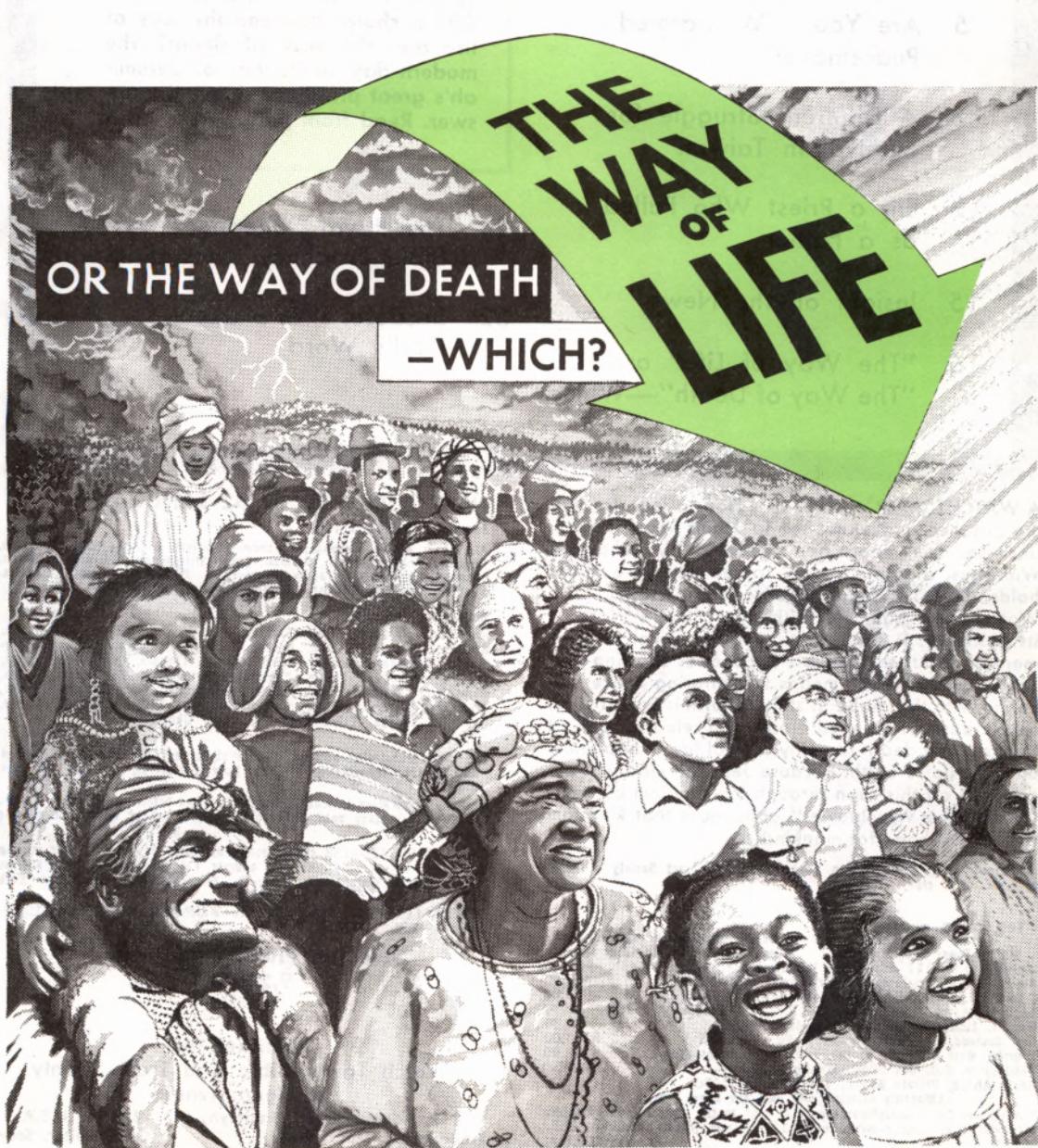


SEPTEMBER 1, 1979

THE WATCHTOWER

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom



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

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How Genuine Is Your Love?

TO DESCRIBE someone as being genuine is to give that one high praise. The genuineness of a person, or a thing, usually is made apparent by tests. Thus the Bible speaks of gold as being tried by fire, and it tells of "genuine gold," "genuine silver" and "genuine nard," a costly perfume. (Jer. 52:19; Mark 14:3; 1 Pet. 1:7) God's Word also refers to persons as being genuine, as when the apostle Paul terms Timothy "a genuine child in the faith."—1 Tim. 1:2.

The question as to whether certain ones had genuine love came up in connection with the Christian Jews at Jerusalem. They had come into dire need, and their fellow believers in Macedonia, 'in spite of their deep poverty,' had outdone themselves in making generous contributions to their needy brothers. After telling the prosperous Christians at Corinth about these things, the apostle Paul went on to say: "It is not in the way of commanding you, but in view of the earnestness of others and to make a test of the genuineness of your love, that I am speaking." Evidently they had professed love for their fellow believers and now the apostle was giving them the opportunity to demonstrate the genuineness of it. How? By actions, by their contributions.—2 Cor. 8:8.

Under inspiration the apostle John, in his first letter, makes the same point, saying: "This is how we know what love is: Christ gave his life for us. We too, then, ought to give our lives for our brothers! If a rich person sees his brother in need, yet closes

his heart against his brother, how can he claim that he loves God? My children, our love should not be just words and talk; it must be true love, which shows itself in action."—1 John 3:16-18, *Today's English Version*.

Yes, true love, genuine love, is shown, not by mere talk, words, but by doing things, helping those who are in need. The Creator, Jehovah God himself, gives us the finest example of this. Because of the disobedience of our first parents, mankind came into great need, and so God sent his only-begotten Son "in order that everyone exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life." Jehovah God provided his Son so that He would have a basis for forgiving repentant humans, even as we read: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous so as to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."—John 3:16; 1 John 1:9.

This example of genuine love on the part of Jehovah God in forgiving our sins is set forth as a model for us to imitate. His Word counsels: "Become kind to one another, tenderly compassionate, freely forgiving one another just as God also by Christ freely forgave you." (Eph. 4:32)

Perhaps in no other respect is the genuineness of a person's love so tested or demonstrated as in the willingness to



*A happy marriage
is the union of two
good forgivers*

be forgiving. It is far easier to make gifts of material value, even costly ones, than to exercise largeness of heart, generosity, by being forgiving.

The apostle Peter found it very difficult to keep on forgiving and so asked his Master, Jesus, if he was supposed to forgive his brother up to seven times. How did Jesus reply? 'Not up to seven times but up to seventy-seven times'; in other words, there is to be no limit to one's forgiving another. (Matt. 18:21, 22) Peter no doubt well remembered these words of Jesus, for years later he wrote: "Above all things, have intense love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins." (1 Pet. 4:8) A multitude is a large number, is it not? In fact, at Proverbs 10:12 we read that "love covers over even all transgressions."

Right in the family circle, how many opportunities there are, day in and day out, to be forgiving! Both the husband and the wife, in relation to each other, or as parents, as well as the children, make mistakes, some minor or small, a few major ones with serious consequences. How should the other members of the family react? Critically, with the attitude, 'What a stupid mistake! How could you do such a thing?' Or, sympathetically, with feeling for the one who made the mistake and minimizing the consequences or showing ways of mitigating the results? Not without good reason has it been observed that 'a happy marriage is the union of two good forgivers.'

The same applies to the larger spiritual family of which all Christians are a part. Since none are perfect, those taking the lead in a congregation, or taking the lead in a certain country, are likely to fall short at times and err in judg-

ment. Their not being perfect furnishes a real test to those over whom they have oversight.

It might be said that even as 'a happy marriage is the union of two good forgivers,' so happiness in the Christian congregation depends upon the readiness of spiritual brothers and sisters to forgive one another. Jesus said that his followers would be identified by their love for one another. (John 13:34, 35) For their love to be genuine, it must include this willingness to be forgiving. As a "Kingdom Song" puts it:

"Surely days of bitter sorrow Our forgiving can prevent; By it we show loving-kindness That indeed is heaven sent. . . True forgiveness is a virtue That we all should cultivate. It will keep us from resentment, From the bitterness of hate."

In fact, not only genuine love, but even wisdom and justice might be said to require that we be forgiving. Unless we forgive others, Jehovah God will not forgive us. Being forgiving results in happiness on the part of all concerned. Is not forgiving a form of giving that results in the greater happiness? (Matt. 18:35; Acts 20:35) Justice also requires that we be forgiving. How so? Because to be unforgiving is to attribute wrong motives to our brothers or to judge them as inex-cusably negligent. Yet does not justice require that we do to others as we would have them do to us? We would not want others to judge our motives wrongly or harshly; rather, we would want them to be forgiving. We must therefore be forgiving toward our brothers.—Luke 6:31.

So there is every reason for Christians to be forgiving toward one another. It is the wise thing and it is the just thing to do. But, above all, it is the unselfish, loving thing to do, it being proof of the genuineness of our love.



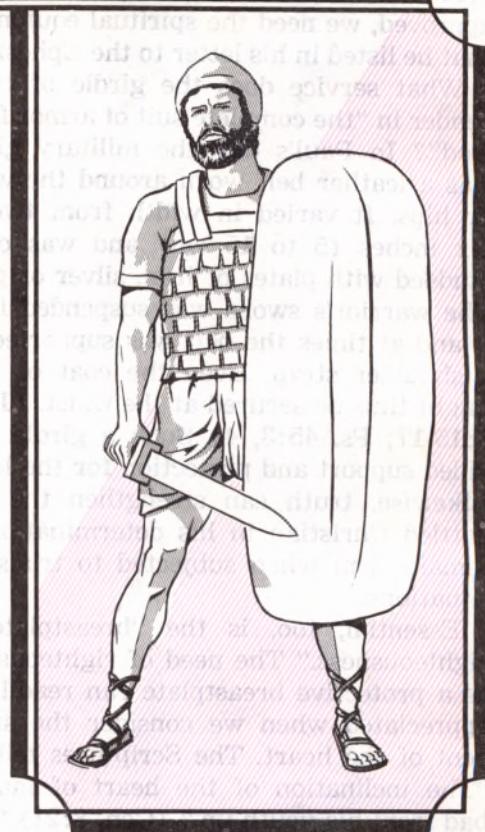
Are You A Well-armed Peacemaker?

"**H**APPY are the peaceable," said Jesus Christ in his Sermon on the Mount. (Matt. 5:9) Such peaceable ones work hard to maintain good relations with others. They repay evil with kindness, and avoid quarreling. (Rom. 12:17, 18) In attitude, word and action, they promote peace. Hence, they are indeed "peacemakers," exerting themselves to help others to enjoy peace with God and with their fellowmen.

Why, then, can it be said that such peacemakers must be well armed? Because powerful enemies are bent on destroying them as spiritual persons. Regarding these enemies and the Christian's fight against them, the apostle Paul wrote: "We have a wrestling, not against blood and flesh, but against the governments, against the authorities, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the wicked spirit forces in the heavenly places." (Eph. 6:12) So ours is a fight against the Satanic powers of darkness, the Devil and his demons. Physical weapons and armor would be of no value in a battle against these superhuman spirits.

THE SPIRITUAL ARMOR

Hence, we need the spiritual equipment mentioned by the apostle Paul. He admonished fellow believers: "Take up the complete suit of armor from God, that you may be able to resist in the wicked day and, after you have done all things thoroughly, to stand firm. Stand firm, therefore, with your loins girded about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and with your feet shod with the equipment of the good news of peace. Above all things, take up the large shield of



faith, with which you will be able to quench all the wicked one's burning missiles. Also, accept the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, that is, God's word."—Eph. 6:13-17.

Though we may have "done all things thoroughly" as God's servants until now, we cannot afford to relax our guard. It is important that we look to our Maker and his spirit to assist us in 'standing firm.' This calls for earnest effort in cooperating with the direction of the holy spirit. The apostle Paul recognized the impor-

tance of this in his own case. To the Corinthians he wrote: "I pummel my body and lead it as a slave, that, after I have preached to others, I myself should not become disapproved somehow." (1 Cor. 9:27) If we, like Paul, desire to remain approved, we need the spiritual equipment that he listed in his letter to the Ephesians.

What service does the girdle of truth render in "the complete suit of armor from God"? In Paul's day the military girdle was a leather belt worn around the waist or hips. It varied in width from two to six inches (5 to 15 cm) and was often studded with plates of iron, silver or gold. The warrior's sword was suspended from it and at times the belt was supported by a shoulder strap. Even the coat of mail might thus be secured at the waist. (Judg. 3:15-17; Ps. 45:3, 4) Such a girdle provided support and protection for the loins. Likewise, truth can strengthen the embattled Christian in his determination to remain firm when subjected to trialsome situations.

Essential, too, is the "breastplate of righteousness." The need of righteousness as a protective breastplate can readily be appreciated when we consider the sinful bent of the heart. The Scriptures tell us: "The inclination of the heart of man is bad from his youth up." (Gen. 8:21) "The heart is more treacherous than anything else and is desperate. Who can know it?" (Jer. 17:9) Only the righteousness that is based on faith in God's arrangement for everlasting life and that is effected by his spirit can prevent the heart from yielding to sinful inclinations.—Rom. 6:15-20.

Even our feet need protective covering, namely, "the good news of peace." Are your feet thus shod? If so, you will be conducting yourself in harmony with the "good news," the whole deposit of Christian teaching. (Compare Romans 6:17.) Since the feet are militarily used for marching, the warrior's having "the good

news of peace" involves more than maintaining pure personal conduct. We should also be eager to spread the "good news." Therefore, even while undergoing hardships, our active participation in making known the "good news" to others can help us to endure faithfully.

An especially prominent part of our armor is faith. The apostle Paul referred to it as "the large shield of faith." He may have had in mind a large Roman shield measuring four feet by two and a half feet (about 1.2 by 0.8 m), rather than the small circular shield customarily carried by archers. Such a large shield provided excellent protection for most of the body. Similarly, our faith in Jehovah God, our total reliance on him, enables us to bear up under all kinds of tribulations. This faith is not a mere belief in the existence of the Creator. (Heb. 11:6) It includes unbreakable confidence that our heavenly Father can and will totally undo any hurt that we may experience. Even death itself cannot prevent our receiving the grand blessings that God has promised to his servants.—Matt. 10:28.

This "large shield of faith" will render harmless any burning missiles that Satan, through his agents, may hurl against us. Faith will help us to resist attacks by "wicked spirits," also allurements to commit wrong, to involve ourselves in a materialistic way of life, and to give in to fear, doubt, selfishness, excessive grief or worry. With faith protecting us like a large shield, we will be able to express ourselves in line with the following inspired words: "Jehovah is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?"—Heb. 13:6.

As the helmet protects a warrior's head, so the "helmet of salvation" safeguards the Christian's mental powers. By keeping our mental vision fixed on our final salvation, the prize of everlasting life, we are greatly aided in putting up a hard fight

against anything that would cause us to deviate from our goal. The positive "hope of salvation" that God has imparted can be powerful enough to give us the kind of protection that a helmet gave ancient warriors.—1 Thess. 5:8.

Often attacks are made on Christians in the form of twisted reasonings and arguments. When this happens, we need the "sword of the spirit," God's Word the Bible. The Scriptures are a product of the holy spirit and are designed "for reproofing, for setting things straight, for disciplining in righteousness." (2 Tim. 3:16) Equipped with accurate Bible knowledge, we can distinguish between right and wrong. (Heb. 5:14) This enables us to 'overturn reasonings and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God.'—2 Cor. 10:5.

PERSEVERE IN PRAYER

Of course, we should never lose sight of the fact that the provider of our spiritual armor is God. He is the One who will safeguard us for everlasting life as we endeavor to yield to the operation of his spirit. That is why we do well to persevere in prayer, thus showing our complete dependence on Jehovah God. In view of the fact that all devoted Christians share in the same spiritual conflict, we would not want to limit our prayers just to ourselves but would want to include the whole brotherhood. This is in harmony with the apostle Paul's further encouragement: "While with every form of prayer and supplication you carry on prayer on every occasion in spirit. And to that end keep awake with all constancy and with supplication in behalf of all the holy ones."—Eph. 6:18.

Since our final salvation is at stake, we do have good reason to remain well-armed peacemakers. Therefore, continue to examine yourself. Make sure that you are enjoying the guidance and support of Christian truth, that righteousness is pro-

tecting your heart, that your faith is strong enough to withstand attacks from without and from within, that the hope of gaining everlasting life is shielding your mental powers, and that you are able to use God's Word aright in battling faith-destroying ideas and "the wicked spirit forces in the heavenly places." Strive to remain spiritually alert, letting yourself be guided by God's spirit as you pray in ways appropriate to the many circumstances or occasions that call for thanksgiving, praise and requests for help and guidance from on high. Yes, exert yourself to be a well-armed peacemaker.

ANNUAL MEETING OCTOBER 1, 1979

The annual meeting of the members of Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania on October 1, 1979, will be held at Jehovah's Witnesses Assembly Hall, 44-17 Greenpoint Avenue in the Borough of Queens, New York city. The meeting will be at ten o'clock in the forenoon of Monday, October 1, 1979.

It will be appreciated if the members of the corporation will now see to it that the Secretary's office has their present mailing addresses so that the regular letters of notice and proxies can reach them shortly after September 1.

The proxies, which will be sent to the members along with the notice of the annual meeting, are to be returned so as to reach the office of the Secretary of the Society not later than September 15. As each member knows, he should complete and return his proxy promptly whether he is going to be at the meeting personally or not. The information given on each proxy should be definite on this point as it will be relied upon in determining in advance those who will actually be personally present.

It is expected that the entire session, including the formal business meeting and any remarks by members or officers, will be concluded at 12 noon or shortly thereafter. There will be no afternoon session. No arrangements will be made for tying in the annual meeting by telephone line to any other locations.

A DIFFERENT STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL IN TAIWAN



STRUGGLES for survival are not new to the human race. Man has faced many such crises ever since people have been on this earth. In our own time, whole nations have struggled to survive. So have individuals, often because of economic problems and pressures.

However, a struggle for a different kind of survival began in Taiwan back in the 1930's. During that decade the Taiwanese, then under the yoke of Imperial Japan, first had the opportunity to hear how they could survive into a righteous new system of God's making. A public lecture in Taipei attracted the attention of at least one person who embraced the truth of God's Word with eagerness. He, along with

special pioneers (full-time Kingdom proclaimers) from Japan, later made diligent efforts to declare this message throughout the island. Initial response was slow among the Buddhist Taiwanese. Yet, after a grueling bicycle ride on a rough dirt road through the mountains to the east coast, what did the special pioneers find? Why, among the Amis tribe of aboriginal people some embraced Bible truth eagerly. These, in turn, talked to relatives and friends who readily accepted the word of trusted and respected members of the tribe and were baptized.

Among those presenting themselves for baptism in 1938 was a 12-year-old lad surnamed Lin. The Japanese pioneer won-

dered if one so young should be baptized. So the ceremony was stopped while some questions were asked. Surprised at the boy's determination to serve Jehovah, Brother Oh allowed the baptism to take place. To this day, that baptismal candidate, Brother Lin, has continued to serve in a whole-souled manner, he and his wife having spent most of the last 21 years as special pioneers. A number of others baptized at that time also have remained faithful to Jehovah through many trials.

During World War II those who had the hope of survival into Jehovah's promised system of things had to put up a vigorous struggle. The Japanese rulers did everything they could to make these humble persons worship at Shinto shrines or compromise in some other way. Two of the special pioneers who had spearheaded the work here were imprisoned for many years. One died in prison and the other mysteriously disappeared after his release at the end of the war. Local Witnesses believe that he was quietly exterminated. A number of other Christians showed that their faith was of the fire-resistant quality that would enable them to survive.
—1 Cor. 3:10-15.

MISSIONARIES AID IN THE STRUGGLE

With the end of the war, Taiwan reverted to Chinese rule. The missionaries working in Shanghai eventually were able to contact the Amis and others who were trying to serve Jehovah. Eventually, approval was obtained for J. McGrath and C. Charles, graduates of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead, to enter Taiwan and work among the Amis. Their assignment was not an easy one. Difficult living conditions, malaria, jaundice and the language barrier were among the problems they encountered. Also, much time was spent trying to help officials, whom clerics of Christendom had influenced against

Jehovah's Witnesses, to understand the true nature of our work. All of this tested the faith and love of the missionaries. They saw the need to build up faith in these humble people, many of whom had been baptized only because their relatives had told them about the hope of a righteous 'new heavens and new earth.' (2 Pet. 3:13) Painstakingly, some material from the Bible study aid "*Let God Be True*" was translated into Japanese, then widely spoken here. Using the Bible and a blackboard, the missionaries conducted studies with the large crowds that gathered at village halls.

To spread the hope for survival to other villages, a special preaching tour was undertaken by two groups of Witnesses. One missionary accompanied each group. For one group the trip was particularly difficult because they had to cross high, rugged mountains, and rain had made the clay path treacherously slippery. Their path snaked down a cliff face where one slip would mean a 600-foot (183-m) fall!

Brother Charles' rubber-soled shoes were dangerous, and he tried walking barefooted but could not. So the brothers loaned him their shoes, which had deep treads. They linked hands and, with many a prayer, finally made it to the bottom of the cliff face. As they crossed the next range of mountains, heavy rain made progress difficult. United prayer for a safe return was offered. And how thankful they were to meet the other group after two weeks of walking!

However, because of the aforementioned action by Christendom's clergy restrictions were placed on the work and the missionaries were forced to leave Taiwan. The local Witnesses were harassed and some were imprisoned. Eventually, though, the authorities came to understand that they had nothing to fear from Jehovah's Witnesses. In 1955 recognition was given

to a local International Bible Students Association, and this opened the way for more missionaries to enter Taiwan.

THE CHINESE FIELD IS REACHED

The new missionaries, Clarence and Louise Halbrook, concentrated on helping the Chinese to learn about the hope of survival. They, therefore, studied Mandarin Chinese, the official language of the island. Before long they were joined by two other missionaries. By January 1957, when a branch office of the Watch Tower Society was established here, there were some 2,000 Kingdom proclaimers, almost all of whom were of the Amis tribe. But did they have faith that would ensure survival? This was to be shown in due time.

A couple of years later, eight missionaries joined the four already here. They were beginning to locate some Chinese individuals desiring to learn about survival. One of the first to be helped was a government geologist known for his bad temper. But Bible truth changed that and now, many years later, he serves as an appointed Christian elder dearly loved by many who have learned the truth since then.

Besides having to communicate in one of the more difficult languages of the world, the missionaries had to deal with such things as materialistic thinking, superstitions connected with ancestor worship, resistance to things foreign and other pressures. But spiritual progress was made and new missionary homes were opened in the south, at Kaohsiung and Tainan.

Two fields of activity developed in Taiwan. The first was comprised primarily of the tribal peoples, the Amis tribe ultimately producing the greatest number of Kingdom proclaimers. The second is the Chinese field, composed of families that have been in Taiwan for many generations and

of those who have more recently come from mainland China. The tribal people are farmers and/or hunters having little of this world's goods and generally little or no formalized religious background, although many have accepted some nominal form of Christianity. On the other hand, the Chinese are noted for ancestor worship, Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianist thinking, and for their quest for material prosperity and good education.

PROBLEMS IN THE TRIBAL FIELD

The simple openness of the tribal people enabled them to accept the Bible's message of survival readily. But would they be able to defend and hold fast to their hope under trial? Late 1961 brought a test that revealed a weakness. The first Amis man to accept the truth before World War II was disfellowshiped, and immediately he set out to capture the whole organization for himself. Many of the 2,500 reporting field service up to that time were his relatives and friends, and quite a number of these succumbed to his threats and persuasions.

Sadly, many from the tribal areas have continued to fall away because of the enticements of materialism and other factors. This has largely been due to the inability of many to study for themselves. Their language had been unwritten until 1963, when it was put in writing by Bible translators. To help these people who could not read any language and had to rely on hearing others translate from Chinese, the Watch Tower Society published a monthly Amis *Watchtower* and other Bible study aids. At last these people could study the Scriptures for themselves. But just as they were starting to make progress in this regard, the Taiwan Education Department forbade the further publication of this Amis literature, citing the government policy that these tribal people

were now Chinese citizens and had to use publications in that language. This was a great setback for older people who had never been to school.

As an aid, however, the Society now prepares Amis cassette tape summaries of *Watchtower* study articles and other material to help individuals to learn the truth. Additional efforts have been made in the form of study courses to aid those conducting meetings to become better teachers, extra visits by circuit overseers, and so forth. Since a new generation has grown up with Chinese education and a poor understanding of their parents' language, it is difficult for uneducated Christian fathers and mothers to teach their offspring. The result? Many of their children never have made Bible truth their own. Because of such factors, a large number of persons in the tribal field have stopped pursuing the Christian way of life.

PROGRESS IN THE CHINESE FIELD

In the Chinese field, however, there is much to encourage the 60 missionaries and others working to help many to survive the greatest tribulation to come upon mankind. (Matt. 24:21) Ten years ago an assembly for the Chinese Witnesses might have an attendance of up to 200. The two Chinese circuit assemblies in April 1979 had a total of 659.

For many, spiritual survival has meant a real struggle. As an example, consider the case of a young woman in a Buddhist family. Her oldest sister accepted the truth, and she herself studied the Bible periodically for several years, but hesitated to take up the struggle for survival. When her father died, she knew that her sister would not worship their deceased parent. But what about her? Refusing to share in idolatry would bring severe family opposition. Her decision? She would

please her Creator, and intense opposition did result. She was accused of not loving—in fact, of dishonoring—her father. Nevertheless, she relied on Jehovah and won that round in the struggle for survival.

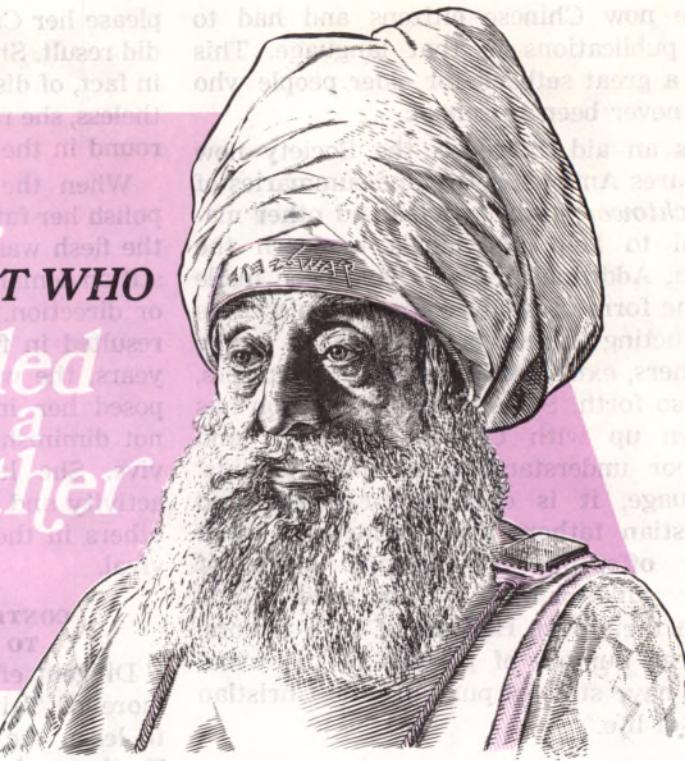
When the time came to exhume and polish her father's bones, it was found that the flesh was not completely gone. Superstition demanded reburial in a new location or direction. Refusal to have part in this resulted in further persecution. Over the years, the woman's husband also has opposed her intensely, but all of this has not diminished her determination to survive. She loves the Kingdom-preaching activity and her joy is great as she helps others in their struggle for spiritual survival.

CONTINUING TO AID OTHERS TO BECOME SURVIVORS

Diligent efforts are being made to help more of Taiwan's 17,000,000 inhabitants to learn the vital truths of God's Word. To that end, during the 12 months ending August 31, 1978, 1,044 praisers of Jehovah in this country distributed 48,997 Bibles and books and obtained 8,421 subscriptions to the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines.

A source of great encouragement was the "Victorious Faith" International Convention of Jehovah's Witnesses held in Taipei during August 1978. That spiritually rewarding assembly was attended by 1,692 persons.

This is, indeed, a critical time for Taiwan and for every nation. With joy, however, true Christians here and elsewhere are declaring the heartening message that all who call on Jehovah's name will be saved. With earnestness, Jehovah's Witnesses in Taiwan continue urging people to take action that will place them among the "great crowd" who will "come out of the great tribulation."—Rev. 7:9-14.



Eli, A PRIEST WHO Failed as a Father

NO HUMAN ever gets beyond the point where he needs discipline. Discipline trains one to act in the right, most beneficial way. As we face life, we constantly come across varying situations, some of them new to us, and not a few of them trialsome. Undergoing these experiences disciplines us.

Since this is the case even with adults, a child needs much more discipline. Every experience is new to him. Additionally, due to inheritance from imperfect parents, "foolishness is tied up with the heart of a boy; the rod of discipline is what will remove it far from him."—Prov. 22:15.

For this reason God tells parents of the grave importance of teaching their children to be law-abiding, to keep morally clean and to have a love for God. If they do not learn these principles from the parents' teaching by word of mouth, but

are disobedient and lawless, some form of discipline must be applied. Laxity or failure to do this will result in children who, later, will pay no attention at all to the parents, and this may result in the greatest calamity to both children and parents.

LAXNESS IN DISCIPLINE BRINGS GRIEF

Eli was a father in ancient Israel. He was also a priest—the high priest for the nation. As such, he was well versed in the law of God. In his personal life, he may have carried out his priestly duties quite faithfully. He may even have thoroughly taught his sons God's law. But evidently he was weak, lax, too indulgent with his sons, and did not follow through and administer the needed discipline, with the result that he incurred God's displeasure and brought grief to himself. But Eli failed

utterly in an even greater respect—he did not show himself zealous for the true, clean worship of God when his two sons became involved in breaking God's law.

THE SINS OF ELI'S SONS

When Eli's sons were grown up and married, and Eli was very old, the report of his sons' shocking conduct kept coming to him. The record states: "Now the sons of Eli were good-for-nothing men; they did not acknowledge Jehovah. As for the due right of the priests from the people, whenever any man was offering a sacrifice, an attendant of the priest came with the three-pronged fork in his hand, just when the meat was boiling, and made a thrust into the basin or the two-handled cooking pot or the caldron or the one-handled cooking pot. Anything that the fork might bring up the priest would take for himself. That is the way they would do in Shiloh to all the Israelites coming there."—1 Sam. 2:12-14.

The law provided for the sustenance of the priesthood in this manner: In the communion offering, when the worshiper presented his sacrifice from the herd or the flock, the priests were allowed the breast of the animal as their portion. The officiating priest received as his own portion the right leg. But Hophni and Phinehas, Eli's sons, would have their attendants take from the cooking pot whatever their large fork would bring up, thus disrespecting God by violating his arrangement and mistreating the Israelite who brought the sacrifice. Worse than this, they robbed God by taking their portion from the offering before the fat parts were offered on the altar—a violation of the law.—1 Sam. 2:15-17; Lev. 7:32-34; 3:3-5.

Adding to their sins, these wicked men committed acts of immorality with the women who served at the tabernacle, so that all Israel came to know about it. And

the report of their terrible desecration of God's sanctuary came to the ears of Eli.—1 Sam. 2:22.

Herein lay Eli's greatest failure. As father of Hophni and Phinehas and, with great seriousness, as God's anointed high priest of Israel, Eli should have taken immediate disciplinary action by removing those two men from their priestly offices and ejecting them from serving at the sanctuary. Moreover, they should have been punished according to the law for their crimes. Instead, Eli merely said to them:

"Why do you keep doing things like these? For the things I am hearing about you from all the people are bad. No, my sons, because the report is not good that I am hearing, that the people of Jehovah are causing to circulate. If a man should sin against a man, God will arbitrate for him; but if it is against Jehovah that a man should sin, who is there to pray for him?"—1 Sam. 2:23-25.

GOD'S JUDGMENT AGAINST ELI'S HOUSE

However, God was not asleep or unconcerned about the matter and had already judged these corrupt men. "Jehovah was now pleased to put them to death," the Bible says, and in harmony with his judgment, he sent "a man of God" to Eli with a scathing message. (1 Sam. 2:25) The prophet told Eli:

"This is what Jehovah has said, 'Did I not for a fact reveal myself to the house of your forefather [Aaron] while they happened to be in Egypt as slaves to the house of Pharaoh? And there was a choosing of him out of all the tribes of Israel for me, to act as priest and go up upon my altar to make sacrificial smoke billow up, to bear an ephod before me, that I might give to the house of your forefather all the offerings made by fire of the sons of Israel. Why do you men keep kicking at my sacrifice and at my offering that I have commanded in my dwelling, and you keep honoring your sons more than me by fattening yourselves from the best of every offering of Israel my people?'

"That is why the utterance of Jehovah the God of Israel is: 'I did indeed say, As for your

house and the house of your forefather, they will walk before me to time indefinite." But now the utterance of Jehovah is: "It is unthinkable, on my part, because those honoring me I shall honor, and those despising me will be of little account." Look! Days are coming when I shall certainly chop off your arm and the arm of the house of your forefather, so that there will not come to be an old man in your house. And you will actually look upon an adversary in my dwelling amid all the good that is done to Israel; and never will there come to be an old man in your house. And yet there is a man of yours that I shall not cut off from being at my altar so as to cause your eyes to fail and to make your soul pine away; but the greater number of your house will all die by the sword of men. And this is the sign for you that will come to your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas: On one day both of them will die. And I shall certainly raise up for myself a faithful priest. In harmony with what is in my heart and in my soul he will do; and

gate and broke his neck.—1 Sam. 4:10, 11, 18.

Eli's posterity did fill the high priestly office for years after that, but their eyes saw many calamities, such as the slaughter of the priests by the order of Saul. (1 Sam. 22:11, 16-18) A further part of the judgment came years later when King Solomon "drove out Abiathar [the high priest, a descendant of Eli] from serving as a priest of Jehovah, to fulfill Jehovah's word that he had spoken against the house of Eli in Shiloh." Solomon replaced Abiathar in office with one of the sons of Zadok. (1 Ki. 2:27, 35) Zadok was a descendant of the line of Aaron's son Eleazar, whereas Eli was of the line of Ithamar, another son of Aaron. (1 Chron. 6:50-53; 24:1; 1 Sam. 14:3; 22:9) Even then God allowed some of Eli's descendants to serve as underpriests. But they experienced the decline of worship at the temple during the reign of the kings, when the priesthood did not receive proper support from the people.—2 Chron. 29:3, 6; 33:7; 34:8-11.

The account about Eli strongly emphasizes these facts that we cannot ignore: We, as servants of God, should follow the Bible counsel to teach God's Word to our children every day and, while showing them love and consideration, should 'bring them up in the discipline and mental-regulating of Jehovah.' (Eph. 6:4; Deut. 6:4-9) If parents condone wrongdoing in their children, they are bound to lose the children's respect. Such parents will later find that they have destroyed the line of communication, and will sadly see their children lost to them in the ways of the world.

Even more vitally, the example of Eli's sons impresses us with the fact that any use of our position as servants of God for selfish gain will bring upon us God's adverse judgment. "If anyone destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him." —1 Cor. 3:17.

In Coming Issues

- Is a Millennium of Peace Just a Dream?
- "Trembling at Men Is What Lays a Snare"
- A Day of Reckoning Is Guaranteed

I shall certainly build for him a lasting house, and he will certainly walk before my anointed one always. And it must occur that anyone left over in your house will come and bow down to him for the payment of money and a round loaf of bread, and will certainly say: "Attach me, please, to one of the priestly offices to eat a piece of bread."—1 Sam. 2:27-36.

This prophecy was partially fulfilled when, a short time later, Eli's two sons were killed in battle with the Philistines, and the ark, which they had carried into battle, was captured. Eli, on hearing the report, fell backward off his seat by the

INSIGHT ON THE NEWS

● "Twenty-five years ago this June," observes the Catholic Jesuit magazine "America," "Americans piously inserted the phrase 'under God' into the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag." In reflecting on

What Kind of God? the reason for this move, "America" says that "most who supported the change in wording (and there were few who did not) frankly admitted that the inclusion of God was a political, not a religious, act." In those days of fervent anti-Communism, notes the article, "the Catholic War Veterans of Wayne County, Mich., resolved that letting God into the Pledge would give 'additional meaning to the spiritual defense of our nation.' God . . . was being recalled to active duty."

The significance of this was expressed by one religious writer of the time who said that, by putting God into the pledge, America was "adopting a God of war who appears as a nationalistic deity directing bombs and bullets into the hearts of our enemies." Observes "America": "Quite simply, the nation was afraid of the future, and it tried to meet this fear by having its children parrot in singsong fashion just how good it actually was. The Pledge was to be a spiritual boot [military training] camp for babes."

Do you want your children to learn about a nationalistic "God of war" or, rather, about the "God of peace" as revealed in the Bible? (Phil. 4:9) "America" draws this conclusion: "The phrase 'under God' is the concrete symbol of what was, 25 years ago, and may still be, the established American religion: worship of the state. We ought to drop it."—June 9, 1979, pp. 469, 470.

● "I would be shy about talking to others about my faith," said a member of the Lutheran Church in America, responding to a recent survey of attitudes on this subject.

Hiding the Light "Talking about religion and faith is really the pastor's job," said another. Only 11.1 percent said that they would talk about their faith to nonchurch families "eagerly" if asked to do so by their pastor. About 16 percent said that they would do

it with misgivings, and 44 percent said that they would not do it at all.

Instead of sharing their faith, as a form of "everyday evangelism," over 90 percent of the church members preferred praying for others or offering to help friends who were having difficulties. Among the reasons offered for their reticence in speaking about their faith were: "I don't feel I could explain my faith to others," or, "I'd feel I was imposing my beliefs on others."

How does such a timid, lukewarm approach to faith compare with the dynamic urgings of Jesus Christ? He told those who follow him: "You are the light of the world. . . . let your light shine before men."—Matt. 5:14-16.

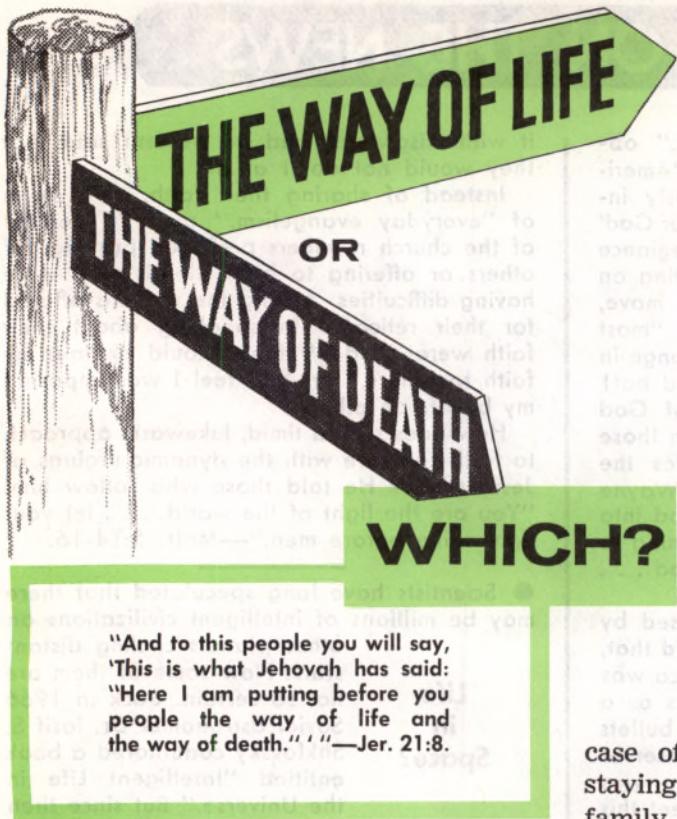
● Scientists have long speculated that there may be millions of intelligent civilizations on other planets circling distant stars. Now some of them are not so certain. Back in 1966

Life in Space? Soviet astronomer Dr. Iosif S. Shklovsky coauthored a book entitled "Intelligent Life in the Universe." But since then

Dr. Shklovsky has apparently had second thoughts, and last year he wrote in a Soviet journal: "It looks as though our sun, that strange and solitary star surrounded by a family of planets, is most likely a rare exception in the stellar world."

And more recently, the New York "Times" reported on a computer analysis of hypothetical stars and planets conducted by astronomer Michael H. Hart. "His conclusion is that, far from being common, civilized life must be exceedingly rare and the one we have on earth may even be unique," observes the "Times." Hart also pointed out that if our own earth were even 5 percent closer to the sun or 1 percent farther from it, temperature extremes hostile to life could develop. Additionally, Hart believes that the fact that no sign of extraterrestrial life has ever been discovered is significant.

In the Bible, the Creator indicates that, at least now, the earth may be unique as a planet hosting living creatures. His Word says: "As regards the heavens, to Jehovah the heavens belong, but the earth he has given to the sons of men."—Ps. 115:16.



HAS it really got as serious as all that? Are we all up against it? Is the whole world now faced with a choice between "the way of life and the way of death"? Can this really be so? Is not death the normal thing? If so, why is the case of humanity different now from what it was before? For the past thousands of years men, women, children and babies have not escaped dying. They had no other choice. Then why today should it be said that now, finally, we face the choice of "the way of life" or "the way of death"? What chance do we have of escaping the longtime foe DEATH?

1. What questions arise as to our being faced now with the choice between "the way of life and the way of death"?

² Well, this is not the first time that a whole world of people faced death, a sudden death, all together. Historians point back to an earlier occasion of this kind. One historian says: "There were heavens from of old and an earth standing compactly out of water and in the midst of water by the word of God; and by those means the world of that time suffered destruction when it was deluged with water."—2 Pet. 3:5, 6.

³ That historian, the Christian apostle Peter, was writing about the global deluge of Noah's day. Were the way of life and the way of death set before the world of that time?

Most certainly, Yes! It was a case of either a person's unbelievingly staying outside the ark that Noah and his family had built and not living through the deluge or a person's getting inside the ark with Noah and his family and thus escaping a violent death with the ungodly world.

⁴ Earlier in the same letter the apostle Peter wrote: "And he [God] did not hold back from punishing an ancient world, but kept Noah, a preacher of righteousness, safe with seven others when he brought a deluge upon a world of ungodly people."—2 Pet. 2:5.

⁵ Because Noah and his family chose the way of life before the deluge burst forth, we find ourselves here today, more than four thousand three hundred years later.

2, 3. (a) According to ancient history, when did a whole world face a sudden death, all at one time, all together? (b) What made it then possible for the choice to be open between living and dying?

4, 5. (a) Why are we all alive today despite the deluge of Noah's day? (b) Why should the lesson furnished by Noah and his family not be lost on us today?

The lesson furnished by Noah and his family should not be lost on us today. Why not? Because the Holy Scriptures predict a similar end to the ungodly world of people that has grown up and fills the earth till now.

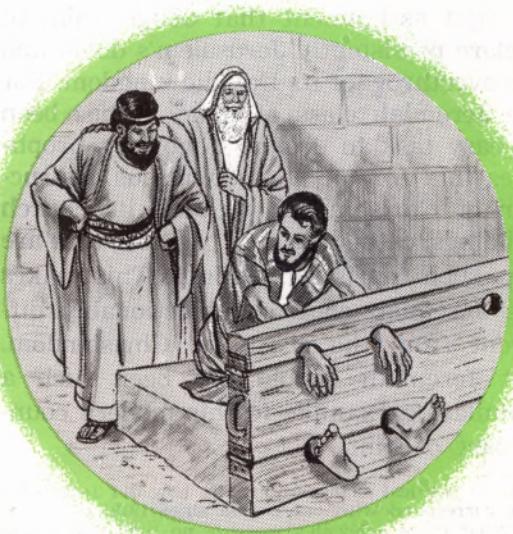
⁶ Logically, a choice such as faced Noah and his family should be facing us at some time as that predicted end approaches. From the way in which Bible prophecy has been coming true since World War I, which marked 1914 as the year for the 2,520 years of the Gentile Times to close, unsectarian Bible students have known that we are living in "the conclusion of the system of things." (Matt. 24:3) By this year, 1979, we find ourselves far advanced into the concluding period of this system of things. So now, more than ever before, the pressure is upon us to choose "the way of life" and to reject "the way of death." This choice is mercifully placed before us by the Life-Giver of all those who breathe.

6. Why is the pressure now upon us to choose "the way of life" and to reject "the way of death"?

⁷ Besides the deluge of Noah's day we have another illustration in human history where the choice was between continued life and an abrupt end of the privileges of life. This had to do with the nation of Israel during the days of the priest-prophet Jeremiah, the son of Hilkiah. (Jer. 1:1-5) Jehovah God made him "prophet to the nations." So even though we may not be of Jeremiah's own people, what this international prophet said and did affects us.

⁸ The God who commissioned Jeremiah as his spokesman wanted him to be a public figure, one commanding the attention of kings, of princes, of priests, of the populace, yes, of an emperor, Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon. Jeremiah also commands the world's attention today through his recorded prophecies that have been preserved for timely consideration by all of us in these critical days.
—Jer. 1:18, 19; 39:11-14; compare Romans 15:4.

7, 8. (a) An illustration of a similar situation in history was provided in whose days of old? (b) To what extent did Jehovah want the prophet to be a public figure?



⁹ The aging generation that has witnessed world events since 1914 C.E. has seen many changes among the rulers of the nations. Jeremiah too saw political changes. After good king Josiah died in 628 B.C.E., Jeremiah saw three sons of Josiah and a grandson of his change seats on the throne of the kingdom of Judah. After Josiah's son Jehoahaz had reigned only three months at Jerusalem, he was removed, and his brother Jehoiakim succeeded him. After this son of Josiah came to an untimely death in 618 B.C.E., his young son Jehoiachin reigned three months and then surrendered to Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar then made the remaining son of Josiah, namely, Zedekiah, the new king of Judah. In the 11th year of Zedekiah's bad reign Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians, and Zedekiah was deported to Babylon, leaving Jerusalem and its temple in ruins.—2 Chron. 35:23–36:21.

¹⁰ Jeremiah saw a continual deterioration morally and religiously among those last four kings of Judah. Have we seen anything equally grievous occur among the political rulers of the nations that profess to be Christian? For Jeremiah it was no light assignment that obliged him to declare persistently Jerusalem's doom and the overthrow of its Davidic kingdom. For the Jeremiah class of today it has been no easy task to declare Jehovah's prophecies that foretell the calamitous destruction of Christendom with all its church buildings, cathedrals and basilicas that are now such tourist attractions. This makes the Jeremiah class so objectionably different from the clergy of Christendom. But Jeremiah of old has been such a stimulating example to this modern counterpart of him.

9. As to political changes on earth, how did Jeremiah's time correspond with our period since 1914?
10. What made Jehovah's message no light assignment for Jeremiah to deliver, and to whom today is he an encouraging example?

¹¹ Once, to dramatize Jeremiah's declaration of doom, God said:

"Go, and you must get an earthenware flask of a potter and some of the older men of the people and some of the older men of the priests [as witnesses]. And you must go out to the valley of the son of Hinnom, which is at the entrance of the Gate of the Potsherds. And there you must proclaim the words that I shall speak to you. And you must say, 'Hear the word of Jehovah, O you kings of Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem. This is what Jehovah of armies, the God of Israel, has said:

"'Here I am bringing a calamity upon this place, of which when anyone hears, his ears will tingle; for the reason that they have left me and have proceeded to make this place unrecognizable and to make sacrificial smoke in it to other gods whom they had not known, they and their forefathers and the kings of Judah; and they have filled this place with the blood of the innocent ones. And they built the high places of the Baal in order to burn their sons in the fire as whole burnt offerings to the Baal, something that I had not commanded or spoken of, and that had not come up into my heart.''"—Jer. 19:1-5.

¹² What would be the "calamity" the report of which would make ears tingle? The "place" that was made sacred to false gods was to become polluted by the "killing" of the idolaters there. (Jer. 19:6) After Jeremiah had declared this, then, as the lay elders and the priestly elders watched, he dashed the flask to the earth and said:

"This is what Jehovah of armies has said: 'In the same way I shall break this people and this city as someone breaks the vessel of the potter so that it is no more able to be repaired; and in Topheth they will bury until there is no more place to bury.'"—Jer. 19:10, 11.

¹³ After that dramatic action before the elders, it became proper for a similar message to be proclaimed to the people of Jerusalem. So Jeremiah left the shards of

11. In order to dramatize Jeremiah's declaration of doom, what did Jehovah tell him to do and to say?
12. After Jeremiah dashed the flask to pieces, what did he say about Topheth in the Valley of Hinnom?
13. After that, what did Jeremiah proclaim at the courtyard of the temple of Jerusalem?

the broken flask near the Gate of the Pot-sherds and went north through the city to the temple courtyard. Then, in the hearing of all listeners, he said:

"This is what Jehovah of armies, the God of Israel, has said, 'Here I am bringing upon this city and upon all its cities [in the suburbs] all the calamity that I have spoken against it, because they have hardened their neck in order not to obey my words.'"—Jer. 19:14, 15.

RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION AND ITS REBOUND

¹⁴ The elders who had seen Jeremiah break the flask at the Valley of Hinnom and who had heard his words of doom did not feel authorized to do anything to him. But the leading commissioner of the temple, namely, Pash'hur the son of Immer the priest, felt authorized to act. The falsehood that he prophesied was not confirmed by Jeremiah. Indignantly Pash'hur struck him in the face and put him in the public stocks in the temple's Gate of Benjamin, in the north wall. What patriotism! many observers may have thought, for Pash'hur was pro-Egyptian, depending upon Egypt's military aid to keep Jehovah's word by Jeremiah from bringing disaster upon the kingdom of Judah by means of the Babylonians. But Pash'hur's patriotism earned him no compliment from Jehovah. He was fighting against God!

¹⁵ The next day, after Pash'hur released Jeremiah, Jehovah had a message for Pash'hur. His name is a combination of two Hebrew words *Pash* and *Hhur*. Together these words are understood to mean "What Is Left Over Round About." So, playing upon the idea of the name Pash'hur, Jehovah inspired Jeremiah to change the name:

"Jehovah has called your name, not Pash'hur, but Fright all around [Magormissabib, Hebrew]. For this is what Jehovah has said, 'Here I am making you a fright to yourself

14. How did Pash'hur act toward Jeremiah, and why?

15. To what did Jehovah change Pash'hur's name, and with what prophetic significance?

and to all your lovers [or, friends], and they will certainly fall by the sword of their enemies while your eyes will be looking on; and all Judah I shall give into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he will actually take them into exile in Babylon and strike them down with the sword. And I will give all the stored-up things of this city and all its product and all its precious things; and all the treasures of the kings of Judah I am going to give into the hand of their enemies. And they will certainly plunder them and take them and bring them to Babylon. And as for you, O Pash'hur, and all the inhabitants of your house, you will go into captivity; and to Babylon you will come and there you will die and there you yourself will be buried with all your lovers, because you have prophesied to them in falsehood.'"—Jer. 20:3-6.

¹⁶ From these words of Jehovah it is evident that Pash'hur had chosen for himself "the way of death." Also, by means of his false prophesying, he was leading his religious friends or lovers into the same way. Correspondingly, in Christendom today hundreds of millions of church-goers are being led into that "way of death." However, this is through no fault on the part of the Jeremiah class.

¹⁷ Dramatically Jeremiah illustrated Jehovah's prophecy by crashing the earthenware flask at the Valley of Hinnom. By public demonstrations far greater than that, the Jeremiah class has notified Christendom of her impending doom. Take, for example, that convention at Cedar Point, Ohio, in September of 1919. There, before an audience of 10,000, the president of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society delivered an address in which he pointed out that the blessing of the clergy upon the then proposed League of Nations would prove fruitless. That international organization for world peace and security would not succeed. Certainly it failed Christendom in 1939, when the German

16. In what way was Pash'hur leading others, and what corresponds to this today?

17. How did the demonstration put on at Cedar Point, Ohio, in 1919, surpass that of Jeremiah's crashing the flask at the Valley of Hinnom?

dictator Adolf Hitler precipitated Christendom into World War II.

¹⁸ For another example, take the year 1933. This year was proclaimed a Holy Year because of its being the 1900th anniversary of the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ. In the pope's announcement of this celebration, benefits were promised respecting the peace and prosperity of Christendom in particular and also of the whole world, despite Hitler's becoming dictator of Republican Germany. But the Jeremiah class courageously challenged such papal promises. On Sunday, April 23, by way of a chain of radio stations with WBBR of New York city as the key broadcaster, the Watch Tower Society's president delivered an hour's lecture on "Effect of Holy Year on Peace and Prosperity." Worldwide publicity was given to this ear-tingling message by its being published in the May 10, 1933, issue of the biweekly magazine *The Golden Age*. At once Christendom's clergy raised loud protests, resorted to political pressures and persecuted the Jeremiah class. But this did not safeguard world peace and prosperity any more than did the subsequent Holy Years of 1950 and 1975. Christendom still faces destruction in the coming "great tribulation."

¹⁹ Thus the blow in the face that the

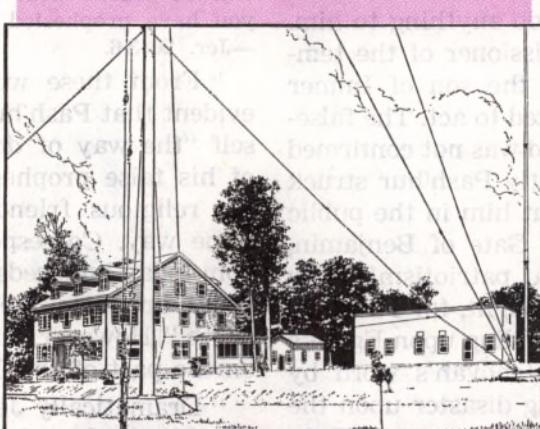
temple's leading commissioner Pash'hur delivered to Jeremiah has found its modern counterpart in this 20th century. Like that patriotic religious leader of old, Christendom's clergy have pilloried the Jeremiah class. Why? In order to put them to public shame and to hamper the publishing of Jehovah's purpose against hypocritical, nominal Christianity, yes against all false religion and its political patrons and henchmen. Conduct of such kind did not turn out well either for Pash'hur of old or for Christendom's clergy. Jehovah changed Pash'hur's name to Magormissabib, meaning "Fright All Around." Such "fright" was to be in connection with the horrifying destruction in 607 B.C.E. Also, Pash'hur was doomed to die captive in Babylon. As for today's imitators of Pash'hur, this clerical class was ex-

posed and doomed to eternal destruction.

²⁰ Ever since the first century the identity of what the apostle Paul called "the son of perdition" or "son of destruction" had puzzled Christians. But in Jehovah's due time this "mystery of iniquity" or "mystery of this lawlessness" was scheduled to be unraveled. (2 Thess. 2:3, 7, *Authorized Version; NW*) So, in 1951, the Jeremiah class published the book *What Has Religion Done for Mankind?* In that year the book was released at the international assembly of Jehovah's Witnesses in London, England. Its chapter 25

18. How was another demonstration made by the Jeremiah class in 1933?

19. How do Pash'hur's change of name and accompanying prophecy of doom find their counterpart in Christendom's clergy today?



WBBR, Staten Island, N.Y.

treated "Red Religion and the 'Man of Lawlessness.'" On pages 320 and 321 we read about the "falling away" or "apostasy":

So the falling away of Christian leaders from true Christianity to form a "man of lawlessness" class or system began shortly after the twelve apostles died. The apostles being thus out of the way, the composite lawless man came out into the open and followed his self-exalting, lawless course of conduct. He set himself up as an apostate clergy in power over the religious interests of professed Christians. The clerical word was more powerful than the written Word of God. The clergy put the traditions and commands of men up above the laws of God and nullified them. Assuming the titles of "Reverend," "Right Reverend," "Most Right Reverend," "Divine," and even "vice-god" for the pope, they elevated themselves in their temples, cathedrals and church buildings as objects of reverence capturing the due reverence and fear away from Jehovah God and his Son Jesus Christ. They claimed to be sons of God, but they made themselves gods or spiritually mighty ones to their parishioners and flocks.

²¹ The above-quoted book boldly set out that the apostate "man of lawlessness" class will undergo the foretold destruction in the approaching "great tribulation," along with all other Babylonish false religions. When Christendom's "man of lawlessness," "the son of destruction," goes, Christendom itself will go also. At such an event, shocking to religious susceptibilities, there will be "fright all around" for nominal professed Christians, as well as for all others who profess unscriptural, unbiblical religions.—2 Thess. 2:8-12; see also the book "*Babylon the Great Has Fallen!*"—*God's Kingdom Rules!*, published in 1963, chapter 26, which comments on Revelation, chapter 17.

21. When Christendom's "son of destruction" goes, what will go with it, amid what situation for nominal professed Christians?

FLEEING TO THE SIDE OF GOD'S EXECUTIONAL FORCES

²² Christendom's course is "the way of death." Let us go no farther in it. Time still allows for a person's escape from being executed with her "son of destruction." Look at Jeremiah as an illustration. Though held prisoner in the Courtyard of the Guard of King Zedekiah as famine, pestilence and war casualties took their toll all around him, he survived Jerusalem's destruction and did not go into exile in Babylon. Fearers of Jehovah who befriended Jeremiah survived with him. Today we also have opportunity to survive.

²³ Back in 609 B.C.E., Babylonian invaders were working their way toward Jerusalem. (Jer. 21:13) Aware of what was approaching, King Zedekiah sent a couple of inquirers to Jeremiah for, possibly, some favorable message from Jehovah. But what reason was there for King Zedekiah to expect any favorable word through Jeremiah? In Jerusalem and throughout the kingdom of Judah there obtained these things to which Jehovah called attention: the breaking of His covenant with Israel, the worship of other gods, unjust court sentences, robbing of helpless ones by defrauders, the taking advantage of widows and orphaned children, the depriving of laborers of due wages, the shedding of innocent blood, false prophesying. (Jer. 21:12; 22:3, 13-16; 23:14, 16) Necessarily Jeremiah had to take courage and boldly declare Jehovah's unaltered message of calamity for the violators of God's covenant.—Jer. 21:1-7; 1:7, 8, 17.

²⁴ What a fine example Jeremiah set for Jehovah's Witnesses of today! Through-

22. How can we escape being destroyed with Christendom's "son of destruction," as illustrated in Jeremiah's time?

23. Why was there then no basis for a favorable message from Jehovah through Jeremiah to King Zedekiah?

24. How do we have in Jeremiah a fine example as respects the delivering of Jehovah's message to Christendom today?

out Christendom today conditions are bad religiously, morally, socially, judicially, with no hope of relief. As in Jeremiah's case, Jehovah today has not minced words in stating his judicial decision against Christendom. He has commissioned his Jeremiah class to declare a correspondingly straightforward message of calamity to the modern counterpart of ancient Jerusalem and Judah. Unsparsingly, unwaveringly, the Jeremiah class must adhere to all that He commands them in His Word.

²⁵ All nations, including those of Christendom, are marching to Har-Magedon. That name does not designate a mere battle royale between capital and labor, resulting in total anarchy world wide. It is no war between man and man, but is something far more serious and calamitous. Back in 1926 this fact began to be made clear. Said the book *Deliverance!*, which was released to the public at the general convention of the International Bible Students Association at London, England, in May of 1926:

The saints do not engage in the actual combat. This is the fight of God Almighty; and the fight is led by his beloved Son, the Priest of whom Melchizedek was a type. Long ago Jehovah's prophet recorded concerning this hour: "The Lord [Jehovah] at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath. He shall judge among the nations, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the head over many countries." (Psalm 110:5, 6) He is also fighting for the salvation of the people, that they might be delivered from the oppressor; and he is fighting for the anointed of God, that they may be vindicated for their faithful witness to the name of Jehovah. . . .

Thus is Satan's empire swept from the earth to oblivion. The name of Jehovah God is vindicated. But all human words attempting to describe this great and terrible day of the Lord are beggarly.—Page 280, first edition.

25. To what are all worldly nations now marching, and how did the book *Deliverance!* of 1926 explain what takes place there?

Let no one deceive himself into thinking that the battle of Armageddon is a mere fight between men, or that it is only a picture. The Scriptures make it clear that it is real. It is the battle of God Almighty, in which he will clear the earth of the wicked system that Satan has used to blind the people for all these centuries.—Pages 282, 283; see also page 261, paragraph 2.

²⁶ That "battle of Armageddon" will bring to a close the "great tribulation" in which the world empire of false religion, including Christendom, will be wiped out. (Rev. 16:13-16; 17:1-18, AV) The Jeremiah class cannot minimize this fact just to please the Zedekiah-like political rulers of Christendom or even those of the whole world. They have to 'hew to the line,' as Jeremiah did to King Zedekiah in obedience to his commission from Jehovah.

²⁷ In the "war of the great day" at Har-Magedon, the rulers of this system of things must reckon with God the Almighty, not with mere fellowmen. As respects the people who patriotically support the political operators of this system of things, they face the executional forces under Jehovah's command. In Jeremiah's day the executional forces were the Babylonian armies under Emperor Nebuchadnezzar. In the coming war at Har-Magedon they will be Jehovah's holy angels led by his Son Jesus Christ.—Rev. 16:12; 19:11-21.

²⁸ The rulers of Christendom have imitated King Zedekiah of Jerusalem and refused to reform and seek reconciliation with God. So what should we common folk do under the imminence of world destruction? (Jer. 21:11, 12; 22:3-5) We should take individual action. We should make a personal choice of the "way of

26. Like Jeremiah, what may the Jeremiah class today not do just to please worldly rulers?

27. What executional forces will the people face at the war waged at Har-Magedon?

28, 29. What choice should we common folk make, thus heeding Jehovah's words at Jeremiah 21:8-10?

life." Each one of us has to heed God's words through Jeremiah:

²⁹ "And to this people you will say, 'This is what Jehovah has said: 'Here I am putting before you people the way of life and the way of death. The one sitting still in this city will die by the sword and by the famine and by the pestilence; but the one who is going out and who actually falls away to the Chaldeans who are laying siege against you will keep living, and his soul will certainly come to be his as a spoil.'" "For I have set my face against this city for calamity and not for good," is the utterance of Jehovah. "Into the hand of the king of Babylon it will be given, and he will certainly burn it with fire."'" —Jer. 21:8-10.

³⁰ A Jew's 'falling away to the Chaldeans' who were besieging the kingdom of Judah was not unpatriotic or traitorous. It was the course of obedience to Jehovah God, the invisible heavenly king of Israel. This was "the way of life," whereas "the way of death" was the disobedient course chosen by the Jewish patriots.

³¹ The case was similar to that of the Christianized Jews of the first century of our Common Era. Jesus Christ foretold the destruction of the rebuilt city of Jerusalem by the Roman armies, whom he spoke of as "the disgusting thing that causes desolation."—Matt. 24:15.

³² Hence, Jesus instructed his dedicated followers: "Then the end will come. Therefore, when you catch sight of the disgusting thing that causes desolation, as spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in a holy place, (let the reader use discernment,) then let those in Judea begin fleeing to the mountains. Let the man on the housetop not come down to take the

goods out of his house; and let the man in the field not return to the house to pick up his outer garment . . . for then there will be great tribulation such as has not occurred since the world's beginning until now, no, nor will occur again. In fact, unless those days were cut short, no flesh would be saved; but on account of the chosen ones those days will be cut short."—Matt. 24:14-22.

³³ The believing Christianized Jews obeyed this instruction from their Master. After the Roman legions retreated from their unsuccessful assault upon Jerusalem and its temple in 66 C.E., the whole province of Judea was abandoned by the endangered Christians. They were not deserters of the Jewish cause. They were obedient to their Leader Jesus Christ, and so the course that they chose was "the way of life." Patriotic Jews chose "the way of death" and perished to the number of 1,100,000 when the Roman legions under General Titus destroyed Jerusalem in 70 C.E.

³⁴ With such historic examples before us, what are we people going to do today? We are living in what Christ's disciples called "the conclusion of the system of things." The unmatched "great tribulation" upon the world that was prefigured by the destruction of Jerusalem now faces "this generation." It is a case now of choosing "the way of life" or "the way of death." The Jeremiah class has chosen "the way of life." This class points out that others may do the same thing. Without further delay all lovers of eternal life in a righteous new order will take advantage of the God-given opportunity to choose "the way of life." They will flee to the side of Jehovah's executional forces.—Matt. 24:3, 34.

30. Why was a Jew's then 'falling away to the Chaldeans' not unpatriotic or traitorous?

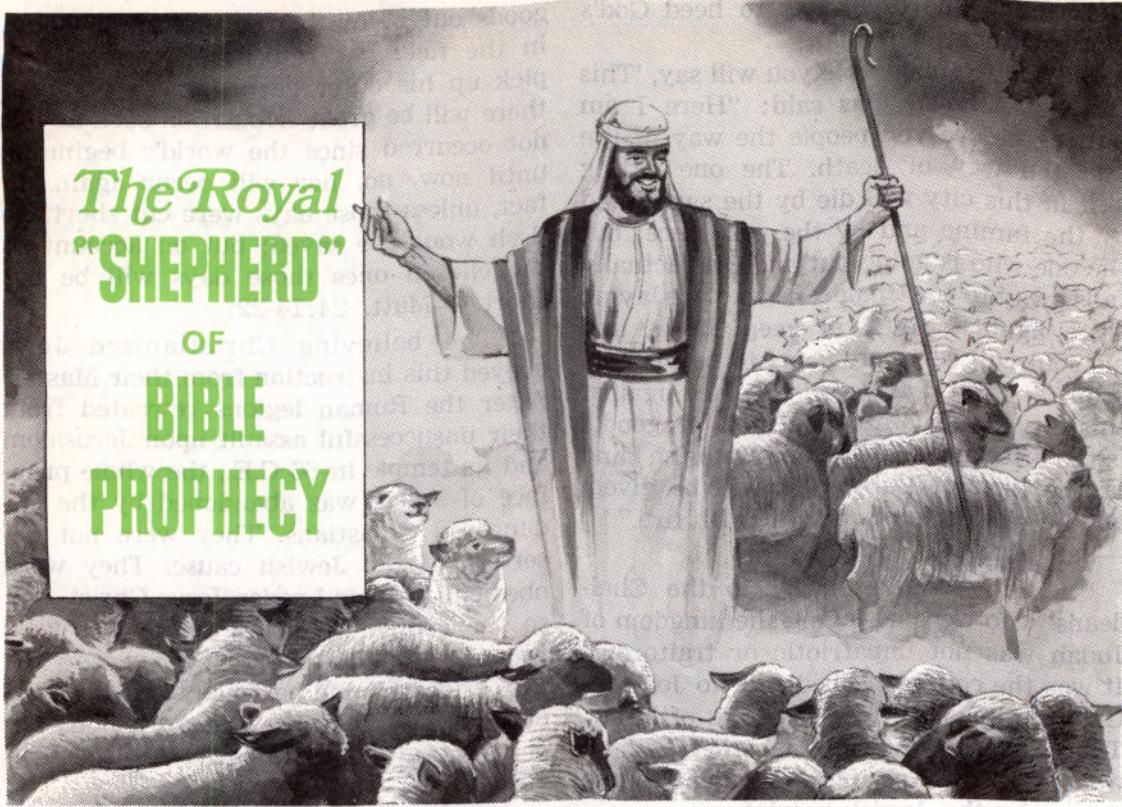
31. The case then was similar to that of whom in the first century C.E.?

32. Consequently, what instructions did Jesus give to his dedicated followers?

33. In the period between 66 and 70 C.E., in what did obedience to Jesus' instruction and disregard of it result?

34. To where will lovers of life in a new order flee without delay?

The Royal "SHEPHERD" OF BIBLE PROPHECY



THE political "shepherds" of this system of things keep the sheeplike peoples divided. Each people is in a separated national fold. There is no one all-embracing fold for all mankind. The organization for world peace and security, the United Nations, has failed to provide such a universal fold although it now holds 151* member nations. It does not meet the need of the peoples for one fold under one Shepherd. Only the Creator, who "made out of one man every nation of men, to dwell upon the entire surface of the earth," can provide the needed Governmental Shepherd for gathering all peoples into one fold.—Acts 17:26.

* Americana Annual, p. 117.

1. How have the political "shepherds" of the world kept the peoples, and how will this be remedied?

By means of his own chosen people Israel, the Creator demonstrated to all the world that, under the present system of things, no imperfect man can bring all humankind together as one flock and rule them as their one shepherd. This proved to be true even with the dynasty of kings that descended from King David, who captured Jerusalem and made it the capital city in 1070 B.C.E. As earthly representatives of the God of Israel they sat upon what was called "Jehovah's throne." (1 Chron. 29:23; 2 Chron. 13:8) Because of the steady worsening of the governmental shepherds (with few exceptions) God saw good to dethrone this dynasty after 463 years of rule.

2, 3. (a) Why did Jehovah see good to dethrone the shepherds that descended from King David? (b) Why does Jeremiah 23:1, 2 pronounce woe against such shepherds?

³ "Woe to the shepherds who are destroying and scattering the sheep of my pasture!" is the utterance of Jehovah. Therefore this is what Jehovah the God of Israel has said against the shepherds who are shepherding my people: 'You yourselves have scattered my sheep; and you kept dispersing them, and you have not turned your attention to them.' 'Here I am turning my attention upon you for the badness of your dealings,' is the utterance of Jehovah."—Jer. 23:1, 2.

⁴ After the death of good King Josiah in 628 B.C.E., his three sons and a grandson proved to be bad in their dealings. This resulted in the scattering of their subjects. For example, there was Shallum, or Jehoahaz, who was first to succeed Josiah on "Jehovah's throne." After reigning a quarter of a year, he was taken into exile in Egypt. There he died. (Jer. 22:10-12) As for his older brother, Jehoiakim, his reign of 11 years was so oppressive and bloodguilty that he deserved nothing better than for his carcass to be thrown outside the gates of Jerusalem and to be buried "with the burial of a he-ass."—Jer. 22:13-19.

⁵ Jehoiakim was succeeded by his young son, Jehoiachin, also called Jeconiah or Coniah. (Matt. 1:11, 12) Because he was a descendant of King David and sat upon "Jehovah's throne," he might have been esteemed as precious as a seal ring on Jehovah's right hand. Yet for his badness he deserved to be plucked off and hurled into exile in the land of Babylon. After reigning only three months and 10 days he felt obliged to surrender to the king of Babylon who was then besieging Jerusalem. Jehoiachin and more than 10,000 Israelites were taken into exile in Babylon, to die there. He did not leave behind him a son to sit on the throne, but his

uncle, Zedekiah the son of Josiah, was made king as a vassal to Emperor Nebuchadnezzar. (2 Ki. 24:5-17; Jer. 22:24-30) Zedekiah violated his oath that was taken in Jehovah's name. Hence, when he faced the consequences of his rebellious course and he made inquiry of the prophet Jeremiah, it brought only a message of doom for Zedekiah.

⁶ What befell those four royal "shepherds" of the kingdom of Judah and the undershepherd princes was "woe," indeed. This meant also the scattering of their sheeplike subjects by their going into exile in Egypt and Babylon. This left the land of Judah a desolate waste. Because of their wickedness the "shepherds" were responsible for this scattering of the "sheep." The God of Israel, Jehovah, may be said to have done the scattering only in that he raised up his disciplinary executional forces for bringing punishment upon his disobedient people.—Jer. 23:1, 2; 2 Chron. 36:9-21.

THE ONE TO BE CALLED

"JEHOVAH IS OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS"

⁷ The ideal shepherd we find in the God of the Bible, Jehovah. He can provide a governmental shepherd better than those last four kings of Jerusalem, whose badness resulted in the scattering of their sheeplike subjects. In view of the disappointment that imperfect human rulers leave behind for their subjects, the heavenly Shepherd Jehovah has promised to provide such a superior governmental shepherd. So after pronouncing "woe" upon the disappointing "shepherds" of the kingdom of Judah, he inspired his prophet Jeremiah to say:

⁸ "And I myself shall collect together the remnant of my sheep out of all the

6. How did the "woe" upon those "shepherds" prove to be woe to their subjects, and how was Jehovah responsible for the scattering?

7, 8. (a) Who only can provide a "shepherd" superior to those last four kings of Jerusalem, and why? (b) In promising such a superior "shepherd," what did Jehovah say at Jeremiah 23:3-6?

4. As "shepherds," how did Shallum (Jehoahaz) and Jehoiakim fare?

5. As "shepherds," how did Coniah (Jehoiachin) and Zedekiah fare?

lands to which I had dispersed them, and I will bring them back to their pasture ground, and they will certainly be fruitful and become many. And I will raise up over them shepherds who will actually shepherd them; and they will be afraid no more, neither will they be struck with any terror, and none will be missing,' is the utterance of Jehovah. 'Look! There are days coming,' is the utterance of Jehovah, 'and I will raise up to David a righteous sprout [in contrast to David's unrighteous royal offshoots]. And a king will certainly reign and act with discretion and execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel itself will reside in security. And this is his name with which he will be called, 'Jehovah Is Our Righteousness.'"

—Jer. 23:3-6.

⁹ "He shall be called: 'The Lord is our Vindicator.'" That is how the 1978 edition of the translation by the Jewish Publication Society of America rendered Jeremiah 23:6, whereas Moffatt's translation reads, "our champion." No man on earth came to bear that name literally. Yet the prophecy is fulfilled in Jesus Christ. His becoming entitled to that name does not mean that Jesus is Jehovah God himself. The Israelite called Jehozadak, whose name means "Jehovah Declared Righteous" or "Jehovah Is Righteous," was not Jehovah himself. (1 Chron. 6:14, 15) Jeremiah 33:16 tells us that even Jerusalem was to be called "Jehovah Is Our Righteousness," but does that mean that Jerusalem was Jehovah himself? No! The name of the last reigning king of Jerusalem was Zedekiah, and that name means "The Righteousness of Jah." The king who was to be called "Jehovah Is Our Righteousness," namely, Jesus Christ, contrasts sharply with King Zedekiah.

9. Why does the fact that the name of the promised "shepherd" was to be "Jehovah Is Our Righteousness" not mean that he is Jehovah himself?

¹⁰ The prophecy of Jeremiah 23:5, 6 was not fulfilled in Jesus' day upon literal Judah and Israel and Jerusalem. Those Jewish elements rejected Jesus as the Messiah. They suffered ruin and dispersion by the Romans in 70 C.E. Actually the prophecy is fulfilled upon spiritual Israelites, Christ's anointed disciples.

¹¹ During World War I of 1914-1918 the remnant of spiritual Israelites was dispersed by the clergy and nations of Christendom that were then engaged in world war. But from 1919 onward Jehovah used the glorified Jesus Christ to collect the dispersed remnant together into a spiritual unity, world wide. The members of this repentant, restored remnant of spiritual Israelites were cleansed and thus made fit to proclaim "this good news of the kingdom" internationally, in "all the inhabited earth." (Matt. 24:9-14) In this way, by Jehovah's undeserved kindness through Christ, they were declared righteous or were vindicated. Jehovah proved to be their Backer, their "champion," and they became his Christian witnesses. (Isa. 43: 10) Inasmuch as this favor was to come through the then enthroned Royal Shepherd, Jesus Christ, the name "Jehovah Is Our Righteousness" deserved to be attached to him.

¹² In order to foreshadow this, Jehovah brought a repentant remnant of Israelites out of "the land of the north" and restored them to their homeland in 537 B.C.E. (Jer. 23:7, 8) This bringing of them up out of Babylon and the resettling of them in the long-desolated land of Judah paved the way for the greatest birth on earth to take place, in Bethlehem-Judah. It was the birth of Jesus Christ as a descendant of King David.—Luke 2:1-38; 3:23-31.

10, 11. (a) Upon which people was the promise of Jeremiah 23:5, 6 fulfilled? (b) To whom did the name "Jehovah Is Our Righteousness" properly become attached, and how so?

12. The releasing of the remnant from Babylon and the resettling of them in the land of Judah paved the way for what important birth?

¹³ Thus Jehovah raised up to David a "righteous sprout," in spite of His woe-ful prophecy against King Coniah (or, Jeconiah; or, Jehoiachin).* (Jer. 22:24 through 23:2; Matt. 1:11-16; 2 Ki. 25:27-30) This "righteous sprout," Jesus Christ, laid down his perfect human life as a sac-rifice for his future human subjects. By doing this he laid the basis for 144,000 dedicated followers of his to be 'declared righteous' with a view to their becoming joint heirs with him in his heavenly king-dom. (Rom. 8:14-17; 1 Cor. 1:30, 31) Since 1919 C.E., despite the accusations made by the clergy of Christendom against the remnant of these 144,000 Kingdom heirs, Jehovah has restored this remnant to his favor and service. Thereby Jehovah has championed them, vindicated them or 'declared them righteous,' through Christ.—Rom. 8:31-33; Jer. 23:6, *Moffatt; JPS; NW.*

¹⁴ Among this restored remnant of spiritual Israelites Jehovah has raised up faithful elders or overseers. Inasmuch as the Messianic kingdom was born in the heavens at the close of the Gentile Times in 1914, these overseers serve as princely shepherds on earth until all the remnant finishes its earthly course and joins the Royal "Shepherd" in his heavenly king-dom.—Jer. 23:3, 4; Isa. 32:1, 2.

HOW CHRISTENDOM'S CLERGY HAVE FAILED

¹⁵ Under the heavenly King, the one called "Jehovah Is Our Righteousness," the restored remnant of spiritual Israelites resides in a spiritual paradise. (Jer.

* See *God's Kingdom of a Thousand Years Has Approached*, published in 1973, page 62, paragraph 40, and footnote. Also, *Paradise Restored to Mankind—By Theocracy!*, published in 1972, page 119, paragraph 31.

13. (a) Jehovah raised up a "righteous sprout" to David in spite of what about David's dynasty? (b) How did Jehovah deal with the remnant in harmony with the sprout's name, "Jehovah Is Our Righteousness"?

14. Among this anointed remnant, what servants has Jehovah raised up since the Kingdom's birth in 1914?

15. In contrast with the state of the anointed remnant, in what condition does Christendom find herself now?

23:3-6) No such paradise of spiritual peace and security exists today in Christendom. She finds herself in a state polluted with adultery and stricken with spiritual famine. Her condition is heartbreaking and is the forerunner of an outcome still more heartrending. It will make a person reel like a drunken alcoholic.—Jer. 23:9, 10; Matt. 24:21, 22.

¹⁶ The ones responsible for this are the clergy of Christendom. They have failed their church members. It is just as Jehovah said of the false prophets and temple priests of Jeremiah's day:

¹⁷ "For both the prophet and the priest themselves have become polluted. Also in my own house [the temple] I have found their badness,' is the utterance of Jehovah. 'Therefore their way will become for them like slippery places in the gloom, into which they will be pushed and certainly fall. . . . And in the prophets of Jerusalem I have seen horrible things, committing adultery and walking in falsehood; and they have strengthened the hands of evildoers in order that they should not return, each one from his own badness. To me all of them have become like Sodom, and the inhabitants of her [Jerusalem] like Go-morrah.'”—Jer. 23:11-14.

¹⁸ Ever since Christendom was founded in the days of Constantine the Great, Pontifex Maximus of the Roman Empire, the Catholic clergy and, later, the Protestant clergy have been guilty of spiritual adultery. How so? In being friends of this world and taking part in its politics and military ventures.—Jas. 4:4.

¹⁹ The clergy let literal adulterers and homosexuals stay in their own ranks and officiate in their churches. Not to be won-dered at, then, is the clergy's allowing

16, 17. In line with Jeremiah 23:11-14, who are the ones responsible for Christendom's condition today?

18. Since when and in what way have Christendom's clergymen been guilty of spiritual adultery?

19. How are the clergy and their church members tainted with literal immorality?

such types of immoral persons to remain among their own enrolled church members. Today the immoral condition of Christendom is notorious, "horrible," on a scale grander than in Sodom and Gomorrah. Deservedly Christendom will suffer the fate of those ancient immoral cities.

²⁰ As the most reprehensible ones among the people of Christendom, the clergy and religious leaders will drink the potion of death: "For from the prophets of Jerusalem [prefiguring Christendom] apostasy has gone forth to all the land."—Jer. 23:15.

²¹ The modern Jeremiah class was prompt and fearless in calling world attention to the clergy's apostasy. The year 1925 was noteworthy for this. At the general convention of the International Bible Students Association in Indianapolis, Indiana, on August 24-31, the main feature was the adopting of a resolution entitled "Message of Hope." The Association's president introduced the resolution after delivering his talk entitled "A Call to Action" and went on to read it. Among other things, it stated:

. . . the religionists, both Catholic and Protestant, are conspicuous for their arrogance, self-conceit, impiety and ungodliness. Therefore, it is apparent that the remedies offered by any and all of these aforementioned elements are vain, impotent and powerless to satisfy man's desire.

Catholicism claims and assumes that which justly belongs exclusively to God. Modernists deny God, deny His Word and His plan of redemption, and offer blind force* as a remedy for man's undone condition. Fundamentalists, while professing to believe the Bible, by their course of action deny the same. They teach false and God dishonoring doctrines, and together with Catholics and Modernists are allied with the political and commercial powers of

* "Blind force," that is, evolution according to Darwin's theory.

20. Why will the clergy drink the potion of death?

21. How, in 1925 C.E., did the Jeremiah class call world attention to the apostasy of the clergy?

the world in blasphemously claiming the ability to establish God's kingdom on earth. All these have combined under Satan their super-lord to push God into a corner and to dishonor his name. . . .

. . . Knowing this, and that his time is short, the Devil is trying to overwhelm the peoples with a great flood of false and deceptive doctrines and to turn their minds completely away from Jehovah. The time has come for God to make for himself a name in the earth and for the peoples to know the truth concerning the divine plan, which is the only means of salvation for the world.—Paragraphs 5, 6, 9. See *The Watch Tower* as of October 15, 1925, pages 310, 311. Note also Revelation 8:12; 16:8, 9.

²² The address "A Call to Action," with which the above resolution was introduced, said, in paragraph 28: "The time has come for Jehovah to make for himself a name in the earth. The church has a part in this to the extent of being the witnesses for the Lord." (Page 326 of *The Watch Tower* as of November 1, 1925) So, from the start of the year (1926) following the resolution and its distribution world wide in a tract, the Jeremiah class made a noteworthy effort to set the name of Jehovah before all mankind. But Christendom's clergy proved to be disrespectful of the name of God. Transferring God's name from his stated purpose to bring a whirlwind of calamity upon Christendom, the clergy kept saying "to those who are disrespectful of me [God], 'Jehovah has spoken: "Peace is what you people will come to have.'" And to every one walking in the stubbornness of his heart they have said, 'No calamity will come upon you people.'"—Jer. 23:17-20.*

* Said a United Press dispatch of September 26, 1977, from Vatican City: "The pontiff said his other sentiments as he approaches 80 concern the permanence of the Roman Catholic Church. 'The church will remain,' he said, 'remain in the middle of history's tempest. The church remains fixed and strong in the events of this world to give all the gospel and eternal salvation.'"

See page 3-A of *The Galveston Daily News* as of September 26, 1977, under the heading "Pope Paul Looking Forward To Approaching Death."

22. (a) Who serve in behalf of God's purpose to make a name for himself? (b) How have the clergy shown disrespect for God's name in the way they prophesy?

²³ However, who sent those clergymen with their promises of peace? They had not "stood in the intimate group of Jehovah" so as to learn his message accurately. Jehovah had not sent them in his name. He did not speak to them that they might prophesy what was "from the mouth of Jehovah." The religious sects of Christendom sent them forth from her theological seminaries. What would have happened if the clergy had stood in Jehovah's "intimate group" or in his council and had stuck to his disclosures? Jehovah says: "But if they had stood in my intimate group, then they would have made my people hear my own words, and they would have caused them to turn back from their bad way and from the badness of their dealings."—Jer. 23:21, 22.

²⁴ In that case there would not be the appalling Bible illiteracy that exists today among churchgoers. If the clergy themselves had taken the lead and had adhered to God's revealed Word and had taught their millions of church members to do the same, two world wars would not have occurred, wars that started inside Christendom! The responsible clergy are not concealed from Jehovah. He has not been only a "God nearby" so as not to see things far away.—Jer. 23:23, 24.

²⁵ The time has come for the people to decide whether to listen further to the "dreams" of Christendom's clergy or to listen to Jehovah's Word as proclaimed by the Jeremiah class. The time has come also for those who claim to be ministers of God to act on the issue set out in Jeremiah 23:25-28: "The prophet with whom there is a dream, let him relate the dream; but

the one with whom my own word is, let him speak forth my word truthfully."

²⁶ What does Jehovah's Word have to do with unfounded "dreams," the visions of mere human hearts? Nothing! There must be a cleavage between the two things, like a separation of grain from the straw. The Jeremiah class having God's Word within them have decided to speak it forth faithfully all the time. Out of respect for Jehovah a "great crowd" of listeners have decided to do likewise.

²⁷ For nearly 60 years now the Jeremiah class have faithfully spoken forth Jehovah's Word. Of its own self that Word has not burned up the combustible organizations of Christendom; nor has it smashed to pieces the mountainlike system of things. Yet the divine Word as proclaimed by the Jeremiah class is not a failure. When, at Jehovah's due time, in the "great tribulation," that spoken Word is carried out by him, then his own question will be answered affirmatively: "'Is not my word correspondingly like a fire,' is the utterance of Jehovah, 'and like a forge hammer that smashes the crag?'" (Jer. 23:29) So let us keep faith in that Word.

²⁸ Unlike the clergy class, those of the Jeremiah class have been sent by Jehovah to speak in his name. Nevertheless, the clergy prophets also claim to speak in his name and, hence, to tell the Bible truth. In this way Christendom's religious leaders really 'steal' away the force and effect of the calamitous message proclaimed by the Jeremiah class. True, the Jeremiah class back up their message by quoting the words, "This is what Jehovah has said." But the clergy try to add weight and the ring of truth to what they preach by affixing the words, "An utterance!" Seem-

23. (a) Did Jehovah send those clergymen, or who did?
(b) According to Jeremiah 23:21, 22, what would have happened if the clergy had stood in Jehovah's intimate group?

24. If the clergy had stood in Jehovah's council, what would not be true about Christendom's church members and involvements?

25. For the listening public, what, according to Jeremiah 23:25-28, should anyone with something to offer now do?

26. Since there must be a cleavage between dreams and God's Word, what have the Jeremiah class and the "great crowd" decided to do?

27. When, and then how, is God's Word like a fire and a forge hammer?

28. How do the clergy 'steal away God's words, each one from his companion,' and so who is against them?

ingly they speak from God. So they may use a Bible text as a pretext for preaching about politics or even war propaganda. Yet Jehovah is against such clergy prophets whom he did not send forth from his intimate group and who 'steal' words from his Bible in order to make a wrong application of them.—Jer. 23:30, 31.

²⁹ How will Jehovah show that such clergy prophets are fakes? By not fulfilling what they announce to be "an utterance!" or what they presume to speak in his name. He does not back up their falsehood. "'Here I am against the prophets of false dreams,' is the utterance of Jehovah, 'who relate them and cause my people to wander about [going astray] because of their falsehoods and because of their boasting.' 'But I myself did not send them or command them. So they will by no means benefit this people,' is the utterance of Jehovah." (Jer. 23:32) Too bad for the people!

³⁰ At this time when Christendom is not at peace with God, let us not be soothed to spiritual drowsiness or to sleep by the clergy's false assurance of peace. Let us take seriously "the burden," or weighty message, from God's Word.—Jer. 23:33.

"THE BURDEN OF JEHOVAH"

³¹ Today Jehovah's message for this political, religious, commercial system of things is heavy with doom bespeaking ruinous calamity. It is accordingly a heavy responsibility for us to declare Jehovah's message for this "time of the end." So when we answer people's questions about the destiny of this system of things, let us be sure to tell what is really the "burden" of Jehovah. When Christendom's laity class or prophets or priests ask us to

29. How will Jehovah show that such clergy prophets are fakes?

30. To what shall we give due weight—to the clergy's assurances or to Jehovah's Word?

31. When those of Christendom ask us to tell them frankly what is the weighty message for today, what are we obliged to tell them?

tell them frankly on what points the weight of Jehovah's Word bears down, we are obliged to tell them that Christendom's people themselves are to him a "burden," yes, "O what a burden!" So he will rid himself of this "burden" by abandoning Christendom to calamity.

³² People disrespectful of Jehovah do not like to accept what the Jeremiah class declare to be "the burden of Jehovah." So they do not like to remember it as something really serious. By way of a counter-proposition, they follow their prophets and priests in presenting what they insist is the real "burden" of God's Word. But their counter-proposition is not based on the Holy Scriptures. It is of private interpretation, and so it "becomes to each one his own word." To such self-opinionated religionists, the Jeremiah class say: "You have changed the words of the living God, Jehovah of armies, our God." (Jer. 23:33-36) But can they change the calamity about which the "burden of Jehovah" warns us? Aha, No!

³³ Contrary to what those of the Jeremiah class have proclaimed since the post-war year of 1919, Christendom's mouthpieces present their false, misleading message. To make it sound weighty to others, they refer to what they have to say as "The burden of Jehovah." To these religionists Jehovah has continuously sent the Jeremiah class to tell such ones not to denominate their sermons and prophecies as "The burden of Jehovah." So what response must the Jeremiah class make to such religionists? This:

³⁴ "Therefore this is what Jehovah has said: 'By reason of your saying, "This word is the very burden of Jehovah," when I kept sending to you [by the Jeremiah

32. How do the people of Christendom counter what the Jeremiah class declares to be "the burden of Jehovah," and so what do they change?

33, 34. To whose being present must the Jeremiah class call the attention of religionists who denominate their message "the very burden of Jehovah"?

class], saying: "You must not say: 'The burden of Jehovah!'" therefore here I am!" —Jer. 23:38, 39.

³⁵ Right! Jehovah is *here* as Judge of Christendom's prophets. What decision does he hand down regarding the "prophets" who classify their message as "the very burden of Jehovah" and regarding the people who take heed to the counterfeit "burden"? The Judge tells us:

³⁶ "And I will give you people to neglect, with finality, and I will desert you and the city that I gave to you and to your forefathers—from before me. And I will put upon you reproach to time indefinite and humiliation to time indefinite, which will not be forgotten." —Jer. 23:39, 40.

³⁷ Judge Jehovah's decision as thus stated was executed in Jeremiah's day, when the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem and its profaned temple in 607 B.C.E. This reproachful, humiliating experience for those stubborn, unfaithful Israelites proved that Jehovah, whom they had disrespected, had now finally given them up to neglect. He had deserted them to the consequences of their badness. It silenced the mouths of the presumptuous false prophets. But Jeremiah's mouth kept prophesying. Jehovah had not deserted him. True to this type, Jehovah will not desert the Jeremiah class when shortly he executes his weighty decision against Christendom's clergy and congregations. —Jer. 39:11–40:4; Lam. 1:1-22.

"FOOLED"—BENEFICIALLY

³⁸ Thus Jeremiah finished 40 years of telling out all that Jehovah had com-

35, 36. According to Jeremiah 23:39, 40, what decision as handed down by Jehovah must the Jeremiah class declare to those who tell or who listen to a counterfeit "burden"?

37. (a) How did Jehovah execute his judicial decision in Jeremiah's day, and with what effect? (b) How did Jeremiah then fare, and how will this be true regarding the Jeremiah class?

38. In what way had Jehovah fooled Jeremiah, and with what effect?

manded him. He found that Jehovah had overpowered him. Jehovah had proved stronger than he was. His Word had exercised a persuasive force on Jeremiah. (*Rotherham*) Due to this fact, Jeremiah had endured in divine service to its completion. In this respect Jehovah had "fooled" him. He had proved stronger than Jeremiah's weakness. Hence, Jeremiah was not hurt by being fooled.

³⁹ Here we recall Jeremiah's words after Pash'hur, the leading commissioner of the temple, released him from the stocks:

⁴⁰ "You have fooled me, O Jehovah, so that I was fooled. You used your strength against me [against my inclination], so that you prevailed. I became an object of laughter all day long; everyone is holding me in derision. For as often as I speak, I cry out. Violence and despoiling are what I call out. For the word of Jehovah became for me a cause for reproach and for jeering all day long. And I said: 'I am not going to make mention of him, and I shall speak no more in his name.' And in my heart it proved to be like a burning fire shut up in my bones; and I got tired of holding in, and I was unable to endure it. For I heard the bad report of many. There was fright all around. . . . But Jehovah was with me like a terrible mighty one. That is why the very ones persecuting me will stumble and not prevail. They will certainly be put to much shame, because they will not have prospered. Their indefinitely lasting humiliation will be one that will not be forgotten." —Jer. 20:7-11.

⁴¹ Like "a terrible mighty one" Jehovah will strengthen us in our weakness. In his strength, we shall keep on telling about his Royal Shepherd, the one called "Jehovah Is Our Righteousness."

39, 40. This recalls to our minds what words of Jeremiah after Pash'hur released him from the stocks?

41. So how shall we be enabled to keep on telling about the Royal Shepherd called "Jehovah Is Our Righteousness"?

Because They Adhere to God's Word

Honesty and sticking to Jehovah God's Word, the Bible, are rewarding in various ways. This is clearly indicated by the following experience from South Africa:

During the early 1970's, a black witness of Jehovah started a small business. Immediately, he employed fellow Christians. When he learned that tobacco endangers health, and that Christians should not use or sell it, this man got rid of all the tobacco in his store. Neighboring shop owners laughed at him, saying that he was heading for bankruptcy since tobacco was the fastest-selling product in their business places.

To the surprise of his neighbors, however, in time the Witness expanded his shop. Not only did it become bigger than theirs, but it became the area's first supermarket, with a café and dining facilities as well as a gasoline station. These developments, in 1976, worried the neighboring shop owners, who asked him how he had accomplished this in such a short time, whereas they had been struggling for years to make profits and develop their businesses.

The Witness explained that his Christian employees were reliable and would not even take a cigarette break. He also said that his workers were more honest and reliable than those of his competitors. "I have never seen a man who has sold us a product that was not what he said it was," he said. "I have never seen a man who has lied to us about the quality of his products." The Witness' honesty and reliability were rewarded. His shop became the largest in the area, and he was soon able to open another shop in a nearby town. He now employs over 100 people and has expanded his business to include a gas station and a service station. He has also opened a branch office in another town, and is currently building a new one. He is a successful businessman, and his success is due to his adherence to God's Word.

sweet from him—not because they were afraid of their employer but due to their fear of Jehovah God. Also, he pointed out that his prices were in agreement with provisions of the Price Control Board and his place was always clean.

Since then, Witness employees can be found in almost every shop in that town, and it is common for job seekers there to be asked: "To what religion do you belong?" And Jehovah's Witnesses are preferred as employees. Why? Because they adhere to God's Word and have a reputation for reliability and faithfulness.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

October 7: "The Way of Life" or "The Way of Death"—Which? ¶1-21. Page 16. Songs to Be Used: 117, 96.

October 14: "The Way of Life" or "The Way of Death"—Which? ¶22-34 and The Royal "Shepherd" of Bible Prophecy, ¶1-14. Page 21. Songs to Be Used: 115, 3.

October 21: The Royal "Shepherd" of Bible Prophecy, ¶15-41. Page 27. Songs to Be Used: 57, 116.

Answers to Questions

Is there any benefit in being a member of the Watchtower Society?

Yes, there are many benefits. Members receive free publications, including the "Watchtower" and "Christian Herald," which contain valuable information on scriptural subjects. They also receive discounts on books and other publications.

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