



The **WATCHTOWER**

APRIL 1, 1963

Semimonthly

Announcing
**JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM**

GOD'S HIDDEN WISDOM
—A SACRED SECRET

THE DYNAMIC PERSONALITY
OF THE BIBLE'S AUTHOR

COMMEMORATING CHRIST'S
DEATH

ON WHAT FOUNDATION IS THE
TRUE CHURCH BUILT?

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

THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER"

Literal towers in Bible times were elevated vantage points from which watchmen could observe happenings, warn of danger, or announce good news. Our magazine figuratively occupies such a vantage point, for it is founded on the very pinnacle of wisdom, God's Word. That elevates it above racial, national and political propagandas and prejudices, frees it from selfish bias. It is not bound by any traditional creed, but its message advances as the light on God's purposes and works increases.—Habakkuk 2:1-3.

It sees things Scripturally. When it observes this generation afflicted with greed, delinquency, hypocrisy, atheism, war, famine, pestilence, perplexity and fear, and persecution of unpopular minorities, it does not parrot the old fable about history repeating itself. Informed by Bible prophecy, it sees in these things the sign of the world's time of the end. But with bright hope it also sees opening up for us just beyond these woes the portals of a new world.

Thus viewed, "The Watchtower" stands as a watchman atop a tower, alert to what is going on, awake to note signs of danger, faithful to point out the way of escape. It announces Jehovah's kingdom established by Christ's enthronement in heaven, feeds his kingdom joint-heirs with spiritual food, cheers men of good will with glorious prospects of eternal life in a paradise earth, comforts us with the resurrection promise for the dead.

It is not dogmatic, but has a confident ring in its voice, because it is based on God's Word. It does not privately interpret prophecy, but calls attention to physical facts, sets them alongside prophecy, and you see for yourself how well the two match, how accurately Jehovah interprets his own prophecy. In the interests of our salvation, it keeps sharp and faithful focus on Bible truth, and views religious news generally.

'Be watchful in these perilous times,' God admonishes. So keep on the watch by regularly reading "The Watchtower".

PUBLISHED BY THE
WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA
117 Adams Street Brooklyn 1, N. Y., U. S. A.
N. H. KNORR, President GRANT SUITER, Secretary
"They will all be taught by Jehovah."—John 6:45; Isaiah 54:13

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The Bible translation used in "The Watchtower" is the New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures, 1961 edition. When other translations are used the following symbols will appear behind the citations:

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AV — Authorized Version (1611)	Mo — James Moffatt's version
Da — J. N. Darby's version	Ro — J. B. Rotherham's version
Dy — Catholic Douay version	RS — Revised Standard Version
ED — The Emphatic Diaglott	Yg — Robert Young's version

Printing this issue: 4,200,000 Five cents a copy
"The Watchtower" is Published in the Following 65 Languages

Semimonthly		Monthly
Afrikaans	Finnish	Portuguese
Arabic	French	Sesotho
Cebu-Visayan	German	Slovenian
Chinese	Greek	Spanish
Chishona	Ilocano	Swedish
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Watch Tower Society offices
America, U.S., 117 Adams St., Brooklyn 1, N.Y. \$1
Australia, 11 Beresford Rd., Strathfield, N.S.W. 8/-
Canada, 150 Bridgeland Ave., Toronto 19, Ontario \$1
England, Watch Tower House, The Ridgeway, London N.W. 7 7/-
Jamaica, W.I., 41 Trafalgar Rd., Kingston 10 7/-
New Zealand, 621 New North Rd., Auckland S.W. 1 7/-
South Africa, Private Bag 2, P.O. Elandsfontein, Transvaal 70c
Trinidad, W.I., 21 Taylor St., Woodbrook, Port of Spain \$1.75

Monthly editions cost half the above rates.
Remittances for subscriptions should be sent to the office in your country. Otherwise send your remittance to Brooklyn. Notice of expiration is sent at least two issues before subscription expires.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS should reach us thirty days before your moving date. Give us your old and new address (if possible, your old address label). Write Watchtower, 117 Adams Street, Brooklyn 1, New York, U.S.A.

Second-class postage paid at Brooklyn, N.Y.

Printed in U.S.A.



The WATCHTOWER

Announcing
JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM

Vol. LXXXIV

April 1, 1963

Number 7

JESUS CHRIST, the Son of God, was a great teacher and leader. He more profoundly affected the human race for good than any other man that ever lived. How different this world would be, especially Christendom, if more persons would let the question, "Would Jesus do it?" serve as a guide in their lives!

For example, would Jesus be so concerned with status in the community that he would lie, cheat and steal to achieve it? Or would he neglect reading the Bible and the worship of his Father because he had an opportunity to earn some extra money? Far from it! He lived in line with the principles he enunciated: "All things, therefore, that you want men to do to you, you also must likewise do to them; this, in fact, is what the Law and the Prophets mean." "You cannot slave for God and for Riches. . . . Keep on, then, seeking first the kingdom and his righteousness, and all these other things"—what you will eat and what you will drink and what you will wear—"will be added to you."—Matt. 7:12; 6:24, 25, 33.

Would Jesus put the preparation and enjoyment of elaborate meals ahead of spiritual interests? On the contrary, even after forty days of fasting he reminded the Tempter, Satan the Devil, that "man must

Would JESUS do it?

live, not on bread alone, but on every utterance coming forth through Jehovah's mouth." On occasion he became so interested in what he was teaching, as in the instance of the Samaritan woman at the well of Sychar, that his disciples felt it necessary for them to remind him that he was hungry: "Rabbi, eat."—Matt. 4:4; John 4:31-34.

By reason of God's holy spirit upon him in an outstanding way, Jesus was able to perform many mighty works, cure the sick, miraculously feed multitudes, calm the troubled sea and even raise the dead. But did this great power cause him to become aloof? Did he therefore consider himself better than the common people? At the same time he preached with eloquence, held the rapt attention of great crowds. But did all this success go to his head? Did it make him conceited? No, Jesus would not act like that, for he said of himself: "Take my yoke upon you and become my disciples, for I am mild-tempered and lowly in heart, and you will find refreshment for your souls. For my yoke is kindly and my load is light." He even washed the feet of his apostles, he their "Master" or "Lord."—Matt. 11:29, 30; John 13:4-14.

Consider, too, the modern emphasis on sex. Commercialism for selfish gain exploits the weaknesses of men, women and

children. It portrays sex, lawful or unlawful, as the most desirable thing in life. As a result, telling smutty stories, sexy jokes, reading pornographic novels and magazines, and attending lascivious motion pictures or prurient stage plays are the order of the day. But would Jesus do these things? Would he indulge in sexy dancing, such as the "Twist," or practice fornication? It is as though professed Christians were becoming converts to pagan phallicism or sex worship. How far removed all this is from the high standard Jesus set and lived by! "I say to you that everyone that keeps on looking at a woman so as to have a passion for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart." —Matt. 5:28.

Or would Jesus Christ, who came to earth to give his life for all the races, manifest racial prejudice? Yet today racial prejudice is rampant, and that especially in the part of the world known as Christendom. Thus a World Baptist Fellowship group congratulated the governor of Mississippi, Ross Barnett, for trying to keep a Negro from enrolling in the state university and even urged him to die if necessary in order to prevent this! Certain fraternal orders that make high professions regarding principles, such as the Masonic Order, refuse to admit Negroes, obliging Negroes to form their own segregated lodges. The Prince Hall Masons are a case in point. Do you imitate the example Jesus set in this matter or do you believe in the motto, 'When in Rome do as the Romans do'?

Or would Jesus be a religious illiterate as are so many in Christendom today, knowing little of what they are supposed to believe and why they should believe it? No, his recorded words show that he had the greatest familiarity with the Word of his Father. His familiarity with it was

such that for every occasion he was able to produce Scriptural testimony: "It is written." "Did you never read in the Scriptures?" "Did you not read what was spoken to you by God?" and so forth.—Matt. 4:4; 21:42; 22:31.

Today prayer is neglected by many; with others it is a mere routine; others, again, keep saying the same things over and over again, while public prayers are often uttered with man in mind rather than God. Would Jesus have fallen short in any of these respects? On the contrary, he prayed often and earnestly and condemned both praying for effect and saying the same things over and over again in one's prayers.—Matt. 6:5-8; Luke 6:12; 11:1; John 17:1-26.

Then again, would Jesus, like so many today, feel embarrassed when it came to discussing his religious beliefs, either because of lack of knowledge or because of the fear of man? His mental attitude was the very opposite; witnessing to the truth was the very purpose for which he came to earth, and he fulfilled that purpose. He was alert to every opportunity to honor his Father and enlighten and comfort others.—John 18:37; 4:16-26; Rev. 3:14.

Yes, if all who profess to recognize Jesus Christ as a great teacher and leader would be governed by the question, "Would Jesus do it?" what a different world this would be! What honor would come to God, what high principles would be followed and how much neighbor love would be shown! But how can you be certain whether Jesus would do a certain thing or not? By familiarizing yourself with his life and teachings, which are summed up in the two great commandments: Love God with your whole heart, mind and soul, and love your neighbor as yourself. To help you gain this knowledge is one of the purposes of this magazine.—Mark 12:29-31.

Commemorating CHRIST'S DEATH

Why? When? By Whom?

"**A** NAME is better than good oil, and the day of death than the day of one's being born." These words have seemed strange to many persons. Nevertheless, once they are understood they are seen to contain a fine truth and to have particular pertinency to the commemorating of Christ's death.—Eccl. 7:1.

Note that first the statement is made that a name is better than good oil. Obviously, it must mean that a good name, not a notorious name, is better than good oil. Thus Jehovah God is repeatedly spoken of as making a *name* for himself, meaning a good, great name: "You gave signs and miracles against Pharaoh and all his servants and all the people of his land, . . . and you proceeded to make a name for yourself as at this day."—Neh. 9:10; 2 Sam. 7:23; Isa. 63:14; Prov. 22:1.

When a human creature has such a name, then it is indeed true that the day of *his* death is better than the day of his birth. By the time of his death he has accomplished something, he has kept integrity, he has a good name with God, assuring him a resurrection. None of this is true of him the day he is born. At birth one has no merit or credit, but one can



build up merit, credit, "treasures in heaven," by pursuing a God-fearing course.—Matt. 6:20.

WHY?

More so than to any other human creature that has ever lived or will yet live do these words of Ecclesiastes 7:1 about the day of one's death being better than the day of one's being born apply to Jesus Christ, the Son of God. True, at his human birth he already had a record of faithful service to his Father in heaven, but how much he accomplished by his life and death as a man!

In the first place, he vindicated his Father's name. Satan the Devil had proudly boasted that he could turn all creatures away from Jehovah God, even as he had turned aside Adam and Eve. Jesus Christ proved Satan the Devil a liar, for, try as he would, the Devil could not turn Jesus away from his loyalty to his heavenly Father. Jesus proved himself truly wise and thereby made his Father's heart rejoice, because of giving him an answer with which to reply to the taunting Devil.—Job chaps. 1 and 2; Prov. 27:11.

Secondly, by his death Jesus provided for the redemption of humankind from sin and death. "The gift God gives is everlasting life by Christ Jesus our Lord." "There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, a man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a corresponding ransom for all." Yes, as he himself stated it: "The Son of man came, not to be ministered to, but to minister and to give his soul a ransom in exchange for many."—Rom. 6:23; 1 Tim. 2:5, 6; Matt. 20:28.

And thirdly, by his faithfulness to death

Jesus set a marvelous example for all his followers: "Look intently at the Chief Agent and Perfecter of our faith, Jesus. . . . Indeed, consider closely the one who has endured such contrary talk by sinners against their own interests, that you may not get tired and give out in your souls." "Christ suffered for you, leaving you a model for you to follow his steps closely." —Heb. 12:2, 3; 1 Pet. 2:21.

Nor would we overlook the part Jehovah played in making the day of Christ's death so memorable. Was it not he who first of all purposed that his Son take this course? And in giving his only-begotten Son did he not show the greatest love? As we read: "The love is in this respect, not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent forth his Son as a propitiatory sacrifice for our sins."—1 John 4:10; John 3:16.

Surely, in view of all that was accomplished by Jesus in his life and particularly by his death, it is most fitting that his death be commemorated. The Scriptures say nothing about celebrating Christ's birthday, or any other birthday for that matter. (In the Scriptures only pagans are reported as celebrating birthdays.) But they do record Jesus' command to commemorate his death. So the witnesses of Jehovah commemorate Jesus' death rather than his birth. The apostle Paul, having received information regarding it from Jesus himself, tells us:

"For the tradition which I handed on to you came to me from the Lord himself: that the Lord Jesus, on the night of his arrest, took bread and, after giving thanks to God, broke it and said: 'This is my body, which is for you; do this as a memorial of me.' In the same way, he took the cup after supper, and said: 'This cup is the new covenant sealed by my blood. Whenever

you drink it, do this as a memorial of me.'" —1 Cor. 11:23-25, *New English Bible*.

WHEN? HOW OFTEN?

Since it is fitting, right and a requirement for Christians to commemorate Christ's death, how often should they do so, and when? When Jesus said, "Do this as a memorial of me," or, "Keep doing this in remembrance of me," did he mean for his followers to do this daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly or annually? He himself does not specifically state, but we can reason on the subject and come to a proper conclusion. How often is any event of great note memorialized? Is it not yearly? Was not the passover celebration in commemoration of the deliverance of the Israelites from Egyptian bondage an annual one, and that at the express command of Jehovah God?—Luke 22:19; Ex. 12:14; Lev. 23:5.

Further, let us note that Jesus Christ is referred to as the passover (Lamb) sacrificed for Christians. (1 Cor. 5:7) This would suggest that his death should be commemorated as the original passover sacrifice was, namely, annually. More than that, since Jesus instituted the remembrance or memorial of his death on Nisan 14, the passover date, and also died on that day—the Jewish day beginning and ending with sundown—is it not reasonable to conclude that his death should also be commemorated in the same way, once each year on Nisan 14, there being only one Nisan 14 in the year?

Historically, for at least several centuries ever so many of the early Christians celebrated the death of Jesus Christ in exactly this way, once each year on Nisan 14, for which reason they were called "Quartodecimans," meaning "fourteenthers."

A noted historian of early Christianity, Mosheim, in his *History of Christianity, the First Three Centuries*, has the following to say about the Quartodecimans (Vol.

1, p. 529): "The Christians of Asia Minor were accustomed to celebrate this sacred feast, commemorative of the institution of the Lord's supper, and the death of Jesus Christ, at the same time when the Jews ate their Paschal lamb, namely on the evening of the *fourteenth day* of the first month.* For . . . they considered the example of Christ possessing the force of law; and, as is equally manifest, they did not conceive our Savior to have anticipated the passover, . . . but that the Paschal lamb was eaten by him and his disciples on the same day on which the Jews . . . were accustomed to eat theirs."

ITS MEANING

When, after having celebrated the passover, Jesus took some of the unleavened bread remaining and said, "Take this and eat; this is my body," did he mean that that bread had suddenly, miraculously, by a process of transubstantiation, as it is called, actually become his body? How could it when he was still in his body? Besides, if he at that time had performed such a momentous miracle, would not some mention of it have been made in the rest of the Christian Greek Scriptures? Obviously he meant that this bread represented, stood for or meant his body. It was this fleshy body that he gave for his followers.

—Matt. 26:26; 1 Cor. 11:25, NEB.

The same is true of Jesus' words, "This is my blood." He did not mean that this wine actually became his blood, for that was still coursing in his veins. Rather, the wine stood for, represented or meant his blood, "the blood of the [new] covenant, shed for many for the forgiveness of sins."

—Matt. 26:28; 1 Cor. 11:25, NEB.

"The blood of the covenant"? Yes, in Bible times blood was used to seal or make valid a covenant. Just as the blood of bulls

and goats was used to validate the old law covenant made between Jehovah God and the nation of Israel, so the blood of Jesus Christ served to validate or make effective, put into operation, a new covenant, a covenant between Jehovah God and the followers of Christ.—Heb. 8:13; 9:15-24.

WHO PARTAKE?

On the evening that Jesus instituted the commemoration of his death he also mentioned a covenant for a kingdom: "I make a covenant with you, just as my Father has made a covenant with me, for a kingdom." That covenant that God had made with Jesus Christ was originally made with King David and foretold the coming of one who would rule forever. Those who are parties to this Kingdom covenant are described in the Scriptures as the 144,000 members of spiritual Israel sealed in their foreheads, as the 144,000 standing upon Mount Zion with the Lamb, and as those who will partake of the first resurrection and rule as kings and priests of God and Christ. It is only those who are parties to both the new covenant and the covenant for the kingdom that are eligible to partake of the Lord's evening meal.—Luke 22:29; 2 Sam. 7:11-16; Rev. 7:4; 14:1, 3; 20:5, 6.

Since the number of those in these covenants is limited to 144,000 and their number began to be selected when Jesus was on earth, it follows that not all who profess to be dedicated Christian ministers today could be parties to these covenants, since they number today many times 144,000. Thus in 1962, 1,639,681 attended the commemoration of Christ's death as celebrated worldwide by Jehovah's witnesses, but only 12,714 partook of the emblems, the bread and wine, or about one out of one hundred and thirty.

The question then comes up as to how one can tell whether one should partake of

* The Jewish year is a lunar year that usually begins with the new moon nearest the spring equinox. Its first month is Nisan.

the bread and wine. God's Word says: "The spirit itself bears witness with our spirit that we are God's children. If, then, we are children, we are also heirs: heirs indeed of God, but joint heirs with Christ, provided we suffer together that we may also be glorified together."—Rom. 8:16, 17.

Those who have this witness in their lives, who have evidence that God's holy spirit is preparing them for this heavenly reward, are certain of it. They have no doubts. The realization of this heavenly goal means more to them than any earthly prospect could possibly mean. Particularly were those of this heavenly class called prior to 1931, during which time God held out only a heavenly hope to dedicating Christians. Those who have this hope should partake. But those whose hope is one of everlasting life in an earthly paradise, also promised in God's Word, clearly should not partake; for they are not in the new covenant nor in the covenant for the Kingdom.*

Does this mean that Jehovah God is unjust, unfair, partial, giving differing destinies arbitrarily to different individuals? Not at all. As the householder of one of Jesus' illustrations, who hired workers for his vineyard, said to those who complained because those who had worked but one hour received the same wages as did those who had worked all day: "Is it not lawful

for me to do what I want with my own things?"—Matt. 20:15.

We may never forget that all we receive at God's hand is undeserved kindness. No one merits anything. This is especially true of human sinners, the offspring of Adam. If Jehovah wishes to reward some with everlasting life in the heavens and others with everlasting life upon earth, that is his prerogative. Adam was not unjustly treated by being created a human rather than an angel; John the Baptist was not unjustly treated in that he became merely the friend of the bridegroom and not part of the bride class. So today, none of those who gain everlasting life upon earth will have any reason to complain. If we are wise we will appreciate what is offered us.

Then why be present if one is not going to partake of the bread and the wine? Because of what will be said on that occasion. We will be reminded of how much Jehovah God has done for us, how much Jesus Christ has done for us and the marvelous example he set for us. To come together on such a serious yet joyful occasion also serves to draw Christians closer together.

This year the witnesses of Jehovah throughout the earth will come together to commemorate Christ's death on Monday, April 8, after 6 p.m. All persons of goodwill toward God are invited to associate with them on that evening and to be benefited by what they hear and see.

* For more on this subject see *The Watchtower*, March 15, 1961, "Should You Partake of the Lord's Evening Meal?"

GOD'S DISTINCT NAME

- It is not unusual for modern Bible translators to obscure the name Jehovah by substituting "LORD" for the name recorded in the original Hebrew. It is interesting to note the comment of T. V. Moore, then pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Richmond, Virginia, who wrote in his translation and commentary on Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi, page 55: "We have retained the name Jehovah, instead of rendering it Lord, because the sacred writers make a marked distinction between this name of God and every other, and a distinction that ought not to be concealed in translation. It is his covenant title, embodying in its structure the unchangeableness of his existence as the guarantee of his faithfulness to his people. See Exodus 6:3."—January 1, 1856.

FOR over fifteen centuries it seemed that the nation of Israel was destined for all time to be Jehovah's instrument for the outworking of his purpose. They were his chosen people, and they relied heavily on their cherished Scriptures to prove it. Then, for their rulers, a disturbing thing happened. A new preacher appeared and, around him, a new movement started. After three and a half years it seemed that this new movement could be written off as a failure, for those rulers succeeded in getting rid of its leader by exposing him to public disgrace and impalement on a torture stake. His few followers went underground and met behind closed doors. (John 20:19) But was it written off? Just fifty-one days later a still more disturbing thing happened. That new movement came to life again and spread like wildfire! Its spokesman, Peter by name, after a stirring public talk, proving all his points from the Jews' own Scriptures, caused his hearers to be "stabbed to the heart," and, as a result, "those who embraced his word heartily were baptized, and on that day about three thousand souls were added" to the movement. For the next three and a half years the movement grew and spread. An extraordinary thing then occurred, taking even the movement itself by surprise. That same spokesman, Peter, took an unprecedented step and opened the door to the despised, uncircumcised Gentiles to join their ranks. Soon its members, now of many nationalities, began to be established in congregations in all that part of the world. The movement was taking shape, like an instrument that

1, 2. (a) Humanly speaking, how did the Christian movement get started and take shape? (b) As viewed by the Christian Bible writers, what questions arise?



"A physical man does not receive the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him . . . However, the spiritual man examines indeed all things." —1 Cor. 2:14,15.

could be used for a definite purpose. What did it all mean?—Acts 2:37, 41; 10:44-48.

² So far we have traced the origin and growth of this new movement as it might appear to men. Remember, however, following our previous discussion, we are interested in looking at it from the viewpoint of the Christian writers of the Greek Scriptures. Did they judge this movement, that came to be known as the Christian church, merely from a human viewpoint? Or can it be proved that their conception gives overwhelming evidence of divine inspiration and Authorship, making it impossible to give the credit to human originality? That is the challenging question we want to decide.

A SPIRITUAL NATION

³ We have previously shown how God's former instrument, fleshly Israel, was truly a nation in every respect. But what about this new instrument? Judged by human

3. What claims as to nationhood did the Christian movement have from man's viewpoint?

standards, it does not comply with a single one of the requirements we reviewed, entitling it to be called a nation. Where is its country, marked on the map? From the days of the apostles onward, true Christians have been found scattered all over the world. By no means can it be said that they were, or are, of a common stock, or that they speak the same language. As to government, true Christians have been and are to be found as law-abiding citizens under the many governments, in all the different countries, with their varying customs, traditions and institutions.

⁴ Yet those Christian writers do speak of this movement as constituting a nation, and not just a body of people united by the same beliefs. Peter says of them: "But you are 'a chosen race, . . . a *holy nation*.'" How is this true? The answer is, they are a *spiritual* nation, for, as Paul says: "Our citizenship exists in the heavens." A spiritual nation? No one had ever thought of such a thing. Such a conception was certainly not of human originality.—1 Pet. 2:9; Phil. 3:20. See also Matthew 21:43.

⁵ When, however, we appreciate the viewpoint as set forth by those Christian writers, we can see how true it is and how everything fits in. Those of spiritual Israel do have their own covenant, the "new covenant," of which Jesus is the Mediator. They are all of common stock, spiritually, for "all who are led by God's spirit, these are God's sons . . . God's children." They do all speak the same language, the "pure language" of God's Word, which "word is truth." They all come under, and give undivided allegiance to, the heavenly government, the "princely rule" laid on the shoulder of the King, Christ Jesus, who rules from the nation's capital city, the "city of

the living God, heavenly Jerusalem." Especially since A.D. 1919 have they been a true nation, for then, when again it seemed they were in danger of being written off, they experienced as it were a new birth, as Isaiah said of them in his prophecy: "Will a nation be born at one time?" Then, too, they were brought into a greatly improved condition under Jehovah's blessing, described by Isaiah as a 'land brought forth in one day,' yes, a land with well-defined boundaries of safe, relative freedom, as determined theocratically by God's Word.—Heb. 9:15; Rom. 8:14-16; Zeph. 3:9; John 17:17; Isa. 9:6; Heb. 12:22; Isa. 66:8.

⁶ This spiritual nation, dwelling in its own country, can indeed be located in God's map, his Word, but do those of Christendom appreciate this viewpoint? Not at all. Take the church of Christendom that claims to be the one, true, universal church, the Roman Catholic Church. Surely there we should find the correct understanding of nationality as it affects Christians. But what do we find? As we all know, there are French Catholics, German Catholics, English Catholics, in fact an almost endless list. Do they all view themselves, first and foremost, as members of the one spiritual nation? Is that the view they take, is that their line of action, in time of war? The answer is painfully evident. They view their nationality, with all its claims of loyalty and patriotism, from the ordinary human, fleshly level. They know no other level. How can they, if their church does not tell them? They are French, German and English first, and their religious ties have to take second place, if they are not ruthlessly trampled on, when war breaks out. The same argument applies in general to the Protestant churches.

4. In what way does the Bible call this movement a nation?

5. (a) How are the Scriptures consistent in showing spiritual Israel to be a nation? (b) What special significance has this had since A.D. 1919?

6. How does Christendom evince its utter failure to appreciate the Bible viewpoint?

⁷ Seeing Christendom's lamentable failure to appreciate the spiritual viewpoint of the Christian Greek Scriptures, how, then, are its clergy and spokesmen in position to criticize those writings and their inspiration? How true was the apostle's word when he wrote: "We speak God's wisdom in a sacred secret, the hidden wisdom . . . This wisdom not one of the rulers of this system of things came to know . . . [but] the things that God has prepared . . . God has revealed them through his spirit, for the spirit searches into all things, even the deep things of God." Yes, there is the source of inspiration of those Christian writers—God's holy spirit. Prior to Pentecost and the outpouring of God's spirit, they were not ready to entertain the idea that God was about to change his instrument for the outworking of his purpose. But after that stirring event, not only did they begin to realize that there was such a change, but their writings reveal a spiritual conception that could have come only from Jehovah himself. Do you appreciate this?—1 Cor. 2:7-10.

A SPIRITUAL TEMPLE

⁸ One more aspect in confirmation of this same subject we wish to draw to your attention. When enumerating the various things qualifying fleshly Israel as Jehovah's instrument, we noted their temple, situated on Mount Moriah in Jerusalem. This was important, for it was the center of their worship. Does Jehovah's new instrument, the Christian church, have a temple? Ordinarily, a temple means but one thing, and that is an edifice built of stone or some other material, a building dedicated to the service of a deity. In

Christendom a temple, or church, is a place of public Christian worship. In any case, it is a literal building that can be marked and located on a map. Well, where is the temple of the true Christian church? The answer is, Scattered worldwide! How so? It is a *spiritual* temple. Who had ever thought or heard of such a thing? But in that same chapter where Peter speaks of the true church as a "holy nation" he earlier speaks of the individual members as "living stones . . . built up a spiritual house [or temple] for the purpose of a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ," who is laid as the "foundation cornerstone." What a lofty conception! As Paul says: "Do you not know that you people are God's temple, and that the spirit of God dwells in you?"—1 Pet. 2:5, 6; 1 Cor. 3:16.

⁹ Again we ask, Does Christendom appreciate this? Not only has she failed to do so, but, due to her worldly-minded influence, the very word "church" has largely lost its original meaning. In the King James Version of the Bible the word "church" is a translation of the Greek word *ekklesia*, meaning a congregation called out from the world for God's purpose, as his instrument. (See Matthew 16:18; Acts 5:11; 11:22; Romans 16:5.) That Greek word was never used for a building. But today, whenever people speak about a church, or going to church, they invariably refer to a literal building, or place of worship. Immense sums of money are spent on some of these historic buildings, but who gives a thought to the spiritual health of the congregations connected therewith?

¹⁰ Rather than dismiss the subject on this somber note, we remind you of that inspiring vision recorded at Revelation,

7. From whom has God kept his wisdom hidden, but to whom and how has he revealed it?
 8. (a) What is usually meant by a temple or church?
 (b) How does the Bible describe the Christian church in this regard?

9. Does Christendom appreciate this viewpoint, and how is this proved?
 10. What is meant by God's "temple" at Revelation 7:15, and what encouragement does this give?

chapter 7. In the first eight verses we have a description of the true church, making up the twelve tribes of spiritual Israel. Then follows the description of a "great crowd," taken "out of all nations," picturing lovers of righteousness who "come out of the great tribulation" on Satan's world during this interval of God's patience. Their hope of a future life lies in a paradise earth. But what is their present position of service before God? The record says: "They are rendering him sacred service day and night in his temple." In some earthly building? Of course not. They are learning, with great joy and satisfaction, how to serve God acceptably and actively, by serving in close association with Jehovah's instrument, the faithful remnant of the true church. Not as in Christendom's churches, where very few have a direct part in their services, but in God's spiritual temple everyone is invited and helped to "always offer to God a sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of lips which make public declaration to his name." Are you enjoying a part in this service? Can we help you in this respect?—Rev. 7:9-15; Heb. 13:15.

¹¹ Thus far we have examined two of the qualifications that made fleshly Israel a chosen instrument, their nationhood and temple, and then we have seen the close correspondence with the true church, only in a spiritual way. Similarly, we could take up fleshly Israel's other qualifications, their priesthood and high priest, also their sacrifices, and show how these are to be found in God's new instrument. In each feature, however, the Christian writers reveal a new conception, a spiritual and heavenly one, including the promises given, in contrast with the writers of the Hebrew Scriptures. Surely we must admit that, though they did not write from the

same viewpoint, there is a wonderful inner harmony between the two sets of Bible writers. There is no collision.

¹² One more question. From where did those Christian writers get the authority for their conception of things? Since they put things, not on merely a higher human level, but on a completely different kind of level, a spiritual one, it would seem they must have gotten their authority from an entirely new source. But here is an amazing thing. Their writings show, time and again, that they obtained the support for their new conception from the very records of those ancient Hebrew prophets, who so many think of as men groping after God and whose writings are considered to be so down to earth and nonspiritual.

¹³ In proof of this, consider briefly the apostle's argument commencing at Romans, chapter 9, where he explains about the change in God's instrument. He shows that "not all who spring from Israel are really 'Israel.' Neither because they are Abraham's seed are they all children . . . That is, the children in the flesh [by ordinary procreation] are not really the children of God, but the children by the promise are counted as the seed," even as Isaac was a child of God's promise, being born when Abraham and Sarah were "as good as dead" as far as giving birth to a son was concerned. (Heb. 11:12) Then, with further quotations from the Hebrew Scriptures, Paul proves that God has the absolute right to choose whom he will, and that those ancient prophets foretold that God would ultimately choose a people not previously recognized, as Hosea wrote: 'I will say to those not my people: "You are my people, the sons of the living God." ' (Hosea 2:23; 1:10) With further quotations, he

12. On what authority do the Christian writers base their spiritual conception?

13. How does Paul prove his argument as to (a) the real Israel, (b) a new people called, and (c) their acceptance in God's sight?

then proves that "people of the nations," Gentiles, obtained the 'righteousness resulting from *faith*,' which righteous standing fleshly Israel failed to obtain because, says Paul, Israel "pursued it, not by faith, but as by works," that is, the works of the Law. Finally, Paul quotes what both Moses and Isaiah recorded as spoken by God against Israel: "I will incite you people to jealousy through that which is not a nation," and, "I was found by those who were not seeking me." (Deut. 32:21; Isa. 65:1) —Rom. 9:6-8, 25, 26, 30-32; 10:19, 20.

¹⁴ In every case, the seeds, or roots, of the Christian writers' conception of things were found embedded and hidden, so to speak, in the Hebrew Scriptures. For instance, Paul shows that the high priest who would provide the only acceptable sacrifice, something far better than animal sacrifices, would not be a Levitical priest, as required by Israel's law. How do we know? Because, says Paul, their Scriptures made it "abundantly clear that with a similarity to *Melchizedek* there arises another priest, who has become such, not according to the law of a commandment depending upon the flesh [or fleshly descent], but according to the power of an indestructible life, for in witness it is said: 'You are a priest forever according to the manner of *Melchizedek*.'" (Heb. 7:15-17; Ps. 110:4) Again, Stephen, in his defense before the Sánhedrin, quoted from Isaiah's prophecy, where a dwelling place for God is foreshadowed of a different and higher kind than Israel's beautiful stone temple. (Acts 7:48, 49; Isa. 66:1) Also, Paul spoke about the circumcision of the spiritual Jews (Christians) as being "of the heart by spirit, and not by a written code [of the Law]." But Moses, centuries before, had spoken about the circumcision of the heart as being more important than that

of the flesh.—Rom. 2:29; Deut. 10:16; 30:6.

¹⁵ In view of all this evidence piling up, showing such a wonderful spiritual conception on the part of those Christian writers, yet harmonizing so closely with the pattern of the Hebrew Scriptures, how can it possibly be credited to human inspiration and originality? Surely it is true that, as in the first instance, "prophecy was at no time brought by man's will, but men spoke from God as they were borne along by holy spirit," so it is also equally true that the proper understanding of prophecy can at no time be determined by men exercising their own wisdom, but it depends entirely on the Author of prophecy, speaking in his own time through those filled with his spirit.—2 Pet. 1:21.

THE WORK OF ONE MAN, OR OF GOD?

¹⁶ We turn now to a different line of evidence. Consider what happened shortly after Israel left Egypt. First, however, we remind you that 215 years previously Jacob and his twelve sons and their little ones went down into Egypt because of the famine. It was a family affair. God said to Jacob in a vision at that time: "Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I shall constitute you there into a great nation." This did not mean as a great sovereign power, but numerically, for the record says that "the sons of Israel became fruitful and began to swarm . . . at a very extraordinary rate." (Gen. 46:3; Ex. 1:7) Their whole stay in Egypt was on sufferance, for they were stock raisers, a "detestable thing to Egypt." So they dwelt "in the land of Goshen," apart from the Egyptians. Under such conditions, it would not be wise, or even possible, to develop a strong, independent national policy, or system of government. They would live

14. What further points are likewise proved as to (a) priesthood and sacrifice, and (b) circumcision?

15. The inner harmony of the Scriptures proves what, and leading to what conclusion?

16. How did Israel develop as a nation while in Egypt?

quite simply as an agricultural community, along the patriarchal lines to which they were accustomed.—Gen. 46:34.

¹⁷ Then “there arose over Egypt a new king who did not know Joseph,” and for at least eighty years, from the time of Moses’ birth to the exodus, the lives of the people were “bitter with hard slavery . . . under tyranny.” No opportunity for national development there. Then came the ten plagues and the exodus, and finally all Israel, with a “vast mixed company” that went with them, safely crossed the Red Sea—with the Egyptian hosts behind them, all dead. Less than three months afterward, ‘Israel went camping in front of the mountain (Mount Sinai).’ This was a most important period in Israel’s history. It was really the commencement of a separate and independent national existence for that people. But how did it develop, seeing they lacked experience in national and governmental affairs?—Ex. 1:8, 14; 12:38; 19:1, 2.

¹⁸ This is what happened. First, God gave the Ten Commandments, also a large number of “judicial decisions” dealing with such matters as slavery, compensation for injuries, cases of stealing, seduction, loans, and so forth, also observance of sabbaths and festivals. But this was not all. A few days thereafter Moses again went up into the mountain to receive further instructions, and “continued in the mountain forty days and forty nights.” With what result? All the evidence points strongly to the fact that Moses wrote the books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, and perhaps the opening chapters of the book of Numbers while at Mount Sinai.—Ex. 21:1; 24:18.

¹⁹ If we are to take all this record as of

human authorship, as is generally understood, then we would have to say that, within a few months, the *one man*, Moses, produced a comprehensive and detailed blueprint for every aspect of Israel’s national life, both civil and religious. Not only the fundamental laws, the Ten Commandments, and not only innumerable regulations of a civil nature, but that one man also gave written instructions, covering every minute detail, concerning Israel’s religious life and worship. This included the construction of the Ark, the tabernacle and its contents, the surrounding courtyard, garments for the priests and high priest, their installation ceremonies, including full details of the materials to be used, their color and measurements, and so forth. Besides that, in Leviticus, we have all the laws regulating the access of the people to God, and the different kinds of offerings.

²⁰ Frankly, it is impossible to attribute all this to one man. Apart from the immense amount of detail, the whole conception is of such a high order. No man or government has produced anything to equal it, or come anywhere near it. Admitted that in the patriarchal society, which God dealt with prior to Moses, there would be well-established codes of law, but much of Moses’ work was in the nature of providing for a new system of worship for a people blossoming into full nationhood. Neither can it be allowed for a moment that Moses, though “instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians,” copied from that pagan pattern of life and worship.—Acts 7:22.

²¹ Two more points are worthy of note. Whereas it often takes generations for a

17. From Moses’ birth, what did Israel undergo, leading to what important events?

18. While at Mount Sinai, how much of the Pentateuch did Moses probably write?

19. Humanly speaking, what did the one man Moses produce for Israel?

20. Why is it impossible to attribute all this to one man?

21. What further evidence proves that Moses and all the Bible writers were inspired to write by Jehovah’s spirit?

nation to evolve a system of laws and then find they have to be adjusted and altered, the laws given through Moses were subject to no such treatment, not by a hairbreadth. The other point is this. Paul says: "The Law has a shadow of the good things to come," and in his letter to the Hebrews he takes many aspects of the Law and shows how they appropriately picture "heavenly things themselves." Now, how could Moses possibly have foreseen and directed what he wrote so as to foreshadow something of which he had no knowledge? In fact, how was the apostle Paul, or any other man, by exercising his own mental ability, able to see the heavenly pattern of Jehovah's new instrument beautifully mirrored in that ancient Law? How convincing it is that both Moses and Paul, and all the other Bible writers, were inspired by Jehovah's holy spirit to write his great Book!—Heb. 10:1; 9:23.

²² After Moses, then what happened? Over fifteen centuries later another Bible writer explains how that law covenant came to be written off. He says that God "blotted out the handwritten document [or covenant] against us . . . He has taken it out of the way by nailing it to the torture stake." Then, in another place, the same Bible writer, humanly speaking, rewrites the entire law code in *one word*—LOVE! He argues and proves that "love is the law's fulfillment," and that "the entire Law stands fulfilled in one saying, namely: 'You must love your neighbor as yourself.' " This is not love as men know it, which is predominantly an emotional af-

fair, but as seen and exemplified in Jehovah himself, for, says the apostle John, "God is love." This may not be so spectacular as all that Moses produced, but it goes far deeper.—Col. 2:14; Rom. 13:10; Gal. 5:14; 1 John 4:16.

²³ Thus, from whatever angle or aspect we consider this subject, when we once get the right viewpoint we can appreciate more than ever before that indeed "all Scripture is inspired of God" and is an imperishable memorial to "Jehovah the God of truth."

We can have full confidence, not only in the authenticity of the Word, the entire Bible, but also in the certainty of the outcome of all that it has foretold. The New World society of Jehovah's witnesses, a people wholly dedicated to Jehovah and who accept his Word wholeheartedly, are right now experiencing some of these good things, and you, too, can share in them. As Jehovah himself expressed it, saying: "My word . . . will not return to me without results, but it will certainly do that in which I have delighted, and it will have certain success in that for which I have sent it. For with rejoicing you people will go forth, and with peace you will be brought in."—2 Tim. 3:16; Ps. 31:5; Isa. 55:11, 12.

²⁴ In seeking to gain a proper evaluation of any book, or collection of books, as with the Bible, it is a great aid, if not an absolute necessity, to become acquainted with the personality of the author. How can this be done? It will be worth our while to give this our special consideration as far as the Bible and its Author are concerned.

22. In what way was the law code rewritten in *one word*, and how does this compare with Moses' writing?

23. What blessings and prospects await those who truly accept the Bible as God's Word?
24. What further question arises in connection with the Bible?

SPECIAL NEXT ISSUE

Read: *Resurrection—of a Dead Body or of a Dead Soul, Which?*

THE DYNAMIC PERSONALITY OF THE BIBLE'S AUTHOR

WHEN we speak of the personality of an individual, we have in mind the various qualities and characteristics that make him a separate individual, for no two people are alike. The study of personalities of the human family is always interesting, though not always helpful, depending on the motive; but the study of the Creator's wondrous personality is of the greatest interest and help. It brings the greatest rewards. It helps us to understand his way of doing things and to appreciate his way of expressing himself in his Word, the Bible. In turn, as we more fully comprehend and admire that fine Personality, through the study of his works and his Word, it makes us want to be like him, in his image, as far as lies within us. This is an excellent thing, for as we seek to conform our own personality to be in close harmony with his, it ensures for us his favor and blessing, and that means for us life in perfect happiness.

² This line of reasoning has Scriptural support. Did not the Creator, Jehovah God, say: "Let us make man in *our image*, according to our likeness"? Did he not then say to man: "Be fruitful and become many and fill the earth and subdue it, and have in subjection" all the lower creation? For the human family to increase and live together as a great society, and at the same

"For 'who has come to know the mind of Jehovah, that he may instruct him?' But we do have the mind of Christ."—1 Cor. 2:16.

time exercise and maintain this dominion, would certainly require a measure of the qualities and characteristics seen in Jehovah himself. Personality is made up of our reasoning powers, and how we use and develop them, along with our heartfelt feelings and longings and resolves. It is a cause for endless wonder that Jehovah has so made man that, though such a tiny speck on a tiny planet, he is, nevertheless, a marvelous replica, on a minute scale, of the great Creator who exercises universal dominion.—Gen. 1:26-28.

³ It would be presumption for frail, imperfect humans to speak of studying the personality of the One who is the "King of eternity, incorruptible, invisible, the only God," and who has "established his throne in the very heavens," were it not that Jehovah, in more than one way, has made it possible. The most wonderful way in which he has done this has been in the sending of his Son to earth, to live among us for a while as a man. John makes this clear in his Gospel. He tells us about Jesus in his prehuman existence, then known as "the Word," and rightly called "a god,"

1. Why is a study of the Creator's personality of the greatest benefit?
2. In what respects was man made in God's image, and how does this throw light on the personality of man?

3. (a) How is it possible for us to make a study of the Creator? (b) What help does John's Gospel give regarding this?

a mighty one, for "all things came into existence through him." Then, after telling how "the Word became flesh," he says: "No man has seen God at any time; the only-begotten god who is in the bosom position with the Father is the one that has explained him." We could not wish for a finer help in our study than this introduction to the one who enjoyed such a close relationship with his Father, and who came to earth so that he could explain him to us.—1 Tim. 1:17; Ps. 103:19; John 1:1, 3, 14, 18.

⁴ This happy relationship is also beautifully described at Proverbs 8:22-31. After describing the initial preparations for earth's creation, God's Son, the Word, says: "Then I came to be beside him as a master worker, and I came to be the one he was specially fond of day by day, . . . and the things I was fond of were with the sons of men." What an appealing picture of family life, with a Father specially fond of his Son, and the Son, in turn, very fond of that which we know is now given into his care by his Father, those things bound up with the human family. To be assured of this one's friendly interest on our behalf is a real encouragement, and we look forward to becoming more fully acquainted with him.

⁵ As we read about Jesus in the Scriptures, what are our impressions? He was dynamic, yet mild. By general standards this seems impossible. We usually think of a dynamic person as being forceful, ambitious, overriding and impatient of anyone getting in his way, whereas we think of a mild person as being placid, not holding very strong opinions, and ready to give way for the sake of peace, rather than stand up for what is right. Due to imper-

4. What enlightenment on this is given at Proverbs 8:22-31?

5. (a) How can Jesus' personality be summarized, and why must we be careful in defining the terms "dynamic" and "mild"? (b) What fine contrast is seen in Jesus, and how is it demonstrated?

fection, our various characteristics are not properly balanced and tend to go to extremes, but this is not so with one who is perfect, as was Jesus. That which perhaps gives us the best key to his personality is the word spoken prophetically of him by David, and quoted by Paul at Hebrews 1:9, where we read: "You loved righteousness, and you hated lawlessness. That is why God, your God, anointed you with the oil of exultation more than your partners." (See Psalm 45:7.) Jesus was and is a great lover of righteousness, including a deep and tender love for those who, though imperfect, sincerely strive after righteousness. To such he is mild, peaceable, friendly and very patient. At the same time he has a strong hatred for all that is lawless, including those who prove they are willfully committed to their evil ways. As he expressed scathing denunciation for the hypocritical religious leaders of his day, who relentlessly showed murderous hostility toward "that holy and righteous one," so he likewise expresses himself to that same class today, saying: "Get away from me, you workers of lawlessness." (Acts 3:14; Matt. 7:23; 23:13-39) Jesus' personality does not change. He is the "same yesterday and today, and forever." Thus there is exemplified in Jesus the same balanced contrast as seen in Jehovah, and also as demonstrated by Jehovah's people today, the fierceness of a lion, coupled with the mildness of refreshing dew.—Heb. 13:8; Mic. 5:7, 8.

⁶ But how does all this help in gaining a better understanding of God's written Word? Well, the Bible was written for the benefit of God's friends, not his enemies. It is worth noting how Jesus spoke to his friends when on earth. What was their impression of him? It is very evident that, though acknowledged as their "Teacher"

6. How did Jesus express himself to his friends, and on what basis?

and "Lord," he did not hold himself aloof, or overawe them, intimidating them. (John 13:13) Instead, he brought them into close union with himself and made them feel at home in his presence. His manner and way of speaking contributed to that end. They found his presence refreshing, and Jesus himself gave the reason for this, saying: "Come to me, all you who are toiling and loaded down, and I will refresh you . . . for I am mild-tempered and lowly in heart." —Matt. 11:28, 29.

⁷ As Jesus spoke to his friends, so Jehovah speaks to his friends through his Word. His Word is charged with his intense and strong personality, yet mild-tempered; hence its style. Though fully accurate, scientifically and otherwise, it is not written in precise, technical terms, so that not even a critic could find any cause for complaint or stumbling. On the contrary, it is full of human imagery and illustrations, things that stir the imagination and appeal to the heart.

⁸ One interesting proof of this in the Bible is seen in the way in which personality is imputed to things that, in themselves, are not persons. This is often done in human speech, imparting a liveliness and dynamic force. For instance, we often talk about a particular plant *liking* a certain kind of soil, as if a plant has personality with its likes and dislikes. Jesus spoke in the same way. In a forceful, illustrative way, he said: "I am the door of the sheep." Still more forcefully, looking at the cup of wine in his hand, he said: "This means [is] my 'blood.'" And, in the way of imputing personality, he said respecting the holy spirit: "That one will teach you all things and bring back to your minds all the things I told you." The apostle Paul did the same with regard to God's Word

itself, speaking as if it were dynamically alive, saying: "The word of God is alive and exerts power and is sharper than any two-edged sword and pierces even to the dividing of soul and spirit, and of joints and their marrow, and is able to discern thoughts and intentions of the heart." How forceful and how salutary!—John 10:7; Matt. 26:28; John 14:26; Heb. 4:12.

⁹ No, the holy spirit and God's Word are not persons in themselves, but, so to speak, they are both charged with his personality. That is why Paul could say: "Do not be grieving God's holy spirit." We can also grieve God's Word if we go contrary to it, and can endanger ourselves and others if we mishandle that sharp, living sword. This is where we realize the benefit of the Bible in being written in the way decided on by its Author. It reflects his personality and brings him nearer to us, and enables us to get a better appreciation of him. We would not want it otherwise. Why should Jehovah accommodate his style of expressing himself to suit the critics? Even we, ordinary men and women, in many cases brought up in the doctrines of Christendom, got our eyes opened to the truth when it was explained to us from the Scriptures. The critics could also get their eyes opened if they were not so wise in their own wisdom. "For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God; for it is written: 'He catches the wise in their own cunning.'" We must keep truly humble and teachable, 'conscious of our spiritual need.' (Eph. 4:30; 1 Cor. 3:19; Matt. 5:3; John 17:17) Then we will be willing to be taught, "not with words taught by human wisdom," but by the One appointed by God, the living Word, Jesus Christ, who always taught according to

7. How does this help in gaining a better appreciation of God's Word?

8. What Scriptural instances can be cited of personality being imputed, and with what benefit?

9. (a) What benefits are gained from the way in which the Bible has been written? (b) Why are the critics unjustified and proved wrong in their attitude? (c) What is the right attitude, and what are the results it brings to us?

the written Word, the Bible. Thus, with the aid of God's spirit, we shall come to "have the mind of Christ" and shall come to "know the things that have been kindly given us by God."—Rev. 19:13; 1 Cor. 2:12, 16.

TWO REASONS FOR A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE BIBLE

¹⁰ There are two reasons why it is good to have a right understanding and appreciation of both the Bible and its Author. First, it gives us a correct picture of the true religion. The true religion is a religion of action. It is not passive, which is the impression given by Christendom in the routine way in which the Bible is generally read in the churches, clothed in black and keeping to archaic English. As a result, those who attend church get the idea that the hallmark of a Christian is respectability. Of course a Christian should be exemplary in all his conduct and ministry, but when that new movement started, with Jesus as its leader, it did not win popularity, either in his day or after Pentecost, because of the good behavior and restraint of its members. They were commissioned and empowered to be busy with a forceful message and witness, commencing in Jerusalem and spreading to "the most distant part of the earth." Even more so today, the message of the established kingdom must be "preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations" before the end of this system of things. Those who have a hearing ear do not hear just a pleading appeal, as expressed in the *Authorized Version*: "Come out of her [Babylon], my people." Instead, they get the impact of the urgent, imperative command, as accurately expressed in our *New World Translation*: "Get out of her, my people!" Those who have a hear-

ing ear take action by forsaking Christendom and fleeing to Zion, God's organization. Those of that organization, the faithful remnant of the true church with the heavenly hope, are blessed, as was Jesus, with the "oil of exultation," Jehovah's spirit. You will find their fellowship a great help and stimulus in 'putting on the new personality' and enjoying an active share in the true religion.—Acts 1:8; Matt. 24:14; Rev. 18:4; Isa. 61:3; Eph. 4:24.

¹¹ In the opening chapters of Revelation we find the second reason for seeking a true evaluation of Jehovah and his Word. We find there detailed information that sets the pattern in helping us to conform our personalities in harmony with the Word and its Author, giving us a clearer insight and keener incentive to love righteousness and hate lawlessness. Jesus fore-saw the conditions in the world at this time of the end and the consequent trials and tests that would come upon his followers. He therefore gave John a message for each of seven congregations. These messages, while appropriate locally in John's day, have their real meaning and force for *all* the congregations of true Christians in this, the "Lord's day." (Rev. 1:10) While given primarily to those with the heavenly hope (for all the promises therein are heavenly), the various conditions described, coupled with the warnings and counsel given by Jesus, apply equally to those dedicated servants of God who have an earthly hope in God's kingdom.

¹² While the promises vary, note the same appeal in each message: "Let the one who has an ear hear what the spirit says." Note also the condition that must be met, not collectively, but individually, when it says at the end of each message:

11. How does Revelation, chapters 1-3, provide special help for us today?

12. (a) What special needs are emphasized in the messages to the seven churches? (b) What comprises the new personality?

10. (a) How can true religion be defined, but how has Christendom proved false in this? (b) How is the true religion expressed today?

"To him that conquers . . ." This is coupled with the word "endurance," occurring several times in these messages, together with such expressions as: "Prove yourself faithful even to death," and "keep on holding fast." To hold fast and endure and conquer decidedly calls for a strong personality. This is not a matter of outward show, but there must be a fixed determination, arising out of a deep appreciation and love for Jehovah, a wholehearted resolve to live for him and do his will. Christ Jesus, who always delighted to do his Father's will, set the perfect pattern, and it is God's will that we should be "patterned after the image of his Son." This also means in God's image, as again Paul said: "Clothe yourselves with the new personality, which through accurate knowledge is being made new according to the image of the One who created it." What does this mean in detail? Listen! "Clothe yourselves with the tender affections of compassion, kindness, lowliness of mind, mildness, and long-suffering. . . . But, besides all these things, clothe yourselves with love, for it is a perfect bond of union." Strong-minded, yes, but there is no room here for being domineering. It is a question of having the right motive.—Rev. 2:7, 10, 13, 19; 3:11; Rom. 8:29; Col. 3:10-14.

¹³ It is only through an accurate knowledge of the Scriptures that we can appreciate and acquire the proper balance and fine contrast of the various qualities and characteristics that make up a godly personality. The apostle Paul himself serves

13. (a) How can we acquire a godly personality?
 (b) In this respect, how is Paul a good example?

as a good illustration. Before he became a Christian he was certainly dynamic, but, being blind to the truth, he was off balance and, as he himself says, he was "a blasphemer and a persecutor and an insolent man." After getting his eyes opened, and for the rest of his life, he was still dynamic, but with a different motive, and now beautifully balanced, as shown by what he writes to the Thessalonians: "We became gentle in the midst of you, as when a nursing mother cherishes her own children. So, having a tender affection for you, we were well pleased to impart to you, not only the good news of God, but also our own souls, because you became beloved to us." Ah! yes, there is the difference. He was now motivated by the spirit of unselfish and loving devotion.—1 Tim. 1:13; 1 Thess. 2:7, 8.

¹⁴ Whatever your former disposition, you need not be discouraged. The fatherly Creator who said to his Son: "Let us make man in our image," can create in you a "new personality" in their image. How? By the transforming influence of God's spirit, the "force actuating your mind," and through the influence of the written Word. The more you realize and are convinced that the entire Bible is of single, divine Authorship, the more you will appreciate the grand personality of its Author, Jehovah. In turn, that will help you to "put on the new personality . . . created according to God's will in true righteousness and loyalty."—Gen. 1:26; Eph. 4:23, 24.

14. How can our personality be remade in God's image?

COMMUNISM AND CHURCH FAILURE

In a speech to a Methodist convention in 1962 Bishop John Owen Smith deplored the failure of the church. He asserted that "communism came into being because Christianity dropped its cross, didn't want to do the difficult, but just sang its songs and said its prayers."—*The News and Courier*, Charleston, S.C., July 30, 1962.

On what foundation is the true church built?

What the Scriptures say will surprise many.
The answer is vital to you.

PRIESTS of the Roman Catholic Church

like to point to Matthew 16:18 when questions arise about identifying the true church. This scripture simply says: "You are Peter, and on this rock-mass I will build my congregation, and the gates of Hades will not overpower it." The Catholic Douay version Bible phrases this text this way: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church. And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." From those few words of Jesus, the Roman Catholic Church has concluded that there Jesus made Peter the rock foundation on which the church of God and Christ is built, that Peter became the first pope and successor of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that there the Roman Catholic Church had its beginning, making it the first church and the only true church.

Cardinal Gibbons in his book *The Faith of Our Fathers*, page 100, makes this statement: "Jesus, our Lord, founded but one Church, which He was pleased to build on Peter. Therefore, any church that does not recognize Peter as its foundation stone is not the Church of Christ, and therefore cannot stand, for it is not the work of God. This is plain." *A Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture*, published by Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1953, says: "By this revelation the Father had singled out Peter as the natural foundation for his Son's society."

But is that what Jesus meant by the words "upon this rock I will build my church"? Was he referring to Peter when he spoke those words? Was Peter to head the congregation of God?

First note, the word "church" appearing in many Bible translations does not have reference to a literal building of stone. The Bible tells us that God "does not dwell in handmade temples." (Acts 17:24) The original Greek word translated "church" at Matthew 16:18 is *ecclésia*. It has reference to a congregation or an assembly of people and not to a building of wood or stone made by men's hands. *A Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture*, page 881, makes this comment: "The 'church' (ἐκκλησία, the customary LXX rendering of the Hebrew *qahál*, i.e. religious assembly, congregation) is the new society of Christ's faithful answering to, and supplanting, the OT *qahál*. Simon is to be the ultimate authority on earth of this society."

From this Catholic authority it is evident that God had a church or an assembly or a congregation long before the time of Christ. That assembly was the Jewish nation. The martyr Stephen referred to the nation of Israel in the wilderness as an *ecclesia* or church or an assembly of God. Nor does this word apply strictly to religious assemblies. It can apply to any as-

sembly duly summoned. Luke, in telling of the mob that gathered at Ephesus in protest to Paul's preaching, refers to it as no regular *ecclesia* or assembly. (Acts 7:38; 19:29-41) At Romans 16:5 (AV) Paul says: "Likewise greet the church that is in their house." Again at 1 Corinthians 16:19 (*Dy*) he writes: "The churches of Asia salute you." It would be ridiculous to conclude that Paul was speaking of greeting a building inside another building, or that certain religious edifices were saluting these of Corinth. Rather, Paul is indisputably speaking about gatherings of Christians, an assembly or congregation of people.

Now, with this in mind, of whom was Jesus speaking when he said: "On this rock-mass I will build my congregation," or "my church"? Note carefully, Jesus does not say "Peter's church," or "Paul's church," but "my church." Jesus is here speaking about his doorstep followers. The *Catholic Commentary* makes this point clear when it refers to them as "the new society of Christ's faithful." These faithful doorstep followers Jesus calls his body, his bride, his congregation or church, and he has prepared a place for them with him in heaven. Revelation gives the number of them as 144,000.—Matt. 16:18; 1 Cor. 12:12-28; Eph. 1:22, 23; Rev. 14:1, 3.

THE ROCK OR ROCK-MASS

Who or what is the rock or rock-mass or foundation upon which the Christian congregation is built? As previously noted, Roman Catholic theologians say that the foundation is the apostle Peter. Thus *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. XI, page 746, says: "By the word 'rock' the Saviour cannot have meant Himself, but only Peter." Are these Catholic theologians correct in their conclusion?

Bible scholars will note that Jehovah the Almighty God is often referred to in the

Scriptures as "the Rock," because he is the eternal foundation of his holy universal organization. At Deuteronomy 32:3, 4 we read: "Do you attribute greatness to our God! The Rock, perfect is his activity." Jehovah God Almighty is a foundation that can never be moved. Samuel's mother Hannah in prayer said: "There is no rock like our God."—1 Sam. 2:2.

Jesus Christ is also identified in the Scriptures as a rock. In fact, Jesus identifies himself as the rock or cornerstone that the builders rejected. (Matt. 21:42) In his writings the apostle Peter testifies to this fact, saying: "Coming to him as to a living stone, rejected, it is true, by men, but chosen, precious, with God, you yourselves also as living stones are being built up a spiritual house for the purpose of a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it is contained in Scripture: 'Look! I am laying in Zion a stone, chosen, a foundation cornerstone, precious; and no one exercising faith in it will by any means come to disappointment.' It is to you, therefore, that he is precious, because you are believers; but to those not believing, 'the identical stone that the builders rejected has become the head of the corner,' and 'a stone of stumbling and a rock-mass of offense.'" (1 Pet. 2:4-8) Thus stones or rocks are used in an illustrative sense, representing individual faithful members who become a part of the Christian congregation built on the foundation cornerstone Jesus Christ.

Note how this view is also supported by the apostle Paul. He writes: Israel "stumbled on the 'stone of stumbling'; as it is written: 'Look! I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling and a rock-mass of offense, but he that rests his faith on it will not come to disappointment.'" (Rom. 9:32, 33) Now over whom did ancient Israel stumble? Was it over Peter or over Jesus

Christ? Paul shows the stone of stumbling and foundation to be Jesus Christ, not Peter.—1 Cor. 10:4.

Further, when Paul mentions "apostles and prophets," which certainly would have included Peter, he, nevertheless, refers to Christ as "the foundation cornerstone." (Eph. 2:20) Why this if Peter headed the church? Again, at Revelation 21:14 all twelve apostles of Christ are designated as twelve foundation stones. Peter is not singled out. But it says that these twelve apostles are of "the Lamb," who is the chief foundation and precious cornerstone.

THE BIG QUESTION

With the foregoing in mind, picture what took place on this occasion. The prophets had foretold the coming of the Messiah or Christ. Jesus' disciples were familiar with these prophecies. In the district of Caesarea Philippi Jesus asked them: "Who are men saying the Son of man is?" They said: "Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." Then Jesus put the question directly to them: "You, though, who do you say I am?" Peter, with his usual promptitude, replied: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." —Matt. 16:13-16.

When Peter declared Jesus "the Christ," Jesus immediately pronounced him "happy" or "blessed," because this knowledge and faith were not the result of natural sagacity, or human instruction, but a revelation from the Father. (Matt. 16:17) Others of Israel had enjoyed the same instruction but had not yet come to believe in Jesus as "the Christ, the Son of the living God." Peter had accepted what God made known. His faith and knowledge were of a spiritual and saving quality. That is why Jesus called him happy.

Peter, however, at this time, was greatly ignorant of many other spiritual truths.

He did not understand the need for Christ to die so that a ransom might be paid for believing mankind. (Matt. 16:21-23) Peter was but little acquainted with his own heart. He had certain wrong expectations. He afterward made some gross mistakes, yes, even committing sins and incurring rebukes and chastenings. (Matt. 26:31-35; Acts 1:6; Gal. 2:11-14) He had many persecutions to endure, but he died faithful. Despite his trials, Peter was "happy," because he was an earnest believer in Christ. Because he so believed, everlasting happiness was open to him.

JESUS' DECLARATION

This confession of Peter's that 'Jesus is the Christ' gave Jesus an occasion, with reference to the name Peter (Greek: *Petros*), which he had before given the apostle, to declare that "on this rock-mass" (*petra*) he would build his church.—John 1:42.

Peter's statement or confession contains a fundamental truth that all who desire life must come to acknowledge, namely, this: that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. So in effect Jesus said to Peter: 'Upon this one whom you have confessed, upon myself as a rock-mass (*petra*) will I build my church, my assembly, my congregation, of persons who are sharers of this precious faith.'

The expression "this rock-mass" has no reference to Peter, but applies exclusively to Christ, God's anointed One, whom Jehovah has laid as a sure and everlasting foundation for His kingdom organization. On this foundation, namely, on Jesus Christ, the church would stand so sure that no machinations or efforts, demonic or human, could ever subvert it. Not even the power of death could destroy the hope of those who put faith in it. The whole congregation, the 144,000, would be made more than conquerors through him who loved them.

In further proof that Jesus was here fixing in the minds of his disciples that he is the Christ, note his words after this discussion: "Then he sternly charged the disciples not to say to anybody that he was the Christ." (Matt. 16:20) So in concluding that discussion he makes no mention of Peter nor does he speak of any primacy given to Peter.

All the Scripture proof is conclusive that the building of the church or the congregation was to be, not upon the apostle Peter, but upon Jesus Christ, the "foundation" or "precious cornerstone." And Augustine admits as much. In Haydock's Catholic Bible, it says with reference to Augustine, whom the Roman Catholic Church made a "saint": "It is true S. Augustine, in one or two places, thus expounds these words, and upon this rock, (i.e. upon myself) or upon this rock, which Peter hath confessed"—not upon Peter himself, but upon Jesus whom Peter confessed to be the Christ. This shows Augustine understood it right. Archbishop Kenrick in his book *Inside the Vatican Council* says that the great majority of the "church fathers" did not apply Matthew 16:18 to Peter. Of eighty-five leading ones only seventeen held that Peter was the rock on which Christ built his church, whereas forty-four held that it was the truth that Peter spoke, while sixteen believed the rock to be Jesus himself. So not only does the Roman Catholic Church disagree with the apostle Peter, who, as shown by his

words at 1 Peter 2:4-7, taught that Christ is the foundation stone, but it also disagrees with the man whom it "sainted" and reveres as "St. Augustine" and with others of its "church fathers."

If Peter were the head of the early church or congregation, then we should find the apostles and others ascribing to Peter a place of preeminence such as the pope of Rome has today. But we find no such honor accorded to Peter by either the apostles or the other disciples. Peter never makes mention of himself as pope. Neither Paul nor any others of the Bible writers refer to any primacy of Peter. When the apostles and other older men gathered in Jerusalem to discuss the question of circumcision, we find that it was not Peter but the disciple James who summed up the matter. (Acts 15:12-21) Surely had Peter been the chief and in Christ's place he would have done so. But he did not.

Clearly, Peter was not the head of the Christian congregation. It is not built on him as its foundation cornerstone. It is built on Jesus Christ himself, the sinless Son of God.—Heb. 7:26.

Neither the early Christian congregation nor the early "church fathers" held that Peter was the rock-mass on which the church was built. For the rock-mass is none other than Jesus Christ himself. And woe be to him who even tries to lay any other foundation: "For no man can lay any other foundation than what is laid, which is Jesus Christ."—1 Cor. 3:11.

Darkness in Christendom

- Darkness hovers over mankind in both the East and the West, Christendom's religions notwithstanding. "It would be a travesty of the truth to suggest," asserted English minister Falkner Allison, "that the darkness which broods over human life in this country of ours, the darkness which results from rejecting the light, is any less than the darkness of ignorance which broods over India and the other so-called non-Christian lands."

IN STEP WITH

the Faithful Organization

As told
by A. P. Hughes

MY INTEREST in God and the Bible started when I was a boy about eight years old. I used to attend a Bible-study class in our village school in Shropshire, England. I recall our studying the life of the apostle Paul, and I came to have a desire to serve God like that. This early contact with the Bible did much to shape my life in later years.

In 1912, when I was sixteen years old, I left home to go and live in Liverpool with relatives who often talked about a coming end to this world. It was an environment for which I am very grateful. That same year C. T. Russell, president of the Watch Tower Society, arrived in Liverpool from New York and I happened to accompany my aunt to the home where he and his party were. When I was introduced to him, he asked me pointedly: "Have you given your heart to the Lord?" (It was a question he frequently asked of young people.) I did not get the full import of his question at the time, but it certainly set me thinking. I attended his public lecture, "Beyond the Grave," and soon after enjoyed happy days attending other meetings of Jehovah's people and learning more about Jehovah's wonderful purposes. In the spring of 1913 I did give my heart to Jehovah in dedication and was baptized. Thereafter I endeavored not to miss meeting with the "Bible Students," as Jehovah's witnesses were called at that time. I wanted to lay a good foundation and to build upon it solid truths. This later enabled me to stand firm in the faith when storms arose that shook many out of Jehovah's organization.

My early activities consisted of distrib-

uting Bible tracts, leaving them at the doors in the early hours of Sunday morning. The idea was that the parents would get them before they fell into the hands of children and were destroyed. It was the work Jehovah assigned us for that particular time through his organization, and it attracted many to the truths found in God's Word.—Acts 6:7.

Then came 1914 with our expectation of soon being taken from the earthly scene into heaven. Many were marking off the days until the appointed times of the nations would run out, as Jesus had foretold at Luke 21:24. However, I felt that perhaps there was something more to learn about our hope. When there appeared in *The Watch Tower* an article entitled "Now Is Our Salvation Nearer," dealing with Psalm 149, I jumped for joy. It showed that, instead of our going to heaven immediately, there was a great publicity work to be done on earth. Still, we were all awaiting the great time of trouble that Jesus had foretold.

TESTED

One day, as I returned home from a weekend in the country, I saw a newspaperman's placard that read: "War Declared!" Here, I thought, was confirmation of our hope regarding the Kingdom and its rule over the earth! (Matt. 24:3, 7) Little did I realize the events that were to

crowd in upon me in the next few years. Time and again decisions had to be made that called for faith and confidence in Jehovah's visible organization. Britain was now at war, and we young brothers in the faith had to decide what course to take. Choosing to maintain Christian neutrality, I was given a two-year prison sentence. During that time I reasoned that if I could be deprived of my liberty by a worldly power, then why could I not give myself in full-time service to Jehovah?

However, there were some problems to face. During the years from 1918 to 1922 there were many tests of faith. Many voices were being heard, all claiming to be God's channel of truth. It was the time for the sifting process that accompanied the coming of Jehovah to his temple for judgment. (1 Pet. 4:17, 18) Earnestly I prayed to Jehovah for guidance. How great the relief when I saw clearly who the "faithful and discreet slave" is! (Matt. 24:45-51) Then the second president of the Watch Tower Society, J. F. Rutherford, came to Liverpool to deliver the lecture "Millions Now Living Will Never Die." What an exhilarating experience it was to see the hall packed out, with thousands more on the outside!

FULL-TIME MINISTRY

Came 1922 and I was now able to launch into the full-time pioneer ministry. I joined Edgar Clay, whom I first got to know while in a war-time prison camp, and began a seven-year period of pioneering that I shall always number among the happiest days of my life. I served first in North Wales, then in the west of England and later in Eire. Always it was our practice to let Jehovah's organization assign our territory and always it proved to be the best.

In cooperation with the Liverpool congregation we arranged lectures in our ter-

ritory. Time and again the halls were packed to hear the lecture "Millions Now Living Will Never Die." In 1927 I was invited to take up the business-house work, calling on all the large business concerns in Birmingham. It was not easy at first and I felt unequal to it, but I soon got used to it and then felt grateful that I had responded to the invitation. On one occasion, when making a call on a leading lawyer, I stayed two hours, and he and his partner obtained ten Bible-study aids from me. Afterward I was invited to visit him and his wife at their home. These are the kinds of experiences that make the pioneer service so rich and satisfying.

During those years of pioneering I always got to the larger assemblies of Jehovah's witnesses. Some of them were like milestones along my Christian way. I will always remember 1926 and Brother Rutherford's stirring talk at the Royal Albert Hall in London. It was at this assembly that we appeared on the streets for the first time, offering the booklet *Standard for the People*. At that assembly too we received the book *Deliverance*. How it stirred me! Its highlighting Jehovah's organization, geared for the fight against the Devil and his wicked organization, did so much for me.

BETHEL SERVICE

A new chapter in my life opened when I was called to serve at the Watch Tower Society's branch office in London. I had mixed feelings when I received the letter, for my pioneer privileges were very precious to me, but in my heart I knew that my future privileges lay right there at Bethel, and that is how it has been. At the London Bethel home I have had good opportunity to witness the forward movement of the organization, keeping step with the further revelations of Jehovah's will. I marvel at the deep respect there is for his righteous requirements, regardless

of how we as individuals may be affected. I have seen many changes over the years, but one thing remains very sure to me: Jehovah is directing his servants through his "faithful and discreet slave."

When we were plunged into the dark days of World War II we were cut off from the Brooklyn office, and many types of restrictions were placed upon us. How richly our heavenly Father sustained us during those difficult days! The physical discomforts brought about by the heavy bombing of London, the food shortages with inevitable rationing, and so many other things, were more than offset by the marvelous evidence of Jehovah's direction and blessing. Never were we without the spiritual food supplied through *The Watchtower*. We had but one typecasting machine and one medium-sized press. Paper was very scarce indeed. Yet, throughout the war, we always obtained our needs. In fact, our magazine production increased greatly during the war!

To witness the love and zeal of the brothers in London and in other large cities so heavily bombed, and to see them carrying on with their Bible studies without letup were things I would not have missed for anything. There was practically no literature left, but this did not deter them from going to the people with the Kingdom message.

Additionally, there was the problem of neutrality once again, affecting not only the brothers but also the sisters. Like many others, I was asked by the authorities to leave my assigned place at Bethel and take up work inconsistent with my Christian neutrality. This I refused to do and so it was prison again for me for a few months. But prison life was not as difficult this time, for we were able to meet together on specified days for Bible study. I had the privilege, along with other brothers, of witnessing to at least three of the

prison guards who accepted the message and then dedicated their lives to the doing of Jehovah's will. One later became a congregation overseer.

I returned to the London Bethel for another year—then back again to prison for the same reason as before. However, this time pressure was applied in an attempt to break up our organization at the London office. Brother A. D. Schroeder, who was serving with us, was deported to the United States. Several of the younger members of the Bethel family had to go to prison. In all this we learned to put our trust wholly in Jehovah.

It was a great day for me and for all the Bethel family when the war ended and there was the prospect of meeting again with Brother N. H. Knorr, who was now the president of the Watch Tower Society. Unless you have experienced being isolated from the Society's headquarters for a number of years, it is difficult to imagine what it is like to have direct contact once again and to see our brothers face to face and to know the sheer joy it brings.

ON TO PROSPERITY

The undeserved kindness of Jehovah knows no bounds. I experienced this when I received an invitation to attend the first postwar international assembly, in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1946. My first opportunity to meet the Brooklyn Bethel family and to live with them for about six weeks before going on to Cleveland was a further means of fixing firmly in my mind the place the Watch Tower Society holds in the divine purpose.

The Cleveland assembly was just wonderful. To see those vast crowds all in the truth was almost unbelievable. To witness the release of the book "*Let God Be True*," which has done so much in establishing Bible truths in the minds of so many; to hear Brother Knorr give out the news that

a new Brooklyn Bethel was to be built; to observe all the other evidences of expansion and prosperity did much to open our minds to the even greater work that lay ahead. And there were more joys in store, for I have been privileged to attend three more assemblies in New York City, including the huge assembly of 1958.

Perhaps the greatest joy of all, however, has been that of witnessing the unfolding of Bible prophecies. What a joy it has been to see the great crowd of "other sheep" coming into the fold! (John 10:16) In 1939 there were just 7,000 witnesses of Jehovah in the British Isles; now there are nearly 50,000! To meet the requirements of these ever-growing numbers there has been a need for expansion in equipment. Our heavenly Father has satisfied these needs by providing us with our new Bethel home and factory in delightful surroundings in northeast London. We have the added joy of the Kingdom Ministry School here for the training of congregation overseers. It has brought me into blessed association with many personal friends, both new and old, for which I am truly thankful.

In the latter part of 1961 I was privileged to spend a week at the Bethel home in Brooklyn. It was indeed a heartwarming experience to receive such hospitality from brothers I know and love. I was also able to attend the Society's annual business meeting at Pittsburgh, the place that witnessed the beginning of Jehovah's work in these last days. I had read about the meeting in the *Yearbook* for many years, and there I was—what a blessing to be present! I felt a closeness to the great purpose

of Jehovah as I witnessed the selecting of brothers for the Board of Directors of the Watch Tower Society. How true it is that Jehovah has established an organizational structure so like that in the days of the apostles. While in Pittsburgh I was able to make another link with the past by visiting the place where Brother Russell first commenced publishing *The Watch Tower*.

I am so thankful that I have lived in the knowledge of Jehovah's purposes from those early days just prior to 1914 when all was not so clear, right on to this day; from a day when there were some doubts, to this day when the truth shines like the noonday sun. If one thing has been most important to me, it has been the matter of keeping close to Jehovah's visible organization. My early experience taught me how unsound it is to rely on human reasoning. Once my mind had been resolved on that point, I determined to stay by the faithful organization. How else can one get Jehovah's favor and blessing?

Now it is 1963. Time has passed quickly because I have kept active. How grateful I am that I was able to take the good counsel: "Remember, now, your grand Creator in the days of your young manhood." (Eccl. 12:1) My life has been very pleasant to me, and I can say with the psalmist David, "The measuring lines themselves have fallen for me in pleasant places. Really, my own possession has proved agreeable to me." (Ps. 16:6) I have no doubt that it will continue to be so as I walk in step with Jehovah's faithful organization.



Accomplishing Our Life-giving Ministry Fully

TO WHOM does Jehovah God entrust his ministry? Is it to the ones rich in this world's goods? those who are most popular? those who have graduated from a theological seminary? No, no, no! None of these factors count with Jehovah God.

He chooses those who are sincere, who love righteousness, who hunger for the truth, who are conscious of their spiritual need, who are willing to admit they can make mistakes and who are willing to learn. He chooses those who, because of faith, hope and love, have dedicated themselves to do his will and follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. To all such Paul's words apply: "Keep your senses in all things, suffer evil, do the work of an evangelizer, fully accomplish your ministry." —2 Tim. 4:5.*

What does it mean to accomplish one's ministry fully? "Fully" means completely, entirely, thoroughly. It means doing all that is required; also, doing all that one can, or to the extent of his capabilities or opportunities. He who accomplishes his ministry fully leaves nothing unattended or only half done. To accomplish one's ministry one must be conscientious, alert, fully awake to one's obligations and opportunities.

Fully accomplishing one's ministry, therefore, means devoting to it all the time one possibly can. It means buying out the opportune time because the days are wicked. There are so many demands upon one's time, so many distractions. To serve fully requires, therefore, making a working schedule of one's time and then sticking to it; not yielding to the temptation to procrastinate but always putting first the interests of God's kingdom. —Eph. 5:15, 16; Matt. 6:33.

"Fully," however, means not only quantity—not only being concerned with hour quotas—but also with quality. It means performing one's ministry effectively, thoroughly, enthusiastically. It means being both dependable and adaptable. Only then can a minister hope to get results. That means sharing in all features of the ministry, including incidental preaching, not neglecting any because of love of ease, fear of man or natural aptitude or inclination. All this, in turn, requires that one take time for both individual Bible study and congregational training for the ministry.

* For details see *The Watchtower*, May 1, 1962.

More than that, accomplishing one's ministry *fully* means going to serve where the need is great if able to do so; it means becoming a full-time pioneer minister if one is at all able to arrange his affairs so as to make room for it; and it also means serving as a vacation pioneer minister as opportunity affords.

Especially do the overseers or the presiding ministers of the Christian congregations have the obligation to accomplish their ministry fully. To be good overseers they must set the right example. They must be concerned with the spiritual welfare of those in their care and be concerned about protecting them from harm. At times a person's worst enemy may be his own fleshly weaknesses. For the overseer to accomplish his ministry fully he must be alert to admonish such a one, kindly yet firmly, if he notices him growing lax, before it is too late.

Further, for an overseer to be accomplishing his ministry fully he must be able to delegate authority to others, so that he has time for all the things he cannot so delegate, or that are best handled by himself. Otherwise, he may become so busy and so concerned with efficiency that those needing help are diffident about coming to him with their problems, or he may get so out of touch that he fails to help the weak ones.

Why should all of Jehovah's servants be concerned with accomplishing their ministry fully? Because they are serving the Great God Jehovah and he requires the best of his servants, exclusive devotion, loving him with their whole heart, mind, soul and strength, doing what they have to do with their very power. More than that, this ministry is the greatest honor that can be bestowed upon men.—Ex. 20:5; Eccl. 9:10; Mark 12:29, 30.

Is this not a life-giving ministry? By accomplishing it fully, by persevering, by continuing steadfast Christian ministers will save both themselves and those that listen to them. Yes, of this ministry it can be said, even as Paul said of godly devotion, that it "is beneficial for all things, as it holds promise of the life now and that which is to come." The more one engages in this ministry the greater one's happiness, for "there is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving."—1 Tim. 4:8, 16; Acts 20:35.

Is Western Society Christian?

ROBERT E. L. STRIDER, president of Colby College in Maine, faced this probing question in his address to the college's graduating class last June. His conclusion, that "ours is not a Christian society," can be appreciated when one considers the unchristian conduct of those who make up the Western world. Firm faith in God is rare, and few follow in Jesus' footsteps.

Danish clergyman Per Dolmer acknowledged that the vast majority of persons in his country belonged to the state church, but that this did not mean they were Christians. He said: "It must for the sake of the truth still be added that if 97% belong to the State Church, then the very greatest part live far away from faith in God, are entirely and absolutely indifferent toward Him, never think of Him, live contrary to the revealed will of God, and as for a great number of them they also die in this indifference and unbelief."

Along the same line a conversation that newspaper columnist Sydney J. Harris reports that he had with a Hindu is of interest. In his column in the Detroit *Free Press* of September 21, 1961, Harris reports that the discussion went like this: "'Since traveling in the Christian world of the West,' he said at dinner, 'I have been puzzled by my readings in the New Testament. How do you people interpret the words of Jesus?'

"What do you mean?" I asked, afraid of what was coming.

"I mean," he said politely, "how do you reconcile His plain doctrine of nonresistance with your guns and your planes and your wars every few decades? Which Christian nation has ever turned the other cheek? Who among you is willing to return good for evil? How can people who share in the good news of His message continually kill one another, while both sides are praying to Him?"

"Well," I stammered, "after all, that's a doctrine of perfection that Jesus preached.

In fact, to this course you were called, because even Christ suffered for you, leaving you a model for you to follow his steps closely. When he was being reviled, he did not go reviling in return. When he was suffering, he did not go threatening, but kept on committing himself to the one who judges righteously.—1 Pet. 2:21, 23.

Ordinary mortal men can't always live up to it."

"That I understand," he nodded, "but it should be your goal—and I can only see that you go in the opposite direction...."

"Surely the mass of Indian people are no better, morally and spiritually, than Westerners are."

"Perhaps not," he said. "All the same, we do not claim to have a special revelation from the Son of God. We do not insist that we follow the Prince of Peace, and then follow the Prince of War."

"Not everybody agrees that Jesus was a pacifist," I objected. "Some people point to his scourging the money-changers out of the temple."

"Ah, but there is a difference between scourging—as you might a disobedient child out of love for him—and wantonly killing millions of innocent men and women and children, all in the name of God. You are commanded to love your neighbors—and today, in this shrunken world, everybody is a neighbor."

"I had one defense left: my Sunday punch, if you'll pardon the expression. 'Don't we have a right, an obligation to fight against injustice and wickedness and tyranny?' I demanded.

"Yes," he said, "you must fight against it—but in your own minds and souls, for that is where it begins, not in some foreign land. When you have purified yourselves, the example of your goodness will be the most effective weapon in the world—if not for now, then in the future."

Harris concluded with the confession: "Maybe you can answer the Hindu. I could not, in all honesty." Regardless of how one may view the various arguments of the Hindu, it is evident that the Western nations are, in fact, defenseless against the charge that they have failed to follow the example set by Christ. In the true sense of the word, they are not Christian!

Questions from Readers

- Since Genesis 7:4 shows that Noah was advised seven days in advance of the exact day that the Flood would come, does this mean that God's people will be advised in advance as to exactly when Armageddon will break out?—E. G., United States.

Genesis 7:4 reads: "In just seven days more I am making it rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and I will wipe every existing thing that I have made off the surface of the ground." Noah had worked for years and years building the ark, and now, just seven days before the Flood was due to come, God told him the exact date. Why? So as to satisfy his curiosity or give him encouragement? No, but so that he could start bringing in the animals. Those seven days were just long enough to let Noah do that.

We therefore cannot construe Genesis 7:4 to mean that sometime in the future, yet well before Armageddon, Jehovah God will advise his people on earth as to when Armageddon will begin. Besides, Jesus long ago said about it: "Concerning that day and hour nobody knows, neither the angels of the heavens nor the Son, but only the Father."—Matt. 24:36.

Of course, Jesus did not say that no one ever would know. To the extent that it would be necessary for Jesus, some time in the future, to know the starting time for Armageddon so as to muster his heavenly armies for that battle, he no doubt will be advised.

But there would be no reason for those on earth to be so notified. So what is prophetic is what took place during those seven days, the entering into the ark of Noah and his family, together with all the lower animals to be spared and the bringing in of all the provisions needed for the year and ten days that they were to spend in the ark. It has been particularly since 1931 that God's people have been sharing in the work of gathering all those of goodwill toward God into the antitypical ark, the new system of things.

When Noah and his family began gathering the animals into the ark during those last

seven days it was a notification to all the on-lookers that the Flood he had been preaching about was due. So today, the ingathering work of itself serves notice to an ungodly world that the battle of Armageddon is very near and will strike within this generation. Until Armageddon does strike there is much for God's people to do in aiding men of goodwill to take their stand and enter the modern ark. So, rather than to be concerned as to just when it will begin, let all dedicated Christians heed Peter's counsel: "Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of persons ought you to be in holy acts of conduct and deeds of godly devotion, awaiting and keeping close in mind the presence of the day of Jehovah, through which the heavens being on fire will be dissolved and the elements being intensely hot will melt!"—2 Pet. 3:11, 12.

- What is the meaning of Genesis 2:19?—W. B., United States.

Genesis 2:19 reads: "Now Jehovah God was forming from the ground every wild beast of the field and every flying creature of the heavens, and he began bringing them to the man to see what he would call each one; and whatever the man would call it, each living soul, that was its name." Some have construed this text to be a résumé of what was stated in chapter one of Genesis. However, it seems to refer to something in addition to the account there rather than to the same thing. From this text it appears that even after Jehovah God had created Adam, but before he created Eve, He kept on creating lower animals and bringing them to Adam to be named. Not only Adam but also Eve was formed before the end of the sixth creative day; therefore these animals were also created before the seventh day, God's rest from creation, began.

- Who are the kings mentioned at Isaiah 60:3?—L. H., United States.

Isaiah 60:3, which is addressed to God's "woman," or organization, as appears from verse one of this chapter, states: "Nations will certainly go to your light, and kings to the brightness of your shining forth." This text is quite similar to Revelation 21:24, which reads: "The nations will walk by means of its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it."

These prophecies could not refer to worldly kings, political or otherwise, for it is not these who are coming to or recognizing God's organization, neither do they have any true glory that they could bring to it. They are not rejoicing in the spiritual prosperity of God's organization. Rather, the kings in these texts must be the ones on earth in line to become heavenly kings, kings from God's standpoint, who will rule as kings with Christ for a thousand years, sitting with him on his throne, even as he sits with his Father on His throne. (Rev. 3:21; 20:6) At the present time a remnant of this number, which totals 144,000, is still on earth and it is to these that the words of these prophecies refer.—Rev. 14:1, 3.

The nations referred to likewise would not be the political nations, for none of these *as such* are coming to God's organization. Rather, these nations are the men of goodwill from all these worldly nations, those referred to at Revelation 7:9, the "great crowd, which no man was able to number, out of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues."—See also Zechariah 8:23.

- When Elisha prayed for God to strike the Syrian army with blindness, what actually happened to them?—K. K., United States.

The account in 2 Kings 6:18, 19 sheds light on the matter, when it says: "Elisha went on to pray to Jehovah and say: 'Please, strike this nation with blindness.' So he struck them with blindness according to the word of Elisha. Elisha now said to them: 'This is not the way, and this is not the city. Follow me, and let me conduct you to the man you look for.' However, he conducted them to Samaria." If the entire army had been smitten with physical blindness they would all have had to be led by hand, but the account simply says that Elisha told them: "This is not the way. Follow me." Apparently what happened was that they were struck with mental blindness so they could not recognize Elisha or where he was taking them.

This mental blindness is recognized by psychologists. For example, William James in his *Principles of Psychology*, Vol. 1, page 48, states: "A most interesting effect of cortical disorder is *mental blindness*. This consists not so much in insensibility to optical impressions, as in *inability to understand them*. Psychologically it is interpretable as *loss of associations* between optical sensations and what they signify; and any interruption of the paths between the optic centres and centres for other ideas ought to bring it about."



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