

The WATCHTOWER

Announcing
**JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM**

APRIL 1, 1952

Semimonthly

IS GOD RESPONSIBLE FOR
WORLD DISTRESS?

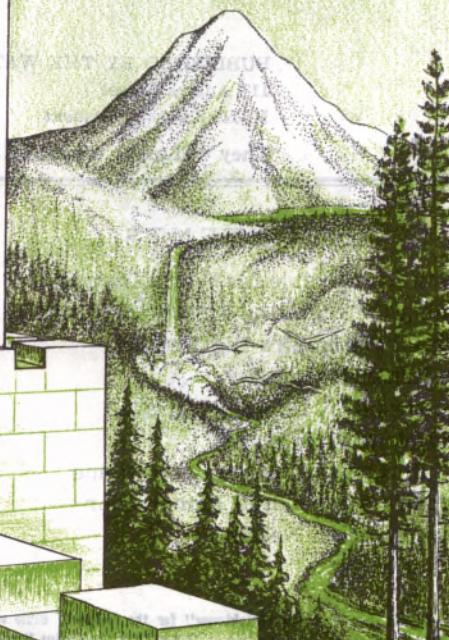
PINNING THE BLAME ON THE
ONE RESPONSIBLE

THE QURAN—A LITERARY MIRACLE?

GOOD NEWS FROM KOREA!

AN INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY
IN ROME

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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".



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

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Abbreviations used in "The Watchtower" for the following Bible versions

AS — American Standard Version	LXX — The Septuagint Version
AT — An American Translation	Mo — James Moffatt's version
Da — J. N. Darby's version	NW — New World Translation
Dy — Catholic Douay version	Ro — J. B. Rotherham's version
ED — The Emphatic Diaglott	RS — Revised Standard Version
Le — Isaac Leeser's version	Yg — Robert Young's version

Unless otherwise indicated, the Bible used is the King James Version

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JEHOVAH'S
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IS GOD RESPONSIBLE FOR WORLD DISTRESS?

"Woe for the earth and for the sea, because the Devil has come down to you, having great anger, knowing he has a short period of time."—Rev. 12:12, NW.

THE correct Scriptural answer to this question is of vital concern to all persons who hope to gain life anywhere in this universe. We must know what God wants and how we are to conform to his wishes.

² Today insecurity and trouble threaten the life of the people world-wide. Governments are unstable, fearful and tottering. Wars, famines, disease and disaster are on the increase, and the best efforts of the world's ablest statesmen do not serve to alleviate the situation.

³ Everywhere the questions are asked: Who is responsible for the mad irresistible surge toward a third world war? Who is responsible for the frenzied conscription of manpower and natural resources for war purposes all over the world? Who is responsible for the fear-inspiring war of nerves which no one claims to want, yet everyone is afflicted with? Who is responsible for the insane development of atomic energy and hydrogen power, poison gas, germs, death rays, and so forth, for the wholesale destruction of humankind? People are fearful and want to know the answers to these questions.

⁴ The democracies of the Western world disclaim all responsibility for existing con-

ditions and point to the Soviet bloc as the transgressor. The Soviet bloc, on the other hand, claims it is innocent and tries to place all the blame upon the so-called 'imperialistic nations' of the West. And so it goes, leaving the man on the street in greater confusion than ever.

⁵ Many religious leaders in all lands say that God is responsible for world distress. They say he is bringing it upon people because of their lack of support and adherence to some particular religious cult. They contend that what the world needs is more religion, and that until people wake up to that fact and embrace some one of the 265 religions of Christendom they cannot hope to have God's favor or blessing. In view of that claim, it seems well to review religion and its accomplishments to date.

⁶ Godless communism is sweeping through the earth like a prairie fire. Efforts to suppress it at one point are offset by its breaking out more extensively and intensively somewhere else. Communistic leaders are convinced that they and they alone have the only solution for this world's ills. They believe religion, as it is practiced in the Western Hemisphere particularly, is "the opium of the people". Despite this

1, 2. What threatens the life security today?
3, 4. What questions bother the people now, and what aid do they get from world rulers?

5. What answer do many church leaders have to offer the people who inquire of them regarding the cause of present-day unrest?
6. What is communism's position in regard to religion?

claim, the Communists are probably the most religious group on earth today. They worship their state with a fanaticism unknown among any other people on earth. They venerate their human leaders, past and present, with a godlike adoration; and no Bible or holy book is accepted by any other nation with greater finality than the writings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin are accepted by the Communist.

⁷ Yes, the Communists are very religious, despite their claims to the contrary. But theirs is not the pure, godly religion of the Bible. In view of this, why do they so vehemently oppose the religions of the Western world? The facts are that for hundreds of years religion dominated Russia. The czar was the head of the state and exercised great influence over the Greek Orthodox Church. Between the ruthless state and the avaricious church, the people were kept in ignorance, exploited and starved until, in sheer desperation during World War I, they turned and rent their oppressors, throwing overboard hypocritical religion and the czarist government. Poland and other predominantly Catholic countries were likewise ruled and dominated by a church-state religious combine, directed by the Roman Catholic Church, that similarly kept the people in ignorance and reduced them to serfdom. They, like the Russians, believing that God and the Bible supported such exploitation, revolted against the whole thing, and they too joined up with godless communism. Other countries, like Italy and France, where communism has made great headway, are

those where church and state, corrupt religious leaders and ruthless politicians have bled the people to the point of desperation. Many of them, in their haste, have rejected God, Christ and the Holy Bible as well as the oppressive shackles of corruption with which they were bound, being unable to distinguish between the truth of the Bible, real Christianity as taught by Christ Jesus, the pure religion, and the

corrupt and altogether devilish practices of these debased religionists and their allies.

⁸ Then viewing all of these facts dispassionately, we ask, Is God responsible for communism and all of its evils? The answer must be emphatically No! Communism was begotten, nurtured and brought to maturity by Satan the Devil through the instrumentality of corrupt religion and ruthless politics. Whether they like

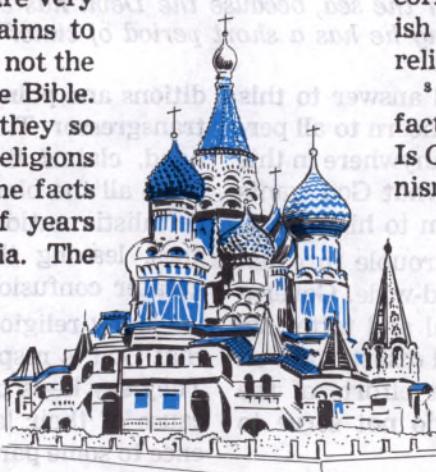
it or not, the great religions of the world, particularly those professing to be Christian, are responsible for communism. It is their offspring—this most devilish, Christless and God-dishonoring religion of them all. Yes, their own offspring, which is now rising up to destroy them.

⁹ What is the system of salvation that communism is trying to impose upon the whole earth and enslave people to? It is the strange, insane delusion that a godless, Christless, materialistic social order, which wholly ignores the Creator of our planet and the laws he established to govern his creatures, can bring peace, security and salvation to the people. Like wild, unrestrained beasts they impose their ideas and

8. Who must bear a major portion of responsibility for communism?

7. Why are Communists so unalterably opposed to Christendom?

9. What is communism's plan for the salvation of mankind?



wild dreams upon the people behind the Iron Curtain. And the other nations and peoples of the earth have to contend with this.

¹⁰ Hitler was obsessed with a similar madness. He was convinced that the Germans were a superrace, destined to rule and enslave all other peoples of the earth. Mussolini likewise had such idea. This is a type of madness that is destroying the entire human race. It has drenched the earth with the blood of millions of soldier boys in two world wars; it has brought death and indescribable anguish to countless thousands of innocent and helpless women and children. And on it goes in its insane drive toward a third world war, sacrificing other millions on the insatiable altar of selfishness.

¹¹ If the position is maintained that communism is responsible for these frightful conditions, then corrupt religion, which gave birth to communism, stands condemned as mankind's greatest enemy. No one can rightly charge God with these conditions. God has had no part in her maneuverings and sinful compromises with politics.

¹² Are we of the Western Hemisphere free of corrupt religion and thus the agent of salvation for mankind? According to our newspapers and magazines, our radio commentators and our Senate investigating committees, we in the United States are controlled by organized crime, corrupt politicians and powerful lobbyists, partly by gangsters within the United States and partly by

10, 11. What effect have such teachings and schemes had on the peoples of the nations now and in the past?

12-15. Are the peoples of the Western Hemisphere free from the influences of corrupt religion? What shows whether?

gangsters in Italy and other parts of the world. These gangsters make and break politicians at will, corrupt our legislature and our judicial departments; and at some points even invade the executive department of the government itself. They control or exercise a dominating influence in practically every avenue of industry, commerce and labor. They traffic in drugs to a point where they are making drug addicts of untold thousands of the nation's teen-age children, besides the many adults. They drive many of them to commit murder and robbery, and others to prostitution, in order to obtain the supply of drugs necessary to appease the mad cravings such drugs create.

¹³ When these inhuman gangsters kill off one another in order to protect or perpetuate their devilish traffic, investigation reveals that they too were nurtured under the influences of corrupt religion, which religion joins in glamorizing their trade. Five priests are reported to have participated recently in the funeral of one such executed gangster.

¹⁴ No, we are not free from corrupt religion. Our forefathers fled European shores to get away from it and to have freedom to worship God according to the dictates of their own conscience. But today false religion's crime-stained hands overshadow our land, corrupting our institutions and our children. Corrupt religion has caught up with us here in the United States and in every other so-called "democracy" of the earth.

¹⁵ Yes, what we have viewed is our democracy in operation. We may eulogize our Bill of Rights and praise our Constitution, but it is the democracy that peo-



ple see being carried out in everyday life by which they judge the democratic form of government. Because people in Europe, Asia and Africa see such corrupt dealings in the democratic form of government, they are afraid of it. And who can blame them? This is the thing they think we are trying to superimpose upon the nations of the world.

¹⁸ The foregoing factual description of world conditions and their immediate causes is presented dispassionately and truthfully in order to make a proper appraisal of the conditions and ascertain who is responsible for world distress. There is nothing in the evidence so far to indicate in any way that Jehovah God was and is now responsible for world distress.

¹⁷ Well, is that the end of the road? Are these frightful conditions to be with us always? Where do we go from here? It will not do to take the position that some do and say, 'I give up, I quit, we cannot do anything about these conditions.' Certainly we cannot turn to alcohol, as some do, or to one of the many kinds of dope to deaden our senses and drown our fears. Nor can we, as some of the younger generation do, throw up our hands, saying, "The future holds nothing worth while for us; so let's live for today, since tomorrow we may be dead." No, rather, this is a time for clear, calm, sober thinking and action.

TO THE BOOK OF ANSWERS!

¹⁸ For every effect there must be a cause; and there is a cause for the present world unrest and distress even though world leaders do not seem to be able to ascertain what it is and uproot it. The cause can be discerned and the pathway to security, peace and life uncovered, if we look for

16. Why is this frank appraisal of world conditions made?

17. What does this time call for?

18. Is the cause of present world distress discernible, and, if so, how?

them in the proper place. That place is the Bible, the Word of the true and living God, the Creator of this planet earth and the human creatures upon it. Despite the vacillating and compromising attitude of the so-called "Christian" world leaders, we have no apology to offer for our position in this respect. The Bible alone contains the true answer.

¹⁹ Let us turn to it now, not with prejudice or with skepticism, but with an honest and sincere desire to find out what it has to offer in answering our question, "Is God responsible for world distress?" We want to find out if what is said therein is old-fashioned and inappropriate for our modern age, as claimed by some clergymen, or whether it contains logical, practical truth.

²⁰ At Isaiah 1:18 (AS) we are invited thus: "Come now, and let us reason together, saith Jehovah." Our God is not a tyrant, but is a just, wise and loving God, who appeals to our reason. His mind or will for mankind is expressed in his Word, the Bible.

²¹ Accepting his invitation now, we open up that wonderful Book, and we find that it pulls back the curtain and gives us a glimpse of Jehovah and the marvelous relationship that has existed between him and all his intelligent creation from the time this planet earth was created up to and including the present time. At Job 38:4, 6, 7 (4S) we read: "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? Declare, if thou hast understanding." "Who laid the corner-stone thereof, when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?" At that time not one discordant note was to be found anywhere in Jehovah's universal realm. Only joyful acclamation hailed this, the creation of earth, as another of Jehovah's majestic purposes.

19, 20. How should we approach the Bible in order to get its correct answer to our question?

21. What vision of Jehovah's relationship with his creatures of past times does the Bible reveal?

All acknowledged Jehovah's supremacy and rightful lordship. Peace, unity and oneness of purpose were the heritage of all. One religion, the pure worship of Jehovah, was accepted by all.

²² After the planet had undergone the development processes described in the six creative days, mentioned in Genesis the first chapter, man was created. He was made in the image of God, as expressed at Genesis 1:27, and was made a member of that glorious family of God.

²³ Here was something new in God's great creation, a creature, an intelligent, earthly creature in his own image, with procreative powers to reproduce his own kind. This creature Jehovah provided with a perfect companion and a beautiful home in a paradise which provided for all their physical needs. These were all man's; his as long as he acknowledged the fatherhood of God and obeyed his laws. He was provided with a wonderful self-perpetuating body, in that it had the ability to rebuild or repair itself as rapidly as it wore out. But to do that the mind and body of man must function in accordance with the divine laws of Jehovah God. By being obedient to his Creator, it would then be possible for him to live on in perfection forever.

²⁴ He gave man the marvelous faculties of seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling and feeling. When these were exercised in conjunction with his intelligence or ability to reason, they enabled him to enjoy fellowship with his Creator and with the other earthly creatures over which he was appointed to have dominion. Moreover, Jehovah gave him the power of understanding, so man might appreciate and operate according to His own great principles of justice, wisdom, love and power. Indeed it was rightly said that man, in possessing all these

22. After this planet underwent the development described in Genesis, chapter 1, what happened?

23, 24. Describe some of the wonderful things Jehovah did for man whom he created.

qualities, became the earthly image of his Creator. Yet man was a free moral agent. While he could understand and appreciate these marvelous principles, he was not so made that he could function only according to their operation. No! Using his will and freedom of choice, he could either accept or reject them as he saw fit.

²⁵ Jehovah expressed his will or law which was to govern man. Obedience to it would mean life; disobedience, death and the loss of all the blessing of living. Genesis 2:15-17 (AS) reads: "And Jehovah God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And Jehovah God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

²⁶ Jehovah exhorted his human creatures to love one another, to be patient, tolerant and helpful. He denounced injustice, hypocrisy, and all evil deeds of one to another. In addition, he provided these newly created members of his family with an overseer or covering cherub. It was his duty to see that the divine law and requirements of Jehovah were properly respected and, undoubtedly, to instruct and enlighten this human pair on the marvels and wonders of the great family of God, of which they were members, they being the visible earthly part.

²⁷ All of this creative work covered many, many centuries. But throughout it all there is not a thing anywhere to indicate that Jehovah was unjust, unloving or unwise. Nowhere was he responsible for bringing distress upon his creatures. God is love, and justice is the foundation of his

25. What rule of action did Jehovah provide for man?

26. What good counsel did Jehovah provide for mankind, and what provision was made to assist him in following Jehovah's law?

27. Was there anything in the operations of Jehovah up to man's creation to indicate cruel or unjust action?

throne. Wisdom is the essence of his every action, and his almighty power is always exercised in full accord with his wisdom, love and justice.

SOURCE OF WORLD DISTRESS

²⁸ Where then did world distress come from? On this that great book, the Bible, is clear and straightforward. In no way does it try to becloud the issue, for it tells us that the covering cherub, who was placed in Eden as overseer to Adam and Eve, became a rebel. He revolted against Jehovah and his righteous system of things and he drew our parents, Adam and Eve, into the rebellion with him. In Ezekiel 28:12-18 (AS), under the figure the 'prince of Tyre', we are given a frank description of the revolt and Jehovah's judgment against this leader of it.

²⁹ "Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Thou wast in Eden, the garden of God; . . . Thou wast the anointed cherub that covereth: and I set thee, so that thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; . . . Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till unrighteousness was found in thee. By the abundance of thy traffic they filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore have I cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God; . . . Thy heart was lifted up because of thy beauty; thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: . . . By the multitude of thine iniquities, in the unrighteousness of thy traffic, thou hast profaned thy sanctuaries; therefore have I brought forth a fire from the midst of thee; it hath devoured thee, and I

28, 29. What does the Bible have to say regarding the source of rebellion and world distress?

30. How did the covering cherub set out to deceive man?

31. What did Satan inaugurate by the course he advocated for Adam and Eve?

have turned thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee."

³⁰ Thus in clear, forceful and understandable phrase Jehovah tells us of the beginning of rebellion in the universe. The first step in the rebel's plan was to turn aside from the service and devotion of God these newly created human creatures of earth. Under the title of 'the serpent' he set out on his deceptive mission. To Eve he accused Jehovah of trying to keep her and Adam in ignorance for a selfish purpose. He contended that Jehovah was actually out to exploit them. Genesis 3:4, 5 (AS) reads: "And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil." Other scriptures indicate that he challenged Jehovah's supremacy, such as Job 1:8-12 and Job 2:2-6, where the record shows he contended that Jehovah could not place upon this earth human creatures who would be faithful to Him under a real test.

³¹ In all this Satan the Devil was inaugurating a new religion. Here was the beginning of corrupt religion, which professed that security, salvation, peace and happiness were obtainable only by defying God and exalting and worshiping oneself. Because of his joining in this rebellion, man was rejected and cast out of God's holy family. He lost his beautiful home and his perfect faculties; and his senses and sinful body became so degenerated he finally died, as Jehovah decreed he would.

32. Put on the complete suit of armor from God that you may be able to stand firm

against the machinations of the Devil; because we have a fight . . . against

the wicked spirit forces in the heavenly places.—Eph. 6:11, 12, NW.

PINNING THE BLAME ON THE ONE RESPONSIBLE

THE issue precipitated back there at the beginning of human creation was: Who is right, Jehovah or the rebel Satan? Who is supreme? To whom do we owe allegiance? That issue has faced the human family from that day until the present day. Adam's own family was split on the issue, for his son Abel took his stand on God's side while Cain chose Satan the Devil's side of the issue, even to the point of murdering his brother. Enoch walked on God's side. Noah and his family chose Jehovah's side also. But the great mass of the people set themselves against God and took the Devil's side.

² Genesis the 6th chapter tells us that some of the angels joined in the issue by leaving their heavenly estate to materialize as men on earth and took wives for themselves from among the daughters of men. Their offspring were hybrids, who became bullies and filled the earth with violence. They too joined Satan's side of the issue. At this time, some 1,500 years after the rebellion and Adam's defection, Jehovah sums up the situation with these words: "And Jehovah saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. . . . And Jehovah said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the ground; . . . But Noah found favor in the eyes of Jehovah."—Gen. 6:5-8, AS.

³ Jehovah executed his decree against

wickedness by the great flood, which destroyed all human creatures, except Noah and his family, who found favor in His eyes because they upheld clean worship of Jehovah and obeyed his commands. (Gen. 6:9-18, AS) The flood wiped the slate clean of corruption and debauchery.

⁴ We pause here to ask, Who was responsible for world distress in Noah's day? Surely not Jehovah. By the execution of his righteous decree, he destroyed corruption and unrighteousness. No, the facts clearly establish that Satan the Devil, who started the rebellion and perpetuated the revolt, was the one responsible. Jehovah, by the execution of his purposes when his due time arrived, exhibited his majesty, supremacy and ability to meet any emergency. Those same events clearly showed up Satan to be a liar, a weakling incapable of helping or preserving those who put their trust in him. Psalm 145:20 (AS) states: "Jehovah preserveth all them that love him; but all the wicked will he destroy."

⁵ After the flood the issue continued, Who is supreme? The lessons of the flood were gradually lost sight of. The human family, with the passing of each generation, fell more and more from the perfect standard Jehovah created in Adam. They became easier prey for the Devil. Shortly after the flood they commenced to multiply on the earth again; and as they journeyed eastward, Satan the Devil induced them to defy God again. Once again the Devil's false

1. What issue has faced the human family from Adam's day until now?

2. 3. (a) Who, in addition to the human family, did Satan draw into this issue? (b) With what effect upon mankind?

4. Upon whom does the judgment in Noah's day place the responsibility for that world's distress?

5. Did the flood of Noah's day permanently settle the issue of who is supreme?

religion that salvation comes only by defying God was used. He induced them to build a city with a tower whose top would reach to heaven. They may have reasoned the tower would be so high they could not be destroyed by a flood. They did not believe Jehovah God when he said, at Genesis 9:11 (AS): "And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of the flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth."

⁶ Jehovah, recognizing that, united with one language, they were only corrupting themselves and co-operating to their own destruction, confused their language and scattered them abroad throughout the earth. With their language confused, it was difficult for them to carry on their evil practice and they were forced to restrain their activity.

⁷ Through the course of time, Jehovah selected Abraham as his friend and Abraham's seed as the line through which all the families of the earth were to be blessed. Genesis 12:1-3 (AS) reads: "Now Jehovah said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will show thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, . . . and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." (2 Chron. 20:7) Through Abraham's great-grandson Joseph Jehovah preserved the nation of Egypt from a great famine (Gen. 41), all of which placed Egypt deeply in debt to Jehovah and to the Israelite Joseph, Jehovah's servant. The Pharaoh that then ruled Egypt acknowledged such to be the case, but as time went on another Pharaoh arose who knew not Joseph. (Ex. 1:8) This Pharaoh was also a servant of the Devil and a devotee of false religion, which is

sponsored by the Devil. He chose to defy Jehovah and resist his will. Exodus chapters 1 to 14 describe this resistance in detail. Chapter 5, verses 1 and 2, reads: "And afterward Moses and Aaron came, and said unto Pharaoh, Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness. And Pharaoh said, Who is Jehovah, that I should hearken unto his voice to let Israel go?"—AS.

⁸ The Lord God brought nine plagues upon Pharaoh and Egypt, in which he manifested his supremacy, power and majesty. In each plague Pharaoh begged release, assuring Moses and Aaron that he would do as the Lord God directed, only to defiantly change his mind and attitude as soon as the plague was relaxed. Then Jehovah brought the tenth plague upon Pharaoh and the Egyptians, executing the firstborn in all Egypt, from the firstborn of the king on down to the firstborn of the most menial slave in his domain, and even down to the firstborn of the cattle. This jarred Pharaoh loose from his hypocritical complacency. He then let the Israelites go, in fact, he rushed them out. But after the Devil worked on him, stirring up within him retaliatory vengeance and selfishness, he determined to bring them back and to hold them for his expansion program. His avariciousness overcame his fear and he gave chase to bring them back. Jehovah, however, came to the rescue of his people and delivered Israel through the Red sea. Unrepentant and hardhearted, Pharaoh and his Egyptian army were destroyed in the sea. Pharaoh in the practice of devil religion tried to get glory, fame and salvation by opposing and defying Jehovah. He failed miserably.

⁹ The next world power, Assyria, followed a course similar to that of Egypt.

6. What steps did Jehovah take to deter the downward trend of mankind?

7. (a) What did God do for the preservation of Egypt?
(b) How did Egypt later show her lack of appreciation?

8. How did Jehovah display his majesty and supremacy upon rebellious Egypt?

9. What was the effect of devil religion on Assyria?

Their king, Sennacherib, after subjugating many nations of the world, except Judah, chose to challenge the supremacy of Jehovah and subjugate Judah also. After giving the Judeans an opportunity to display their faith by standing firm against the bombastic and sacrilegious charges of the heathen monarch, Jehovah sent forth his angel during the night and slew 185,000 Assyrian soldiers and sent their king home in disgrace, where he was murdered by his own sons as he worshiped before his heathen god. (2 Kings chapters 18 and 19; 2 Chronicles chapter 32) Thus another haughty monarch and his nation sought glory and exaltation via devil religion, only to have all their efforts come to nought.

¹⁰ The third world power, Babylon, and her king suffered a similar fate and for the same reason. Jehovah exalted Babylon by using her in the days of Nebuchadnezzar as his instrument for punishing Israel for her sins. Nebuchadnezzar himself became puffed up thinking he had made Babylon the mighty nation she was. However, the Lord brought him to his senses by forcing him to dwell with the beasts in the field and to eat their food for seven years until he learned that the Most High Jehovah rules in the kingdom of men and gives it to whomsoever he wills.—Daniel chapter 4.

¹¹ However, it remained for Nebuchadnezzar's son, Belshazzar, after he became king, to add the crowning insult to Jehovah. On one occasion, when he had a great feast for his princes, his wives and his concubines, which was amidst drunken revelry, he had the sacred vessels of Jehovah's temple (which his father was permitted to carry off at the fall of Jerusalem) brought forth for the celebration. And, to show his contempt for Jehovah, he had all drink toasts to the gods of silver, gold, brass,

iron, wood and stone. But in the midst of the revelry a hand appeared and wrote on the wall "MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN". What was the meaning of this? Daniel interpreted the words and let it be known that they signified Jehovah God had numbered the days of Belshazzar and he and his kingdom would soon be destroyed. He had been weighed in the balances and found wanting; his kingdom was divided and given to the Medes and Persians. In that night Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans was slain and Darius the Mede took the kingdom. (Daniel chapter 5, AS) The Devil's religion failed again.

NOT GOD'S RESPONSIBILITY

¹² All of these world-shaking events brought much distress and sorrow to the people. Surely Jehovah could not be held responsible for them or be accused of causing that world distress. In every case he punished the aggressors and delivered the innocent and righteous. In each execution, Jehovah displayed his majesty, power and righteousness, as well as real love, in working for the best interests of all people. While, on the other hand, the Devil and his religion were suffering one ignoble defeat after another.

¹³ In the days of Jesus, the Devil and devil religion sank to their most despicable depth. During the preceding four thousand years it had been amply demonstrated that the Devil was wholly incapable of fulfilling any one of the defiant claims he had made. On the other hand, Jehovah had met every issue with glorious success without sacrificing principle or honor. Now Jehovah was about to display his great faith in his own arrangement by giving his most valuable treasure, and also the thing nearest and dearest to his own heart, in vindication of

10, 11. How did Babylon respond to the mercies Jehovah accorded her?

12. Can Jehovah be held responsible for the distress coming upon these world powers?

13. How did Jehovah demonstrate great confidence in his arrangements in the time of Jesus?

his way and in behalf of condemned humans who were enemies of his through wicked works. Luke 2:8-14 (NW) reads: "There were also in that same country shepherds living out of doors and keeping watches in the night over their flocks. And suddenly Jehovah's angel stood by them . . . and they became very fearful. But the angel said to them: 'Have no fear, for, look! I am declaring to you good news of a great joy that all the people will have, because there was born to you today a Savior, who is Christ the Lord, in David's city. And this is a sign for you: you will find an infant bound in cloth bands and lying in a manger.' And suddenly there came to be with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying: 'Glory in the heights above to God, and upon earth peace among men of good-will.'" Jehovah declared publicly, in advance, his complete confidence in Jesus and the work he would do.—Isa. 42:5-7; 53:11.

¹⁴ Surely the Devil, realizing the futility of his efforts, would not let his human dupes go and permit them to gain enlightenment and live. No, not the Devil. As soon as he could he organized his forces to counteract the goodness and mercy shown by Jehovah. With his false beacon star he led the astrologers to seek the newborn King. They were sent for by Herod for the purpose of helping him vent his hatred and aiding him in his plan for the child's destruction. Outmaneuvered by Jehovah so that his own efforts were frustrated in that regard, Herod became furious and, in his efforts to destroy Jesus, he had all the

boys in Bethlehem two years old and younger murdered. There was no limit to which he would not go in order to do away with Jehovah's provided savior for mankind.

¹⁵ From the time of Jesus' immersion onward the real battle began. Jesus came and presented himself to John the Baptist, as foretold by the psalmist (Psalm 40:7, 8): "Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." It was written in the volume of Jehovah's holy book, the Bible, that this deliverer would 'bruise the serpent's head'; that he would 'bless all the nations of the earth' and that he would be the prophet and leader of the people.—Gen. 3:15; 22:18; Deut. 18:18, 19.

¹⁶ Now Jesus publicly declared he had come for the purpose of fulfilling all of these great prophecies.

The success of that undertaking meant the end of Satan the Devil and all of his plans, and the Devil knew it. From that very moment, commencing with his forty days in the wilderness, until he was impaled on Calvary, Jesus was opposed, persecuted, maligned, and misrepresented by the Devil and his dupes. The Devil tried desperately to thwart the benevolent purposes of Jehovah and to destroy his Servant. But, as in the past, his efforts came to an inglorious end. Though Jesus died an ignominious death at the hands of Satan's dupes, Jehovah raised him up the third day and exalted him to his own right hand, while the Devil's



14. After four thousand years of futility, was Satan now willing to permit man to embrace Jehovah's blessings?

15, 16. What precipitated the great persecution at the baptism of Jesus and afterward?

agents who persecuted Jesus, from Judas to the high priest, were wiped out by A.D. 70. All of this brought great distress not only upon the faithful Servant of Jehovah and his associates but upon thousands of others who were being deprived of God's gracious provisions for them. Who was responsible for world distress at that time?

¹⁷ From the days of Jesus until now (a period of over 1,900 years) the pages of history run red with the blood of faithful servants of God who, like Jesus, took their stand on Jehovah's side of the issue of supremacy and published Jehovah's provision for salvation through Christ. They were brutally murdered and persecuted in the Roman arena, through the catacombs, under the crusaders, by the demonic Inquisition, in the horrible concentration camps of Hitlerized Germany and at the present time in Russian salt mines. All of these dupes were instigated by the same Devil who inflamed their passion by propaganda and demon influence to oppose God, to murder Jesus, and to hound his followers to death. In all this, faithful men of all ages have proved the Devil a liar and demonstrated that Jehovah God can place men on earth who will be faithful to him.

¹⁸ From this angle it is not difficult to appreciate how the ego of men like Kaiser Wilhelm, Hitler, Mussolini and Stalin can be inflamed to believe that they are supermen who can, by adopting devil religion and defying God, rule the world. These are the type of mad world leaders who, in this our day, are drenching the earth in human blood. Each works for the Devil's one purpose: "I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; . . . I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High."—Isa. 14:13, 14, AS.

17. What have been the experiences of all those who have taken their stand on God's side during the past nineteen centuries?

18. How does this enable us to appreciate how world leaders of the present and immediate past became inflamed with world conquest ideas?

¹⁹ But the next verses of that prophecy will have their fulfillment on the god and invisible ruler of these nations of the earth today just as they did upon Belshazzar, king of Babylon: "Yet thou shalt be brought down to Sheol, to the uttermost parts of the pit. . . . thou art cast forth away from thy sepulchre like an abominable branch, clothed with the slain, that are thrust through with the sword, that go down to the stones of the pit; as a dead body trodden under foot. Thou shalt not be joined with them in burial, because thou hast destroyed thy land, thou hast slain thy people."—Isa. 14:15-20, AS.

²⁰ Nations, unitedly or separately, who persist in following the Devil and devil religion are bound for destruction. There is no way of escape. Lest there be any further doubt in that respect let us consider the testimony of Jesus Christ through his servant John, as found in Revelation 16:13-16 (NW): "And I saw three unclean inspired expressions that looked like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the wild beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet. They are, in fact, expressions inspired by demons and perform signs, and they go forth to the kings of the entire inhabited earth, to gather them together to the war of the great day of God the Almighty. . . . And they gathered them together to the place that is called in Hebrew Har-Magedon."

²¹ The source of these demon-inspired messages is the Dragon, the wild beast and the false prophet. The Dragon is identified by Jesus at Revelation 20:2 as the Devil and Satan. In Revelation, chapters 13 and 14, he identifies the wild beast as the organization of war-mad, godless and wild nations of the earth who superimpose their devil religion upon the people. And the

19. What is their foretold end to be?

20, 21. What does Revelation 16:13-16 (NW) show to be the sources of demonic teachings that are destroying the old system of things?

false prophet identifies itself as the dual world power of Britain and America, who teach and advocate that the combine of the nations of this earth into the League of Nations or United Nations, advocating and practicing devil religion in one form or another, is the only means for salvation. That teaching is false and brands them as false prophets. It is from these combined sources that devilish propaganda comes, which is bringing such great distress upon the people. Rather than look to God for direction and help, they exalt man and his ideas. Note how their conduct and teachings contradict the Word of God. Jesus states at Matthew 23:12 (NW): "Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted." And 1 Peter 5:6 (NW) reads: "Humble yourself, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time."

²² Therefore, after reviewing the evidence and considering the facts, it is very clear that Jehovah God is in no wise responsible for world distress. Rather, the Devil, his demons, the beastly world rule and the false prophet system, which the Devil is using to foist his devil religion upon all the peoples of the earth, are guilty before God and man for world distress. Truly Revelation 12:12 (NW) has said of this time since A.D. 1918: "Woe for the earth and for the sea, because the Devil has come down to you, having great anger, knowing he has a short period of time."

WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT

²³ However, while the obtaining of this information is vital and important, that, in itself, will not bring us salvation. We, as individuals, must do something about it. What? What did Noah and his family do at the time of the flood? (Genesis chap-

22. After reviewing all the evidence, what is our conclusion?

23. Is simply the obtaining of this knowledge all that is required for salvation?

ters 6-9) What did Moses, Aaron and the Israelites do in Egypt? (Exodus chapters 5-14) What did Hezekiah, Isaiah and the nation of Judah do when faced by Sennacherib? (2 Kings chapters 18, 19) What did Daniel do when he was called before Belshazzar? (Daniel chapter 5) What did Jesus and the disciples do? Read the testimony and find out for yourself. In terse phrase their attitude is summed up in Genesis 15:6, Romans 4:3 and James 2:23. They believed God and it was counted to them for righteousness. They exercised faith based upon that belief and did what the Lord God directed them to do. That is all you have to do today. Find out what the Lord's will is for you as expressed in his Word the Bible and do it.

²⁴ This is going to take courage, faith, and a strong conviction based upon a knowledge of God and his purposes. Therefore the study of his Word the Bible and the Bible helps which the Lord is now providing through the Watchtower Society is very necessary. These publications alone point to God's kingdom as the one and only hope of salvation. This is going to be no easy task. Those servants of God in past times had to draw courage from their convictions and demonstrate it even to death in many cases. So with you today. Prove for yourself that God is right, and stick to it. What if it does cost you your present life? The issue is: Do you want to die on God's side assured of a resurrection and endless life in perfection in Jehovah's kingdom or die condemned and executed of God as a rebel on the Devil's side without any hope of life in the future? Jehovah is now giving all the privilege of choosing life or death.

²⁵ To the kings and rulers of the world Jehovah now says, as recorded at Psalm

24. (a) Is the maintaining of integrity easy today?

(b) What must be our stand respecting the issue?

25-27. What is Jehovah's message today to the rulers? To the meek? To everybody?

2:10-12 (AS): "Now therefore be wise, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve Jehovah with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the son, lest he be angry, and ye perish in the way, for his wrath will soon be kindled. Blessed are all they that take refuge in him."

²⁶ To the meek and humble peoples of the earth who love righteousness he says: "Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation that hath no shame; before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of Jehovah come upon you, before the day of Jehovah's anger come upon you. Seek ye Jehovah, all ye meek of the earth, that have kept his ordinances; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye will be hid in the day of Jehovah's anger."

—Zeph. 2:1-3, AS.

²⁷ And to everyone he says at Zephaniah 3:8, 9 (AS): "Therefore wait ye for me, saith Jehovah, until the day that I rise up

to the prey; for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger; for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy. For then will I turn to the peoples a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of Jehovah, to serve him with one consent." So listen to the pure language of Bible truth that his witnesses are talking and join with them in calling on his name with praise and in serving his cause in vindication of his rightful sovereignty over the earth and all the rest of the universe. In that way you may be hid and preserved clear through the universal war of Armageddon and enter into the new world where righteousness and meekness will be the rule for all humans who live. That world will never come into the calamitous distress of this present wicked world, for it will be the lovely everlasting world of God's creation by Jesus Christ.



A Small Christian's Big Decision

¶ Hero worship has been long with this world, though not approved by the Bible. It shows that worship is properly given only to Jehovah God and his royal Son, Christ Jesus. (Rom. 14:11; Eph. 3:14; Phil. 2:10, 11) It shows that the Christian must neither bow to images nor make images of even such good men as the apostles. (Ex. 20:3-5; Acts 10:26) Bowing, even to kings, cannot be justified by saying they represent the government. The three Hebrews received God's blessing for not bowing before what was also an image of the government.—Dan. 3:1-30.

¶ Recently this issue produced a big problem for a little 7-year-old Christian named Doreen in Vancouver, British Columbia. She was selected out of 10,000 students to present flowers to Princess Elizabeth. Thrilled over the honor and the large picture of her in a Vancouver newspaper, Doreen's spirits were dampened when she learned that she must bow to the princess in violation of God's instructions. Permitted by her parents to make up her own mind on the matter, she first decided the honor was too great to give up, then reconsidered and told the school authorities that Christ was her King and that she could not bow to creatures.

¶ A Vancouver newspaper (the *Daily Province*) confused the matter, saying first that her refusal was "because she became frightened", then that she had "probably been influenced by the family's religious views", and finally that it was a disturbing surprise to the school officials. Most certainly Doreen's parents can rejoice to see their daughter turn down false worldly honors to obey her everlasting Father, Jehovah God. In doing so she set an example that all Christians can well follow.

The Jubilee Trumpet

CAUSE the trumpet of the jubilee to sound . . . and proclaim liberty throughout all the land." (Lev. 25:9, 10)* That proclamation, according to Jehovah's law given by the hand of Moses, was to be made once every fifty years on the day of atonement. It meant the freeing of Israelite slaves, the returning of ancestral estates to their rightful owners, the reuniting of families and even giving the land a rest. What happiness that proclamation brought with it and how eagerly the Israelites who had lost their land, their liberty or their loved ones must have looked forward to it! The jubilee was prophetic in its meaning and therefore is of great interest to us today.—Rom. 15:4; Heb. 10:1.

Most persons think of the ideal liberty in terms of democracy or self-rule, and particularly since World War I have the peoples of the world clamored for this liberty. But serious flaws are becoming more and more apparent in this liberty, while its very life is being threatened by totalitarian enemies.—2 Pet. 2:19.

Jehovah God is a God of proper liberty, and such liberty he gave to our first parents in Eden. However, due to selfishness they lost their liberty and came into bondage to Satan the Devil, once a mighty angel whom God had placed in charge of man and who made himself Satan by his rebellion against Jehovah. To keep control of mankind he built a powerful organization, consisting of not only selfish human creatures, but also demons, angels who, like himself, had rebelled against God.—Genesis chapter 3; Ezek. 28:13-18; 2 Cor. 4:4.

By their disobedience our first parents

* For further consideration of this subject see *The Watchtower*, August 1, 1951.

also brought themselves and their offspring into bondage to sin. "Every doer of sin is a slave of sin." And sin caused death to rule as king over mankind. Surely no human government could possibly offer men liberty from Satan and his organization, from sin and from death. But Christ Jesus can and does: "If the Son sets you free, you will be actually free."—John 8:31-36; Rom. 5:12-14, 20, 21; 6:23, NW.

How is it that Christ Jesus can offer this liberty to man? Because he has both the legal right and the power and authority to do so. By dying on the torture stake he bought the human race with his own blood, thereby providing the legal basis for freeing man from sin's condemnation and its penalty. The pouring out of holy spirit on his followers fifty days after his resurrection was proof of that fact. Since then God has been selecting a body of 144,000 members to share heavenly resurrection and glory with Christ Jesus and to reign with him.—Acts chapter 2; Heb. 9:12, 14; Rev. 14:1, 3; 20:5, 6.

Although at his resurrection Jesus received all power and authority, he had to wait for God's due time to exercise it in behalf of mankind. Bible prophecy shows this time came in 1914, when war took place in heaven and Satan and his demons were cast down to the earth.—Matthew chapter 24; 28:18; Heb. 1:13; Revelation chapter 12.

Soon will come the complete destruction of Satan and all his organization, visible and invisible, and complete freedom for all lovers of truth and righteousness. Now is therefore the time to proclaim liberty to all of earth's inhabitants. Will you do your part?

The Quran— A Literary Miracle?



"The Watchtower" herewith begins a series of articles dealing with the Quran (Koran), under the following headings: "The Quran—A Literary Miracle?" "The Quran—Confirmatory of Previous Scriptures?" "The Quran—Harmonious with Itself?" and "The Quran—of God or of Man?" Throughout this series comparison will be made with the Bible. While these articles deal with the Muslim viewpoint, they will prove of real value to others by reason of the comparison of the Bible with what has been termed its closest rival, the Quran.

SUPPOSE you started out on a long journey, and at a crossroad chanced to meet a friend whose destination was the same as yours. This friend, upon hearing of the route you are taking, at once tries to convince you that you are going in the wrong direction. Would you become angry with him because he implied that you, as well as those with you, had made a mistake, and so strike him a blow, and then continue on in your course? Of course not!

Rather, each of you would calmly state his reasons why he thought his way was the right way and then the two of you would doubtless make a comparison of the sources of your information. For, after all, both of you want to get to your destination, do you not?

The foregoing well illustrates the way we should view this series of articles which will discuss the Quran and compare it with the Bible. Muslims and Christians alike are traveling on life's road, and both are confident that they are going in the direction that leads to eternal life in happiness. Yet they are heading in opposite directions because they are consulting differing sources of information; the one following the guidance of the Quran, the other that of the Bible. Which is right?

Before going any farther let us note that no one should judge the Bible by any of the popular religions of so-called Christendom, for they do not properly represent it. In

fact, Christendom has absolutely no right to the name "Christian", as her doctrines, her crusades, her wars, her politics, her commercial exploitation, her racial discrimination and oppression of the peoples are as far removed from what Christ Jesus taught and practiced "as the east is from the west". So let Muslims not reject true Christianity and ignore the Bible simply because of the abominable record that an apostate Christendom has made upon the pages of history.

The Quran, as all Muslims well know, was given to them by Muhammad, an Arabian who was born in the latter part of the sixth century, in Mecca, and died at Medina, June 8, A.D. 632. At about the age of forty he was convinced that he had received a message from the angel Gabriel together with a call to make known that there is 'no god but Allah [that is, The GOD] and that Muhammad is his prophet'. For the remaining twenty-three years of his life he professed to receive many more such messages or revelations, which he dictated for others to write down, as he himself, it is held, was illiterate. Shortly after his death these were compiled from white stones, skins of animals, ribs of palm leaves and the breasts (memories) of men, and became known as the Holy Quran.

As copies multiplied various readings sprang up, causing serious disputes. So some twenty years later another official

copy was made and all previously existing copies were committed to the flames. For about twelve centuries the Quran has had very little change in text.

The Quran (Arabic for "the recitation" or "the reading") is not quite as large as the "New Testament" and so is about one-fourth as large as the Bible. It consists of 114 chapters, revelations or *suras*, which vary in length from three to 286 verses, the verses themselves varying from one to twenty and more lines.

With few exceptions the Quran is written in the first person, with Allah as the speaker. According to its own testimony the "Mother of the Book" exists in God's presence and was revealed to Muhammad "in slow, well-arranged stages, gradually" by "The Holy Spirit [Angel Gabriel, who] brought the revelation from thy Lord in Truth, in order to strengthen those who believe, and as a Guide and Glad Tidings to Muslims". (*Muslim*, meaning one who has surrendered himself to God) Its being a divine revelation is stressed throughout the Quran. See Sura 2:89, 97; 6:19; 16:102; 17:105, 106; 25:32; 43:2-4, *Ali*.*

THE QUESTION OF AUTHENTICITY

What proof did Muhammad have to offer that these suras did indeed come from the one true God? Two thousand years before, when Moses was asked to go to his people with a message from God, he immediately saw the question of authenticity: "But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice; for they will say, Jehovah hath not appeared unto thee." Jehovah solved that problem by empowering Moses to perform three signs. Seeing these proofs of authenticity, "the people believed."—Ex. 4:1-31, *AS*.

And for the next forty years the Israelites witnessed many, many more miracles. Particularly was divine power manifested

at the time of the giving of the law: thunder, lightning, fire, smoke, trumpet sound and earthquake; all combined to testify that Moses was not an impostor but was indeed a divinely commissioned prophet.—Exodus, chapters 7 through 15; 19:16-18; Deut. 8:14-16.

When Christ Jesus came, the same question of authenticity arose, and again it was answered unequivocally. So much so that he was able to send to John the assuring report: "The blind are seeing again, and the lame are walking about, the lepers are being cleansed and the deaf are hearing, and the dead are being raised." And so to the religious leaders of his day Jesus could say: "If I am not doing the works of my Father, do not believe me. But if I am doing them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works."—Matt. 11:5; John 10:37, 38, *NW*.

Why, even the scoffing, hypocritical and malicious religious leaders received a sign, that of Jonah, or of Jesus' resurrection after he had lain in the grave for three days. And his followers did even greater signs in that they performed them over a wider area and for a much longer period of time.—Matt. 16:1-4; 28:12-15; John 14:12; Acts 1:3-11; 19:11, 12; 1 Cor. 14:22; 15:1-20.

Both Moses and Christ Jesus were used to introduce new systems of things and each established himself as God's prophet by the performance of many signs. But where were the signs establishing Muhammad as God's prophet and proving that God had introduced a new system of things in Arabia in the first part of the seventh century A.D.? Could Muhammad say, as did Jesus: 'If you do not believe my message, believe my works, signs, miracles?' No, he could not, for he had none; none to establish the authenticity of his message.

Time and again this fact is admitted as his listeners accuse Muhammad of impos-

* *A. Yusuf Ali Version*, 1946 Edition.

ture and forgery. See Sura 2:118; 10:38; 11:13; 17:89-93; 21:5, 6, *Ali*. In view of the many signs the previous prophets had performed, did his listeners not have a right to ask: "Why is not a sign sent down to him from his Lord"? (Sura 6:37; 13:7, *Ali*) But they were told: 'Certainly signs are in the power of God: but what will make you realize that if Signs came, they will not believe?' "We refrain from sending the Signs, only because the men of former generations treated them as false."—Sura 6:109; 17:59, *Ali*.

Repeatedly his listeners were told that Muhammad was merely a warner; but that was only begging the question; they wanted proof that Muhammad was indeed God's warner by the performance of signs. True, some in former times did not believe in spite of signs, but that did not keep God from sending signs by his prophets. And neither was that fact used by Christ Jesus as an excuse for not giving proof of his divine commission by the performance of signs.—Sura 3:180, 181; 5:36; 9:71, *Rodwell*.*

THE MIRACLE OF THE QURAN

In striking contrast with the former prophets who thus "came [to their people] with clear proofs of their mission", the only sign to which the Quran points (Muslim tradition to the contrary notwithstanding) is that of the literary merit of the message itself. "Do they say, 'He forged it'? Say: 'Bring then a Sura like unto it.'" And again: "Say, 'If the whole of mankind and Jinns [Spirits] were to gather together to produce the like of this Qur-an, they could not produce the like thereof.'" (Sura 2:23, 24; 10:37, 38; 17:88, *Ali*) Say Muslim commentators: "It challenges comparison by its beauty." "None but God could inspire spiritual truths in such noble language."

There are many beautiful passages in the Quran, especially those dealing with God's attributes, such as the earlier and shorter suras. And no doubt its exalted message in rhymed prose had the greatest attraction for the Arabs at a time when anything that could be strictly called a book may not even have existed in their own language.

Yet it cannot be denied that its various parts are of very unequal value. Great literature is not repetitious, but in the Quran time and again the stories of Adam, Moses, Christ Jesus and others are rehearsed, and ever to the same purpose. In Sura 55 the expression (verse) "Then which of the favours of your Lord will ye deny?" occurs no less than 31 times in a total of 78 verses. (*Ali*) Three out of every four suras warn of hell-fire and punishment after death, and two out of three bring up the subject of its authenticity.

Even more serious is the lack of coherence in the Quran. There is little coherence between the suras, they being placed in order of length, beginning with the longest ones, although these were written last and compare unfavorably with the first ones. The suras themselves often seem to be a conglomeration of verses, a factor which makes the Quran extremely difficult to understand correctly, for as one authority, A.-Q. H.T. Muhammad, expresses it: "Whoever will give his opinion respecting the [Quran] must be able to discover which Meccan verses are mixed up with Medina Suras and which Medina verses are confounded with Meccan Suras." Is great literature "mixed up" or "confounded"?

Coherence is also frequently lacking between the titles and the suras themselves. Sura 29 is entitled "The Spider" although only passing mention is made of this insect in the middle of the sura. The same is true of Sura 16, "The Bee," and of Sura 27,

* Note: Verse division varies according to version.

"The Ant." In the longest sura, No. 2, "The Heifer" or "The Cow", we find only some half a dozen verses of 286 dealing with that animal.

The *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Volume 16, 1907 edition, devotes two pages to a discussion of the literary weaknesses of the Quran (Koran), such as violation of spelling and interruption of thought to gain rhyme, the rhyming of such indelicate subjects as that relating to woman's menstrual periods, omission of indispensable links, superfluous verbiage, etc. Compare Arabic text of Sura 95:2 and 37:130 with 23:20; 6:85 and 37:123, *Ali*. Nor is the Quran free from grammatical errors.

For the historian Carlyle, who had the greatest admiration for his hero-prophet Muhammad, and therefore could not be accused of prejudice, it was incredible and inconceivable that anyone should consider the Quran a literary miracle. Said he, among other things: "It is as toilsome reading as I ever undertook. A wearisome, confused jumble, crude, incondite, . . . written, so far as writing goes, as badly as almost any book ever was."

And Gibbon, the author of the monumental work *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, who incidentally was a very harsh critic of so-called Christendom, in his description of the Quran, while admitting that it has some beauty, goes on to say that he was wearied by its "endless incoherent rhapsody of fable, and precept, and declamation", adding that "the divine attributes exalt the fancy of the Arabian missionary; but his loftiest strains must yield to the sublime simplicity of the book of Job, composed in a remote age, in the same country". And to which may be added the sermon on the mount, the book

of Isaiah, 1 Corinthians chapter 13, and any number of the Psalms and the parables of Jesus.

But, objects our Muslim friend, you overlook the fact that Muhammad was illiterate, and no illiterate person could have produced such a work. True, Muhammad may have been unable to read and write, but the fact remains that he was a very successful businessman who procured in marriage the hand of his employer, a wealthy and cultured widow. His illiteracy would account for the literary weaknesses we have noted in the Quran.

Nor can it be argued that the translation is at fault. Truly great literature will show through a translation, as is the case with the Bible, which is great literature in any language. Besides, the defects we have noted of repetitiousness, lack of coherence, faulty rhyme, etc., are all inherent in the original Arabic text.

Finally, note the testimony of Islam's history on this matter. In the compilation of the Quran under the direction of Zaid Ibn Thabit, a contemporary of Muhammad, was the question of authenticity of the various suras and verses decided on literary merit? Not at all, but upon the oaths of those presenting the suras. Nor was opinion always unanimous. Some of the "Companions", associates of Muhammad who survived him, expressed the strongest doubts that suras 1, 113 and 114 belonged in the Quran. Clearly, literary merit was not the determining factor with them.

Truly, in view of the facts presented it cannot be claimed that the Quran is divinely inspired because of its being a literary miracle. For an examination of other claims for the Quran we refer the reader to succeeding articles in this series.





Good News from KOREA!



The following is a report by a Watchtower Society missionary who was in South Korea at the time of the invasion of that republic. He was later evacuated by the United States Army to Japan. Now, back in Korea, he has this encouraging report about the increase, faith and integrity of Jehovah's witnesses in that war-torn land.



THE last time I was in Korea was in June 1950. Then there was just a handful of Jehovah's witnesses in all Korea and only one company, located in the city of Seoul. Now after one and a half years of war and privation in which many brothers have gone hungry, suffered from exposure, lived in caves and in trees, were injured, and some were killed, the company of Jehovah's witnesses has increased to where there are company organizations now, not only in Seoul, but in Taegu, Chonju, Kunsan, Quejon, and Pusan; also, the good news of God's kingdom is being made known throughout all South Korea and in places where it has never before been preached.

In Pusan 25 to 30 meet regularly and 8 new ones were baptized the first week that I returned to Korea. In Taegu there are 25 meeting regularly, and 12 new ones were baptized this year. In Kunsan 20 are meeting and 13 new ones were baptized. In Chonju 20 are assembling and 5 were baptized. In Quejon 7 assemble regularly and 2 were baptized. In Seoul only a few sisters remained, but they kept on preaching, and 40 attended the meetings regularly. Last week the company servant was permitted to return to Seoul, and 56 were in attendance.

On November 17, 1951, I started to visit the above-mentioned places. I received special mail orders from the Army to visit Seoul. The brothers were surprised to see me. They hugged and kissed me and felt my legs and arms to

see if I was in good health. They arranged that I stay with them in their homes. I appreciated this, because it was very cold in Seoul. The Koreans heat their homes by placing a pot of burning charcoal or by lighting a wood or coal fire under the *undul*, or floor. This heats the floor and the room. The Koreans eat, sleep and sit on the floor. The floor is always wiped very clean with a damp cloth. The custom is to give the guest the place right over the firebox. The foreigner, not being used to this custom, sometimes finds he has been given a literal "hot-seat". The Korean publishers are pleased when the missionaries partake of their style of living with them. At night the floor is wiped clean and the pads and comforters are spread out to make a very warm but rather hard bed. But after a month or two your bones become accustomed to it.

That afternoon we walked through the city of Seoul to the missionary home. Almost all the big buildings, except those partially repaired by the military, are nothing but shells. The city was as quiet as the country. The only traffic was military. In the distance I could see the missionary home. The buildings all around it

were completely demolished, but the missionary home was standing there; however, not without damage. It had been hit by a shell in one corner, leaving a two-foot hole in the brick wall. All windows had been blown out, the ceiling plaster was down, most of the doors had been torn off, and the wiring was removed, but the house was still repairable and usable. We were surprised to find a few tables and chairs, a refrigerator and part of the washing machine, which the Reds no doubt found too cumbersome to carry away. Everything else was gone.

SOME WERE KILLED

In front of the missionary home was a large hole. I was told that a newly baptized sister and her son, who later was baptized, had their home destroyed and they moved into the basement of the missionary home. When the Communists knew that they were going to have to evacuate the city, they rounded up all persons they considered questionable and killed them. They questioned the five persons, the sister and her son and three other members of the family, living in the basement of the missionary home, and when their answers did not appeal to them they stood the sister and her family in front of the house and shot them down. The young brother was not shot, but he fell with the others and was left for dead. The sister and other members of her family were killed instantly. The hole in front of the house was their grave until the liberation.

That evening about thirty-five of the brothers (mostly sisters) met to hear a service talk and arrangements for group witnessing the following days. The next morning 18 persons turned out for group witnessing. Many new ones were inaugurated into the preaching work. Seoul had been averaging 9 publishers since the last evacuation, but before the week was out

24 publishers had reported and the high average for the month of 29 hours per publisher had been obtained. Those sisters that had remained in Seoul had worked hard in preaching to others the message of Jehovah's established kingdom and now they were realizing their fruitage.

While in Seoul I met Kim Kwang Je, a journalist with whom I had studied. When Seoul was captured the first time, Kim was kidnaped by the Reds and taken to North Korea. At Pyongyang he escaped and went to volunteer to the U. N. forces. (He had not up to that time made a dedication to do God's will and had not been immersed.) The South Koreans would not believe him and accused him of being a Communist. He was sentenced to death. Before execution he got to talk to an American officer and explained to the officer that he was a Christian and that he had studied the Bible with me; also that he was studying to become one of Jehovah's witnesses. The officer checked to see if I had been in Seoul, etc., and reasoned that Kim could not be a Red and want to be one of Jehovah's witnesses at the same time. So he set Kim free. He is very grateful to the Watchtower Society, because he credits the Society and our Bible study with having saved his life. We have resumed our study now, and I believe he will soon dedicate himself to do God's will and become a publisher for the Kingdom.

The last public lecture I gave here in Seoul was the one given June 25, 1950, when the South Koreans learned that their homeland had been invaded. Strangely enough, just a year and a half later I gave another public talk in this same auditorium to some 133 wounded Korean soldiers. The auditorium is now converted into a hospital. Also, many new publishers desired to be baptized. Arrangements were made to use a bathhouse early in the morning before the U. N. soldiers came. Bath-

houses are for exclusive use of the American soldiers. On Saturday morning, December 29, before 8 a.m., 27 new brothers and sisters, among whom was the queen's sister, were baptized. The brothers in Seoul have a marvelous spirit. They are not in the least discouraged. They are more determined than ever that the good news be made known in all Korea. And the facts show just that.

THE SPREAD OF THE GOOD NEWS

At Taejon I spent the night with a group of five isolated publishers. Despite difficulties due to war restrictions, at least ten persons have been meeting together each week. A young businessman and his wife who had seriously studied the truth before the war have since dedicated themselves to do God's will and are now very active in the service in Taejon. This man is well educated and comes from a well-known family.

It was gratifying to hear how he took his stand for the truth. During the first occupation of Seoul the Communists were forcing all the young men into military service with no recourse for them to resist. Most young men fled to the hills and this brother was among them. The Communists rounded up a group one day where this brother was hiding. The Reds interviewed each one, who often grovelingly said he would work for the Communists, etc. Each one who was questioned before this brother's turn had been taken off to one side and killed. It appeared that he was next to die. So he was determined to give as much of a witness as possible. He was asked why he was hiding in the mountain. He said that he believed in Jehovah's promise of the new world under Christ Jesus and that at Armageddon all political governments would be destroyed, including both North and South Koreans that resisted Christ's government, and that he

would not violate God's law for any human law which was contrary to God's law. He told them he was not afraid to die, because he believed in the resurrection. The Red soldier in charge told him he was the first one to tell the truth. He said he did not believe like the brother but that he believed in speaking up for what he stood for, and he permitted the brother to go free. This brother later escaped to South Korea. "The truth is powerful," he says, and his life's objective now is to make it known to all Koreans.

A grand reunion was held at Kunsan and Chonju. The new Kunsan group is very enthusiastic. This is one place where the Kingdom work had not been done before. There are some twenty associated with the company here and thirteen were immersed in 1951. At Chonju the brothers fare a little better than some of the others. A brother owns a factory here and has been employing many of the refugee brothers. He said he always wanted someone to help preach the Kingdom good news in Chonju, and now it is being done. A small Kingdom Hall has been built. There were forty-seven at the public meeting. Until now only three persons have been reporting their preaching. When the brothers heard the reasons for reporting, one ninety-year-old sister, who was one of the first to witness in Korea, gasped, "I have been preaching but have not reported, but I sure will from now on." A wooden bathtub out in the machine shop of the factory is where four persons were immersed during the war. My visit in Chonju was, as in all the other places where I visited on this tiny peninsula, only too short.

In December I visited the Taegu company. This company has been sort of a headquarters for the work during the dark days of the war. The company servant is an English teacher and a graduate of the Jesuit's Sofia University of Tokyo. His con-

version from Catholicism was swift and complete in 1949 and 1950. During the war he has continued in his translating work and mimeographed his translations of the study material and sent them to the other brothers, in their scattered localities for their weekly study meetings. Taegu is crowded with refugees, but not as badly as Pusan.

The last time I was in Pusan was in October 1949. The harbor was run-down, with very little activity. There were no witnesses here at that time. Now, in November 1951, Pusan harbor is virtually humming with activity. The city is jammed with refugees. Everyone here, including the government officials, lives refugee-fashion. Everywhere are thousands of little *hakoban* (box houses) made of crates and mud, papered inside with American newspapers. On one there is a sign which says, "Jehovah's Witness of Kingdom Hall"—slightly backward in English, but the idea is there. Here some thirty-one of us crowded into the ten-foot-square *hakoban* last Sunday for the *Watchtower* study, which was followed by a public talk. Crowded, yes, but no one complained. The newly organized company reported a peak of fourteen publishers in November.

Many of Seoul's refugee universities are trying to operate here. All school buildings are being used by the national government or the military, so most of the schools use tents or meet in the open sitting on boxes. The universities are operating on about ten per cent of the normal enrollment. The dean of Seoul's Soongmyung Women's college, with whom I study, asked me to give a lecture to the students and faculty. Their temporary college consists of three tents with crude benches, but more than a hundred persons crowded into one tent to hear the lecture. I had another surprise while here. Whom should I meet in Pusan but Professor Choi's wife! It was a thrill to see

her again. She quickly telephoned Professor Choi, who left his office and came right over to my tiny hotel room. He too had had many narrow escapes. He was once President Rhee's secretary and the Reds were hot after him. Now he is the deputy defense minister. In spite of his high government position, Professor Choi is a very humble man and genuinely interested in the truth. He is a graduate of Oxford University and is one of the best-known translators in Korea. He is going to translate the new book for me. A while back he was the No. 2 choice as ambassador to England. I told him he would make a better ambassador for the Theocracy. He said: "You mean I should become a pioneer?" He has used his high government influence to help me on many occasions since I have returned. He and his wife helped me get settled. He lives refugee-fashion himself, as does everyone.

Before the war the peak in publishers for Korea was sixty-one, including the eight missionaries. When all the reports for December were gathered a new peak of eighty-one publishers had been reached. This increase has not come through the missionaries, but through the diligent work of the Korean publishers themselves. Their living conditions are alarmingly subnormal. They lack food, clothing and shelter.* Their spirit is marvelous. They do not think they have suffered any more than anyone else but are thankful that they, by the undeserved kindness of God, have the privilege to preach till the work is done. With them the Kingdom service comes first. They are determined to press on, come what may. It is truly a blessing to be back in my assignment and to be associated with such wonderful brothers filled with undying faith and love.

* The Watchtower Society sponsored a clothing drive in behalf of the Korean brothers, which was completed some time ago. About 4,000 pounds of warm clothing and shoes were collected and sent.

AN INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY IN ROME

This report was received from N. H. Knorr, president of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, while on a lecture tour of southern Europe, the Middle East and India.

THE world is full of turmoil. Nations are striving against nations. It seems each nation is waiting for one of the others to light the fuse that would start a third world war. In the meantime great preparations for a conflict go on in the powerful nations and the lesser nations follow suit with their little armies, all getting ready for the big day. While all this goes on in the troubled world, Jehovah's witnesses keep on preaching the good news of God's kingdom as man's only hope. And they urge humankind to study God's Word and change their thinking from these morbid thoughts of this system of things to God's way of thinking. They should live for the new world of righteousness which will follow the battle of the great day of God Almighty.

It is a pleasure to be associated with people who are not burdened down with the problems of this dying society of Satan's world, but who lift up their heads and rejoice, for they see that the kingdom of the heavens has drawn near. Jehovah's witnesses are holding to their position with Christ Jesus, the anointed King, and they hearken to his words as recorded at Luke 21:34-36 (NW): "But pay attention to yourselves that your hearts never become weighed down with overeating and heavy drinking and anxieties of life, and suddenly that day be instantly upon you as a snare. For it will come in upon all those dwelling upon the face of all the earth.

Keep awake, then, all the time making supplication that you may succeed in escaping all these things that are destined to occur, and to hold your position before the Son of man."

Jehovah's witnesses world-wide are standing shoulder to shoulder doing Jehovah's bidding under the direction of Christ Jesus, their Leader and Commander. They appreciate their responsibility and privilege of telling the people of the world what the signs of the times mean. This they do day in and day out, even unto the ends of the earth. From time to time these servants of God assemble together in conventions in different parts of the world, and such an assembly was arranged for in Rome, Italy, December 7-9, 1951. It was my pleasure to visit Rome and be with the Lord's people in that land. Brother Milton Henschel traveled with me.

When we left the little group of the Bethel family that saw us off at the International airport in New York on December 5, we were pleased to find another American representative booked on the same plane. It was a happy trio that headed eastward toward Rome. There was a little delay of five hours at Gander, Newfoundland, on account of engine trouble, but we slept on the plane after we learned following our landing that there would be a delay. It was after 11 p.m. when we received the news. After the repairs were made and we took off to cross the Atlantic we all

woke up, but it was not long until we were sleeping again. Flying so far north in December made the day short and it was dark before we reached Paris. When we arrived at Paris it was 7:15 p.m. There we had the opportunity to speak with two brothers from the Paris office.

After an hour we were off to Rome, reaching there just before midnight. When we disembarked huge spotlights were shining on the plane and we could not see anyone, but we heard some shouts of greetings and found that the graduates of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead assigned to work in Italy and neighboring countries had hired a bus and were there to greet us. They had waited many hours on account of the lateness of the plane, but they were a joyful delegation just the same. There were many greetings to deliver to them from relatives and friends in America. They let us travel with them on the bus from the airport to Rome and we had the opportunity to say some things to them, but we looked forward to later occasions when we could enjoy talking with such faithful witnesses of Jehovah. It was getting late and the convention was to begin in the morning, so it was thought good not to take time for any gathering. For most of us it was to bed about 2 a.m. and up at 6 to attend the first big assembly of Jehovah's witnesses in the great city of Rome.

There is an old adage that says all roads lead to Rome, and as the day progressed this certainly seemed true, because representatives came from 14 nations outside of Italy and Trieste: Britain, Germany, France, Switzerland, Denmark, Belgium, Austria, Sweden, Eire, Norway, Netherlands, Luxembourg, Gold Coast, and the United States. There were hundreds of them. From England more than 250 came; from Denmark, more than 100; from Switzerland and Germany, upward of 70.

Good numbers came from most of the other countries. Trains had to be met, guides had to show these non-Italian-speaking persons where to go; but everybody seemed to get along very well, found accommodations, attended the assembly, and it was not long before they knew which bus or tram to take to get to the fairgrounds called Fiera Campionaria.

The Italian publishers of the Kingdom and the missionaries had worked for days in preparing the grounds and hall for this assembly. The building used was an L-shaped exhibition hall. Communists had been in there sometime before and had left things in a miserable mess. The floors were dirty and the walls were smeared with political slogans. The man from whom the brothers rented the grounds and building said he certainly could not afford to fix things up for the three-day convention. He told Jehovah's witnesses they could go ahead and do what they wanted to to make the place presentable. When the proprietor came on the grounds the day before the assembly began he was amazed to see that all the walls of the building we were going to use had been painted and the grounds cleaned up. Everything had been put in order and a beautiful platform was erected at the angle of the "L". Fluorescent lights were installed. The backdrop of the stage was made of green laurel woven into lattice work and dotted with pink and red carnations. It looked like a new building now and not like a scene of wreckage and upheaval left behind by the Communists. There in Italian was the year's text. At one end of the building booths for rooming, information and service were set up; at the other end, the cafeteria and bookroom were set up.

The convention to be held in Rome in 1951 was certainly different from the little gathering there in 1947, when I previously visited the city. Then we could be gathered

in a small hotel room and the people could be counted on one's fingers. But now as nine o'clock arrived on December 7 and the brothers were finding their seats while songs brought them to order there were 1,300 in assembly. The audience continued to grow until on Sunday evening the assembly reached a peak of 1,731 attending. They braved heavy downpours of rain and sat with coats on in the unheated building, rejoicing as they sang and took in life-giving knowledge from God's Word.

The program was arranged for three days with discourses starting in the morning at 9 and continuing all day until about 9 in the evening, with time out at noon for lunch and at five o'clock for the evening meal. It was believed best to devote these three days to attending meetings and aiding the newly interested Italian brothers in gaining accurate knowledge of the truth. There was no wide publicity given to the public lecture on "Will Religion Meet the World Crisis?" However, all of the subscribers for *The Watchtower* and the interested persons in Rome were notified of the assembly and specially requested to attend the public meeting. The attendance figures showed that they did come.

The work of Jehovah's witnesses is really just getting started in Italy. In 1947 the Society was able to send two missionaries into the country, and they had an average of 152 publishers that year. Now there are 38 graduates from Gilead in the country working in various cities, and during 1951 there was an average of 1,532 ministers of the gospel in Italy, with a peak during the year of 1,739. Five years ago the publishers spent 22,000 hours preaching the gospel. During 1951 they spent 231,000 hours. So the gospel of the Kingdom is being preached in Italy, but there is still much work to be done. We know that the greatest good can be accomplished by going from door to door, arranging back-calls and

carrying on Bible studies. In this way the other sheep of the Lord can be found and fed. To advertise public meetings or do street witnessing with the magazines would cause too much disturbance at the moment in this land where there is considerable conflict between the Catholic Hierarchy and the communistic organizations. Freedom of speech, while constitutionally approved, is not altogether an actuality. There are too many old laws in Italy that have never been revoked that the priests can urge the police to put into operation to stop public assemblies. But one may have private assemblies and he may study with people in their homes. So that is what Jehovah's witnesses are doing in Italy, with excellent results. The convention was a private assembly and not announced, and therefore no special police permission was required, although the police were notified of the gathering. Everything was most orderly and the brothers were richly blessed by things brought to their attention.

One of the speakers pointed out the great need for the Bible in Italy and how those who had already come to the truth must keep up with present truth. They must appreciate what the Lord provides through his organization and study diligently. He said we must use the information we have by preaching from house to house and not merely here and there at scattered times as some do. The brother illustrated this by the way we take in nourishment. We do most of our important eating at regular mealtimes, *pasta asciutta* (spaghetti) being the main dish. But if we wish and have the opportunity we sometimes have a snack of *castagne* (roasted chestnuts), which we can obtain along the streets. Do we eat chestnuts all the time? No! So we see it is necessary to do more house-to-house preaching to feed ourselves properly and feed the other sheep. We must be reg-

ular in our preaching and in our studying. We must always remember that we are not looking for numbers in our organization, but those who do come to the organization must become mature. This we can accomplish through patience. A brother gave an experience in connection with patience. Sometimes we are too anxious and we want to hurry people into the truth. One brother on his first back-call asked the person of good will, "Do you want to study the Bible with me?" The answer was "Yes". The brother came forward immediately with this question: "Will you come to meetings with me?" And the answer was "Yes". The brother was not patient, so he asked this newly interested person before he ever had studied anything with the brother, "Will you go out in the service with me?" The speaker pointed out that he should have had a little patience before asking the second and third questions. This was not to say that years should pass before people are asked the second and third questions, for we know all true Christians should come to the point of preaching the good news as Jesus Christ did, but they should have some knowledge of the truth first. After several Bible studies they will know something to talk to others about. All this was said in the way of teaching the brothers to become mature and use good judgment.

Another gave an experience to show we should not suffocate the persons of good will by staying too late at night. Give them what they need through the regular studies and allow them to digest it. Then let them get hungry for more the next time you call. It is important that the people retain what they are taught.

Another point was that we do not have to know all of the Bible to preach the gospel. One sister had said she was not capable of making back-calls and conducting Bible studies because she might meet a professor.

The question was asked of many brothers, "How many professors have you met in your preaching activities so far?" The answer was "None". When one comes to a knowledge of the truth and of the Kingdom he can always tell what he knows about the Bible to those he meets. The peasant class of people can always help their fellow men and can study with them. And as far as the Bible is concerned, many educated persons know little of the Bible's contents, and Jehovah's witnesses can teach them too.

Good instruction was given concerning children and their proper care. The matter of maturity was stressed. Getting along together in congregational life was urged. Proper morals and respectable living were pointed out to be necessities in God's theocratic organization. The standards acceptable by Catholic leaders in Italy for members of their church are not the same as God's. God cannot lower his standards to accommodate different nationalities. The cleanliness of the Lord's organization was seen by all and greatly appreciated. Getting counsel and instruction from God's sixty-six letters to all of us is our greatest help. Through these letters we can find the way to life eternal and we can learn properly how to live now and preach the good news, preparing ourselves for the new world society.

The Italian brothers and all those attending were greatly encouraged by the good things brought out from God's Word, and so as to help the English-speaking and German-speaking conventioners some special sessions were arranged and summaries of the talks and experiences were given to them in their own language. The Danish group also held a meeting of this kind.

The majority of the graduates of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead who are now working in Italy were on the program. Most of them did not know any-

thing of the Italian language before they went to Italy and the visitors were amazed with the fluency they already possessed and how they seemed to feel right at home with the Italian tongue. The missionaries have done excellent work in their various assignments. Three years ago there was just one good-will family in the city of Naples. Some missionaries and Italian pioneers have worked it for a while. Good seed has been planted and an organization developed. Now there are 30 regular publishers in Naples, with a peak of 40. This company was conducting 29 home Bible studies in the month of November. The company in Rome had increased from 6 to 38. Like increases have been brought about in Trieste, Milan, Turin, Como, Bologna, Florence, Palermo and many other cities throughout Italy. The real increase in Italy will come through the work of the Italian brothers themselves, so the more of these that come forth having an accurate knowledge of the truth and appreciating their privileges of service, the better it will be for the witness work in Italy. The missionaries help them to know how to do the work and to become mature publishers, but they must bear the burden of most of the work among the millions of people in Italy. Now there are 43 pioneers in full-time service in Italy, along with the missionaries. There are 97 companies of Jehovah's witnesses organized into six circuits. The circuit servants follow up all interest in their circuits. Many have to travel a great distance to get in touch with *Watchtower* subscribers or a person who recently obtained literature from the office. Circuit servants usually spend the day with such people, conducting studies with them and showing them in detail how the work of the Lord is being carried on, inviting newly interested persons to engage in field service and many times leaving booklets and other publications with them for distribu-

tion. A careful check is kept on every individual by the office and by the circuit servants, and new companies now are springing up all over Italy. They try not to neglect any of the interest.

It seems what all Italy needs is more planting and watering, and Jehovah God will bring forth the increase. The increase is great already, as seen in the large number of publishers who have taken up the work in the past few years and in the fact that 94 were baptized at the Rome assembly, but surely that is just the beginning. For centuries Italy has been steeped in false religion, and the majority of the people of the land are fed up with all of the evil practices, the pomp and glory of men and the selfishness and favoritism shown to the wealthy class. The priests have been a burden on the backs of the people, and this country, like the rest of the world, is sick of false religion. It is truly the tyranny of the religious-political leaders that has brought about a condition in Italy where millions from the Catholic faith have turned to communism. In this condition is seen proof that Catholicism is not the solution to the problem of overcoming godless communism, but rather it has been the cause of much of it throughout the earth. It is indeed comforting to know that Jehovah God is now doing something to help the oppressed peoples by building a new world of righteousness. In the years before Jehovah displays his anger against the evil system of things now dominating the earth, many more persons of good will are sure to take their stand on the side of God's kingdom.

The people must break away from the attitude of glorying in the past and they must look to the future, to the new world which Jehovah is creating now. Rome is a city of relics and crumbled-down old buildings, like the Colosseum and Nero's palace, as well as arches of triumph, the Forum,

and the catacombs. These things are interesting for tourists and the Italians to see, and so are the ancient things of the Vatican, but the people should not be blinded to the future by always gazing into the past, nor should they overlook the realities of the wickedness of this present system of things by pointing to the evils and persecutions of Christians in the past, or the conquests that were carried on in Italy or by the Romans. We are living in the same old world under Satan that Paul spoke about in 2 Corinthians 4:4. Rome and all the world are ruled by the same invisible god, the Devil, as when Paul visited there nineteen centuries ago. Rome has no glory to be proud of over any other city of the world. It can boast in its past conquest and its gains in religious domination of men, as well as past and present persecution of true Christians, its inquisitions and its corruptness. Judging by God's Word, its past is no glory and its present system of things is worthy of destruction in God's sight.

Jehovah has the only message of comfort for the people. It is in his Word. That holds hope for lovers of righteousness. Jehovah's witnesses have the privilege of declaring the good news from God's Word

in the face of all kinds of opposition, and Jehovah receives the credit for keeping the way open that the message may be heard and for giving the great increases in these last days of Satan's rule.

The "Clean Worship" assembly in Rome brought joy to the hearts of many. All who attended were happy to have been there. Others throughout the earth rejoiced to know an assembly for clean worship was held in this stronghold of fusion religion. Dozens of cablegrams poured in from all parts of the world and all in attendance were grateful to the Lord that the assembly could be held without interference in this ancient city that has oppressed so many and kept the people of many nations in darkness concerning God's purposes expressed in the Bible. Only by Jehovah's power could such be possible, and it is Jehovah that sees to it that the light from his Word will shine forth in these last days and that false religion will be exposed by it. The Italian publishers of God's kingdom show determination and zeal, and with Jehovah's help they are certain to push forward the expansion of theocratic organization greatly before the end of Satan's system of things comes. It was a pleasure to see them and worship Jehovah with them.

Vatican's View of the Ambassador

G Anne O'Hare McCormick is one of the top writers of the highly respected *New York Times*. She is on friendly terms with many officials and reports firsthand on their views. In her December 23 column from Rome (published December 24) she shed light on the Vatican's attitude toward the proposed American ambassador, saying: "There is surprise at the amount and violence of American opposition to the president's move. Church officials say emphatically that it would be better not to have an ambassador than to stir up sectarian feeling and religious controversy in the United States. It is understood that this is the view of the pope himself. . . . Advocates who argue that the appointment is not to a religious leader but to the ruler of the scrap of real estate called Vatican City do not get much support here. The mission is either to the pope as the head of a world-wide church or it is nothing, it is pointed out; to pretend anything else is to make the appointment useless or reduce it to absurdity. All other countries sending representatives to the Vatican accredit them to the Holy See, and if the United States decides to send one at all it will follow the regular formula."

Questions from Readers

● At the Watchtower School of Gilead I was told that it was the Jewish custom to kill condemned sinners before hanging them on the stake. What is the proof for this?—R. H., Peru.

This instruction is given at Deuteronomy 21:22, 23 (AT): "If anyone has committed a crime punishable by death, and has been put to death, and you have impaled him on a stake, his corpse must not remain all night on the stake; but you must be sure to bury him the same day; for an impaled man is a terrible disgrace, and you must not pollute the land which the LORD your God is giving you as a heritage." This shows that after he has been put to death he is impaled, and thereafter it speaks of him as a corpse. To have his body hung on a stake added to his disgrace and also served as an example to others to avoid such an unhappy end because of disobedience.

Such public display as a warning to others was probably the purpose when ringleaders in the worship of Baal-peor were slain and hung. "Jehovah said unto Moses, Take all the chiefs of the people, and hang them up unto Jehovah before the sun, that the fierce anger of Jehovah may turn away from Israel. And Moses said unto the judges of Israel, Slay ye every one his men that have joined themselves unto Baal-peor." In addition, Jehovah brought a plague against those who followed these ringleaders into demon worship; so that the total slain was 24,000. Apparently about a thousand of those slain were ringleaders, and 23,000 were direct victims of the plague from Jehovah. (Num. 25:4, 5, 9, AS; 1 Cor. 10:8) But the point to note here is that these leaders in the transgression were slain by the "judges of Israel", and then hung. They were not slain by hanging.

It was this instruction from Deuteronomy that was had in mind when Joshua dealt with the king of Ai: "The king of Ai he hanged on a tree and left until evening, but at sunset Joshua ordered his body to be taken down from the tree." (Josh. 8:29, AT) Note that both here and in Deuteronomy it was the corpse or body that was taken down, not the living person. If the criminal had been hanged on the stake

while alive he would usually be alive when the time for removal came, as was the case with the thieves impaled with Jesus. The fact that Jesus was dead within that short time caused wonderment. (John 19:32, 33) Of course, that impalement was performed by the Romans, and according to their custom the victims were hanged on the stake alive. The Jewish practice of killing the impaled ones first is also shown by Joshua 10:26 (AT): "Joshua then felled them, and killed them; he hanged them on five trees, and they remained hanging on the trees until evening." The removal of the body at sunset precluded any swelling or stench of decomposition or disfigurement by wild beasts at night.

● Since the idea of slavery is so distasteful today, why do we speak of Christians as being slaves of Christ? He said he no longer called us slaves, but friends.—M. S., Connecticut.

It is true that Jesus said, at John 15:15, NW: "I no longer call you slaves, because a slave does not know what his master does. But I have called you friends, because all the things I have heard from my Father I have made known to you." Jesus had just completed celebrating the Passover and instituting the Memorial with his apostles, and it was just before his arrest and death. In this final encouragement and strengthening of his apostles he was very intimate; yet he did not deny that they were still slaves. Five verses later he reminded them of the master-slave relationship: "Bear in mind the word I said to you, A slave is not greater than his master. If they have persecuted me, they will persecute you also; if they have observed my word, they will observe yours also." So he was not eliminating the term slave, but he was showing that his followers, while slaves, were also his friends. It was not the usual cold and formal master-slave relationship; in addition to this legal relationship they were also close friends. But this friendship did not cancel the fact that Christians belong not to themselves, but were bought with a price, and are slaves of Christ.—1 Cor. 6:19, 20; 7:23.

● Luke 2:39 states: "So when they had carried out all the things according to the law of Jehovah, they went back into Galilee to their own city Nazareth." (NW) Since the slaughter of the babes by Herod came a year or more after Jesus' birth, does this text not prove the child was at Nazareth when Herod's infanticidal

campaign came, and that the flight into Egypt was from Nazareth and not Bethlehem, as a recent *Watchtower* said?—R. E., New York.

The Gospel accounts are brief, and what one leaves out another often supplies. We cannot assume that Luke related a complete coverage of the movements of Joseph and Mary and the babe Jesus; actually, we know positively that Luke did not do so, since he does not even mention the flight into Egypt. Luke 2:39 merely spans the time gap between the fulfilling of the law relative to the newborn babe and the later taking up of residence in Nazareth, without attempting to relate everything in between.

Matthew's account, however, fills in more details for us. It shows that the astrologers were sent to Bethlehem by Herod, and since there is no recorded change in the directions we must assume that that is where they went, the reappearance of the "star" being necessary to guide them, not so much to Bethlehem, but to the particular house where the child was. Thereafter the record tells of the flight into Egypt to escape the mass infanticide by Herod. Note that this murderous slaughter of boys of two years of age and under was confined to "Bethlehem and in all its districts". (Matt. 2:1-16, NW) The districts of Bethlehem would be nearby areas, not even reaching to Jerusalem, and

certainly nowhere near Nazareth in distant Galilee! If the child had been in Nazareth it would have been in no dire peril. But the slaughter struck at the region wherein the child resided, making necessary the angelic warning and the subsequent flight into Egypt.

Matthew next tells of Herod's death, which opens the way for the safe return to Israel of Jesus and his parents. Apparently Joseph was going to return to Judea to take up life in Bethlehem, whence he had fled in the first place. But Herod's son ruled there and Joseph feared for the child's safety. Through a dream he received divine warning not to return to Judea, but to go instead into the territory of Galilee. There, in order to fulfill further prophecy, the family settled in Nazareth. (Matt. 2:19-23) All of this clearly implies that Joseph was returning to the place whence he had fled, Judea, and more particularly Bethlehem, but that a change in plans was effected through divine intervention, for the child's safety and for the fulfillment of prophecy. So they went to Nazareth instead, and we are back at the point in Luke's narrative recorded in the latter part of Luke 2:39.

So we believe that *The Watchtower* of December 15, 1951, correctly stated matters in its published reply to this question, on page 764.

QUESTION

Is it true that the wise men followed the star to Bethlehem? I have heard that they followed the star to Nazareth, and that they followed it to Bethlehem. Is this true?

ANSWER —*I Cor. 12:30; 1 Cor. 12:32.*

• Luke 2:30 states: "So when they had come out of the way to Bethlehem, they saw the star that shone over the place where the child was." This is the same as the statement in Matt. 2:9, "When they had gone out of the way to Bethlehem, they saw the star that shone over the place where the child was." (NW)

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES

Week of May 4: Is God Responsible for World Distress?

Week of May 11: Pinning the Blame on the One Responsible.