

The

WATCHTOWER



Christmas

**IS IT PART
OF TRUE WORSHIP?**

DECEMBER 15, 1977

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

The WATCHTOWER

December 15, 1977
Vol. 98, Number 24

A watchtower enables a person to see far into the distance and announce to others what is coming. Can a magazine serve similarly in our day? Yes, from its first issue (July 1879) onward, *The Watchtower*, published by Jehovah's Witnesses, has done just that.

How can it benefit you? Consider: Do you long for a better world, one of true justice and free from sorrow, hatred and war? Do you want to live at a time when genuine peace and love prevail among people of all races? Then this magazine can aid you. Using God's Word, the Bible, as its authority, it points out the clear evidence that the present wicked system of things will soon end, destroyed by God. But it also announces the coming in of a righteous new order. There, under the rule of God's kingdom, his heavenly government, people will enjoy life forever in true peace, health and happiness on a paradise earth.

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We know that many sincere persons would appreciate a discussion of these things in their own home with a qualified person. One of Jehovah's Witnesses will be glad to call on you free of charge. To arrange for this, simply write the publishers of this magazine or contact Jehovah's Witnesses locally.

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Christmas

IS IT PART OF TRUE WORSHIP?

JESUS CHRIST said: "The truth will set you free." (John 8:32) Is Christmas based on truth? If so, we can gain good from its celebration. But if not, it will work hardship on us. In your own case, does the Christmas season bring you a feeling of freedom, or do you give a sigh of relief when it is over?

Some people, going by the axiom that a tree is known by its fruit, are suspicious about the holiness of Christmas. They make strong complaints about the commercialization of that season. As to this "intrusion of the secular into the sacred," Stevan Davies, of Temple University's religion department, said: "We should remember that the 'commercialization' of Christmas is equally the sacralization of business. . . . The Santa Claus legend will be protected and preserved." He added that Santa Claus "will be retained because he is indispensable to merchants as a sales incentive during the holiday season."

Does the 'sacralizing' of business sound like true religion to you? A writer for the U.S. Catholic magazine, Daphne Ponchin Mould, apparently does not think so. "Every religious trace has been done away with," she wrote in the magazine's December 1976 issue. "Christmas has not merely shed its Christian significance, but even its older pagan one," she said.

You doubtless have your own private

feelings toward the oncoming Christmas season. Undoubtedly the gift-exchange custom puts uncomfortable pressure on many persons. And the gifts they receive under this compulsory atmosphere do not really move them to the thankfulness and appreciation that the season is supposed to promote.

FOUNDATION OF CHRISTMAS

But aside from the commercialism that has been injected into it, is the religious aspect of Christmas founded on truth? To know this is very important in order that we may render acceptable worship to God "with spirit and truth."—John 4:23, 24.

Likely your children have been brought up to believe in Santa Claus. But if you have told them the truth, you will never have to make the grim choice that many parents face at Christmas season—either to break their children's hearts or push the family over the financial brink. And, if you want your children's gratitude and love, how much better it is to tell them the truth, and give them gifts spontaneously at times when you are able. Then, it is no legendary Santa Claus, but *you*, their parent, whom they thank and on whom they know that they can rely for truthful communication. Furthermore, they will be spared the disillusionment and resulting cynicism that many children develop when the Santa Claus myth is exploded for them.

Today, scholars generally acknowledge that the date December 25 is NOT Jesus Christ's birth date. Not until the fourth century C.E. was any record made of the observation of a Christmas festival. By that time the church had gained great secular power under Emperor Constantine. Sun worship was particularly strong then in Rome. The worshipers of the Persian sun-god Mithra celebrated December 25 as the "birthday of the invincible sun."

The Roman church's adoption of that date as Christmas day was not to advance worship "with spirit and truth," but was to introduce a so-called Christian festival that would be readily adopted by the population. Actually it was the absorbing of a pagan ritual into a celebration in pretended honor of God and Christ.

THE CHRISTMAS STAR AND GIFT-GIVING

Someone may call attention to the giving of gifts to the "young child" Jesus. (Matt. 2:11, NW; *Authorized Version*) 'Did not the "wise men" do this? And did they not follow a star that led them to where Jesus was?' However, when the Bible is examined, we find that the "wise men" represented, not Christianity, but paganism. Also, we discover that they were unwitting performers in a plot of Satan the Devil to kill Jesus.

Consider the Bible account: Just prior to Jesus' birth, his parents had arrived in Bethlehem to register for taxation. All the inns in the town were full. When Mary gave birth to Jesus, she laid him, bound in cloth, in a manger. On that very night God, by means of an angelic host, and not by a star, directed humble Jewish shepherds, worshipers of God, to the infant. The announcement was made to them that a child had been born to be a Savior, Christ (Messiah) the Lord.—Luke 2:1-17.

Were the so-called "wise men" worshippers of the true God? No. The original Greek language of the Christian Scriptures calls them *magoi*—Magians, Zoroastrian priests (the term is related to the English word "magician"). They were astrologers from Mesopotamia, far to the east. They did not look upon Jesus as their Savior or Messiah, but as "king of the Jews."—Matt. 2:1, 2.

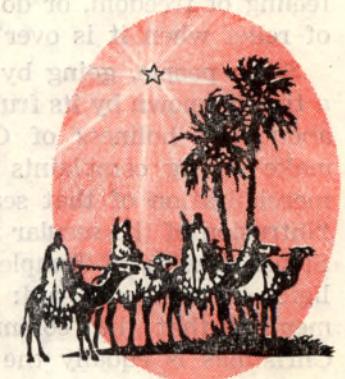
Note other evidence that the Bible provides. It was actually months after Jesus' birth that these astrologers went to King

Herod, saying that they had followed a star that they saw 'when they were in the east,' and wanted to do homage to the infant "king of the Jews." And the "star" that led them was not a real star, nor a conjunction of planets, for only the astrologers reported seeing it. Herod then went to the Jewish religious leaders and inquired as to where the Messiah was to be born. They quoted to him the prophecy in Micah 5:2, designating his birthplace as Bethlehem.—Matt. 2:3-6.

Herod now secretly summoned the astrologers and sent them to Bethlehem under command to report back to him. But the Bible says: "Because they were given divine warning in a dream not to return to Herod, they withdrew to their country by another way."—Matt. 2:7, 8, 12.

Herod was enraged. To be sure that he got Jesus, he had all the boys in the area of Bethlehem killed, "from two years of age and under, according to the time that he had carefully ascertained from the astrologers." (Matt. 2:16) But Jesus escaped, because he had been taken by his foster-father Joseph to Egypt at God's warning, thus thwarting the plot to kill the child at that time.—Matt. 2:13, 14.

So Jesus was no newborn infant at the time of the astrologers' visit, but was approaching *two years of age*. These "wise men" had seen the "star" first when they were in Mesopotamia, many months' travel away from Bethlehem, and by the time that they found Jesus he was no longer





in a manger, but in a house. (Matt. 2:11) Clearly, then, their gifts had no connection with the date of Jesus' birth.

Accordingly, is it not evident that the Christmas shopping spree and the exchanging of gifts, the astrologers' "star," the December 25 date and other features of Christmas, are not from God? And giving honor to the infant Jesus today is mis-

leading, for Jesus Christ is no longer an infant, nor is he to be worshiped as such. For now, being a mighty spirit person at the right hand of God in heaven, the resurrected Jesus Christ is the chief advocate of the worship of God "with spirit and truth," which does not include Christmas and the Santa Claus myth.—John 4:24; Acts 2:33; Rev. 3:21; Matt. 28:18.

HOW DEPENDENT ARE WE ON JESUS CHRIST?

JEHOVAH God is "the Father, to whom every family in heaven and on earth owes its name." He is the Universal Sovereign Lord and the only one to whom our worship is to be properly directed.—Eph. 3:14, 15; Acts 4:24; Luke 4:8.

Nevertheless, we are totally dependent on Jesus Christ in our worship of Jehovah, as well as for any hope that we have of everlasting life. How could this be so?

It is because, originally, the human race alienated itself from God. In fact, the father of the race, Adam, sold his posterity into sin. (Rom. 7:14) The price he received for the "sale" was the doing of what he wanted to do in place of obeying his Creator's instructions. He set out with his wife Eve for selfish enjoyment of living and running his affairs for his own pleasure. What this would mean to their offspring may have meant little to him.

We see a similarity in the attitude of some people today. They want to enjoy life for themselves, using dangerous drugs and committing immorality that can have a devastating effect on their children in the form of physical and mental abnormalities and loathsome diseases. But the present "pleasure" is all that counts with them. Others are not too concerned about trying to improve matters for the coming generation—enjoying their own life now is their pursuit.

HUMAN RACE NEEDED HELP FROM GOD

So humans from Adam's time till now have been in a bad state, the sin inherited



from this original father permeating them and increasing in the earth. (Rom. 5:12, 16) Their desperate situation was well expressed by the psalmist: "Not one of them can by any means redeem even a brother, nor give to God a ransom for him." No, the price was too "precious," too high, as the psalmist stated.—Ps. 49:6-9.

But God was not defeated by this situation. He knew how to make salvation for mankind possible, and he had at hand the means for this. So, to Jehovah God goes the credit and praise as the Author and Arranger of our opportunity for life. But in this arrangement God himself made us all subject to his Son Jesus Christ. Everything that we get we receive because of God and through his Son. Even our prayers to God must be addressed in Christ's name. (John 15:16; 16:23, 24) He is in complete charge of all humankind. Decision for life or death is in his hands. "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me," said Jesus.—John 14:6.

THE EXALTED POSITION OF JESUS CHRIST

As to our dependence on him in knowing and serving God, Jesus said: “*All things have been delivered to me by my Father*, and no one fully knows the Son but the Father, neither does anyone fully know the Father but the Son and anyone to whom the Son is willing to reveal him.” (Matt. 11:27) Just before he ascended to heaven he told his disciples: “All authority has been given me in heaven and on the earth.” (Matt. 28:18) Since that time he has occupied a position on his Father’s throne.—Rev. 3:21.

Christ is also our great High Priest, though not a priest of the Jewish Aaronic priesthood. Of this latter, earthly priesthood, we read: “Many had to become priests in succession because of being prevented by death from continuing as such, but he [Jesus Christ] because of continuing alive forever has his priesthood without any successors. Consequently he is able also to save completely those who are approaching God through him, because he is always alive to plead for them.”—Heb. 7:23-25.

At this present time *Christ Jesus* is the one who judges us. He said: “The Father judges no one at all, but he has committed all the judging to the Son.” (John 5:22) Of course, he does this at the Father’s appointment and in full harmony with his Father’s will and laws. He is in constant association with his Father and, as he said: “The Son cannot do a single thing of his own initiative, but only what he beholds the Father doing. For whatever things that One does, these things the Son also does in like manner.”—John 5:19.

Besides being a judge of the living, Jesus Christ has also been empowered to judge the dead. The Christian apostle Paul told the Athenians: “[God] has set a day in which he purposed to judge the inhabited earth in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and he has furnished a

guarantee to all men in that he has resurrected him from the dead.” (Acts 17:31) In order for Jesus Christ to judge the dead, he must be able to summon them before him, and this he does by resurrecting them. He himself said: “Do not marvel at this, because the hour is coming in which all those in the memorial tombs will hear his voice and come out.”—John 5:28, 29.

When will this be? This will be after the destruction of wicked humans at the “war of the great day of God the Almighty,” the binding and abyssing of Satan and his demons, and the start of Jesus Christ’s thousand-year reign. (Rev. 16:14; 19:11-21; 20:1-3) During this reign the human race is in the hands of Jesus Christ, and he judges them as to life—their attaining of perfection—or as to death—their meriting death because of failure to avail themselves of the provisions for life. The apostle Paul says that “he must rule as king until God has put all enemies under his feet. As the last enemy, death is to be brought to nothing.” (1 Cor. 15:25, 26) Christ has the authority to judge and the power to destroy those who are disobedient to God’s laws and who refuse to respect the kingly rulership that God has given him. He even does away with death. Since sin is the cause of death, he removes all Adamic sin from those who are obedient to him. (Rom. 6:23; 1 Cor. 15:56) He brings them to perfection, and when he pronounces them perfect, they will be as perfect as was the first man Adam when created. During the thousand years, Christ does all this work. And, in fact, he is doing all judging now.—John 5:30.

However, Christ does not do this for his own glorification. He does it all in order to present the perfected human race to Jehovah as righteous members of His universal family. For all things actually belong to God as Creator. (Rev. 4:11; Isa. 40:25, 26; Ps. 50:10-12) The account re-

garding the thousand-year reign of Christ reads: "Next, the end, when he hands over the kingdom to his God and Father, when he has brought to nothing all government and all authority and power," and, "when all things will have been subjected to him, then the Son himself will also subject himself to the One who subjected all things to him, that God may be all things to everyone." (1 Cor. 15:24, 28) What joy Christ must have in anticipating this event!

Thus Jesus Christ will have nothing of which to be ashamed when he hands over the Kingdom to God, the real Subjugator of all things. But even after Jesus has finished his millennial reign with its judgment proceedings, it will still remain true that "God is the One who declares them righteous." (Rom. 8:33) In harmony with this basic fact Jehovah now proceeds to put to the final test those whom Jesus Christ hands over to him in their human perfection. In order to have this decisive test applied, Satan and his demons are loosed from the abyss where they have been imprisoned for the thousand years. Then those who selfishly succumb to the test that these demons bring upon them will be annihilated in the "second death" from which there is no resurrection. (Rev. 20:7-15) On the other hand, those who maintain their integrity and loyally uphold Jehovah's universal sovereignty will be rewarded. He will justify them or 'declare them righteous' and will bestow upon them the gift of everlasting life in their human perfection on a paradise earth.

THE NEED TO RECOGNIZE CHRIST'S POSITION NOW

Now, besides being High Priest, Jesus is Head of the Christian congregation. (Col. 1:18) While there are elders and "gifts in men" who are of great help to the members of the congregation, they are merely servants to minister to the needs of the

family-like congregation. (Eph. 4:8; Luke 22:26; 1 Cor. 3:5) It must be remembered that they are not the head, the 'masters over our faith,' the ones from whom our spiritual food comes, but only fellow workers under Christ. (2 Cor. 1:24) The apostle Paul said: "No matter how many the promises of God are, they have become Yes [affirmed, fulfilled, realized] by means of him [Jesus Christ]." (2 Cor. 1:20) Also, '[Christ] has become to us wisdom from God, also righteousness and sanctification and release by ransom.'—1 Cor. 1:30.

We must therefore recognize Christ as *real*, not as in the background, but as present with us, as *God's chief representative* alongside us to care for, strengthen and protect us at all times. We should realize his nearness. He will help us in difficult decisions. When we are confronted with severe opposition, he "will give [us] a mouth and wisdom, which all [our] opposers together will not be able to resist or dispute."—Luke 21:15.

At John 6:51, Jesus Christ points out the dependence of the world of mankind on him in the words he spoke to the Jews: "I am the living bread that came down from heaven; if anyone eats of this bread he will live forever; and, for a fact, the bread that I shall give is my flesh in behalf of the life of the world."

During Christ's millennial reign all his earthly subjects, those surviving the coming "great tribulation" and those resurrected from the dead, will be privileged to feed on this heavenly manna by exercising faith in the sacrifice of Christ's perfect humanity, with everlasting life in view.—Rev. 7:14, 15; John 5:28, 29.

Consequently, we should keep in mind the position in which Jehovah has placed his Son. We should study his words in the Bible and be careful to observe his leadings. One who is an elder should always look to Christ's leadership, his example,

his direction and his words, as Head of the congregation.—Col. 1:18.

We remember at all times that Jehovah is the One to be worshiped, but that God has chosen to give honor to his Son. (John 5:23) The very purpose of Jesus in making his sacrifice and doing his work was

to turn mankind to the true worship of Jehovah and to restore them to perfection, all to God's glory. All this works for the happiness of humanity, whom God and his Son love and for whom God gave his Son. The Son willingly cooperated by suffering that we might live.—John 3:16.



Make Wise Use of the Strength of Youth

When one has the strength and vigor of youth, life can be delightful. Wise King Solomon wrote: "Rejoice, young man, in your youth, and let your heart do you good in the days of your young manhood, and walk in the ways of your heart and in the things seen by your eyes. But know that on account of all these the true God will bring you into judgment. So remove vexation from your heart, and ward off calamity from your flesh; for youth and the prime of life are vanity."—Eccl. 11:9, 10.

The Creator wants youths to enjoy life and does not take a rigidly negative view of youthful interests and what appeals to the desires of young hearts and eyes. However, the young person needs to remember that he is still accountable to God for his actions. Though allowing youths freedom of choice, the Most High will not shield them from the bitter consequences of pursuing a wrong course. By avoiding a reckless, debauched way of life, youths can guard themselves against all kinds of frustrations and injury.

Solomon, by inspiration, writes that "youth

What Did The Wise Man Mean?

and the prime of life are vanity." Why so? For one thing, a person obviously does not remain young forever. Likewise, the joys and advantages of youthful strength and vigor are of uncertain duration. Even young people get sick and die. The youth who ignores this may fail to make wise use of what he has, dissipating his physical energies and capabilities in a way of life that can make his later adult years more difficult.

Most appropriately, therefore, King Solomon calls attention to the one whom youths should make the focal point of their lives. He states: "Remember, now, your Grand Creator in the days of your young manhood, before the calamitous days proceed to come, or the years have arrived when you will say: 'I have no delight in them'; before the sun and the light and the moon and the stars grow dark, and the clouds have returned, afterward the downpour."—Eccl. 12:1, 2.

There is no better time to think seriously about the Creator than

when a person is in his prime, when he can really give the very best in the service of the Most High. That ability wanes during the "calamitous days" of old age when the body is weak and ailing. Especially the person who has wasted his youth will "have no delight" in the declining years of his life. Solomon likens the time of youth to the Palestinian summer when sun, moon and stars shed their light from a cloudless sky. In old age that time is gone and the days are like the cold, rainy season of winter, with one downpour of trouble followed by another.

Describing the effects of old age on the human body, which he compares to a house, Solomon continues: "In the day when the keepers of the house [the hands and arms which take care of the body and supply its needs] tremble, and the men of vital energy [the legs] have bent themselves, and the grinding women [the teeth] have quit working because they have become few, and the ladies seeing at the windows [the eyes] have found it dark; and the doors [of the mouth, the lips] onto the street have been closed [for public expression is rarely made], when the sound of the grinding mill becomes low [as chewing with toothless gums becomes low and indistinct], and one gets up at the sound of a bird [because sleep

is very light], and all the daughters of song sound low [since hearing is defective; furthermore, the voice is weak, making any singing of songs feeble]."—Eccl. 12:3, 4.

"Also, they have become afraid merely at what is high [recognizing the danger of a possible fall], and there are terrors in the way [public thoroughfares are now filled with dangers on account of poor eyesight and hearing as well as slowed reflexes]. And the almond tree carries blossoms [the hair turns white and falls out like the white petals of almond blossoms that drop to the ground], and the grasshopper [an old person, stiff and bent, with elbows thrust backward, might resemble a grasshopper] drags itself along, and the caper berry bursts [for it fails to stimulate desire for food in an old person whose appetite has weakened], because man is walking to his long-lasting house [the grave] and the wailers have marched around in the street; before the silver cord [the spinal cord] is removed, and the golden bowl [the bowllike cranium with its brain content] gets crushed, and the jar [the heart] at the spring is broken, and the water wheel for the cistern [the circulatory system] has been crushed. Then the dust returns to the earth just as it happened to be and the spirit [the life force] itself returns to the true God who gave it." (Eccl. 12:5-7) This return of the spirit or life force to God signifies that control over the spirit now rests with the Most High. God alone can restore the dead person to life.

IN COMING ISSUES

- **Good Government—Will It Ever Be Realized?**
- **How God's Kingdom Can Benefit You.**
- **A World Without Violence—Is It Possible?**

Truly wise is the youth who uses his time and energies well in serving the Creator. He will have no regrets about this in adult life and will be in a far better position to cope with loss of physical strength. Besides, by living in harmony with the Creator's commands, he is safeguarded against losing his health and vigor prematurely.

Insight on the News

- This past summer, bulldozers lowered the hillock outside the western city wall of Jerusalem exposing ancient walls of an earlier time.

Digging Up the Valley of Hinnom

The digging is of interest to Bible students because it confirms the previous use made of this area, formerly a valley, outside

the city walls. "Old City residents for centuries would cast their debris over the city wall into the deeps of the Hinnom Vale," reports "The Jerusalem Post." It continues: "In clearing the slope, tons of old ceramics have been uncovered, as well as bones of camels, goats and sheep."

This illustrates the fact that when Jesus used the Greek word "Gehenna" (often translated "hell") to describe the punishment of the wicked, he was drawing on this fitting local symbol of destruction, as noted in the appendix to the interlinear Greek-English "Emphatic Diaglott."

"Into this place were cast all kinds of filth, with the carcasses of beasts, and the unburied bodies of criminals who had been executed. Continual fires were kept to consume these. . . . 'Gehenna,' then, as occurring in the New Testament, . . . in no place signifies a place of eternal torment."—Matt. 5:22, 29, 30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15, 33.

- How certain can we be of the presently accepted chronology of the ancient Babylonian Empire? For many years, chronologists have put heavy reliance on the king list of Claudius Ptolemy, a second-century

Claudius Ptolemy—a Fraud

Greek scholar often considered the greatest astronomer of antiquity.

However, in his new book "The Crime of Claudius Ptolemy," the noted physicist Robert R. Newton of Johns Hopkins University offers proof that many of Ptolemy's astronomical observations were "deliberately fabricated" to agree with his preconceived theories "so that he could claim that the observations prove the validity of his theories."

In its comments on Newton's book, "Scientific American" magazine notes: "Ptolemy's forgery may have extended to inventing the

length of reigns of Babylonian kings. Since much modern reconstruction of Babylonian chronology has been based on a list of kings that Ptolemy used to pinpoint the dates of alleged Babylonian observations, according to Newton 'all relevant chronology must now be reviewed and all dependence upon Ptolemy's [king] list must be removed.' "—October 1977, p. 80.

These findings illustrate why secular history and chronological reckoning cannot be relied upon when they conflict with the Bible. Unlike secular historians, the Bible writers had nothing to gain by misrepresenting the facts. Also, what they wrote became part of "all Scripture" that "is inspired of God."—2 Tim. 3:16.

- "Amman Stands—Jeremiah Was Wrong" reads the headline of an article in Georgia's

"Atlanta Journal and Constitution."

The article goes on to state that "Jeremiah predicted ancient Amman [now the capital of Jordan] would become a 'desolate heap.' Ezekiel said it would be made

a stable for camels and occupied by Bedouins."—See Jeremiah 49:2; Ezekiel 25:4, 5.

Was Jeremiah wrong? Modern-day Amman, Jordan, is not desolate, notes the Atlanta paper, so Jeremiah must have been wrong. But these hasty critics failed to note that nowhere did Jeremiah say the desolation of ancient Ammon would be PERMANENT, as prophets had done in other cases such as that of Babylon, which is desolate to this day.

—Isa. 13:19, 20.

In fact, Jeremiah's prophecy actually allowed for later habitation of Ammon, saying, just a few verses after the forecast of desolation: "Yet after this I will restore the fortunes of Ammon. This is the very word of the Lord."—49:6, "New English Bible."

However, before this occurred, the desolation prophecy was indeed fulfilled in detail, as noted by "The Biblical Archaeologist Reader": "Archaeological explorations have shown that sedentary occupation in the land of Ammon virtually ceased before the middle of the 6th century B.C. . . . the bedouin hordes from the desert . . . brought to an end the semi-autonomous Ammonite state."—Vol. II, pp. 87, 88.

Fighters Against God Losing The Battle

"They will be certain to fight against you, but they will not prevail against you, for 'I am with you,' is the utterance of Jehovah, 'to deliver you.'"—Jer. 1:19.

FIGHTERS against God! Not in the sense of fighting against the laws of God's creation, such as the law of gravitation. But fighters against God in the sense of fighting against the visible organization of his chosen people and the work that he commands them to do. In modern times, men who highly respect the scientifically discovered laws of creation may thus find themselves fighting against the God of The Holy Bible. To their own chagrin, they are losing the battle.—Acts 5:39.

² To such fighters against God it doubtless seems presumptuous for a small organization on earth to consider itself the organization over which God has put his special protection in order to deliver it from fighters against him. But to what mental conclusions should actual experiences of that organization lead it? The evidence of 100 years ought to lead it to the right conclusion as to the identity of the organization that God has chosen and strengthened to withstand worldwide attacks till now. This small organization of dedicated persons stepped onto the stage of modern affairs in God's name. All the evidence to date indicates that God chose to recognize and accept the organization and that he has not cast it off. The test of time, of as much as 10 decades, has furnished valid proof to this fact.

1. In what sense are those now losing the battle the fighters against God?

2. How is the proof furnished that God has accepted the small organization under question and that he has not cast it off?

³ The experience of this organization compares with what took place 19 centuries ago, in Bible times. In the Middle East a man was then being announced as the long-awaited Messiah, the one anointed by God to be the King of a government that would at last give all mankind a righteous rule. The majority of the people followed their religious leaders and refused to believe him to be the promised Messiah from God. But he was no impostor. He was no self-made Messiah ambitious for glory and power. To his opposers he said: "I do not accept glory from men. . . . I have come in the name of my Father, but you do not receive me; if someone else arrived in his own name, you would receive that one." (John 5:41-43) The speaker of those words was Jesus, a descendant of King David of Jerusalem and, hence, also a descendant of faithful Abraham, by means of whose seed all the families of the earth are to be blessed.—Gen. 12:3; 22:18; Matt. 1:1-16.

⁴ Jesus' coming in the name of his heavenly Father meant that he came, not on his own initiative, but as the one sent by his heavenly Father. So he was a son who obediently had to do on earth the will of his Father. He had to make his Father's name known and to bring honor to it, not misrepresenting it.

⁵ To this very day Jesus the Messiah

3. In whose name did the announced Messiah come, but with what reaction from the people?

4. Jesus' coming in the name of his heavenly Father meant what respecting himself?

5. Although being a prophet himself, in whose prophecies also was Jesus the Messiah interested?



has proved himself to be the greatest prophet that the God of the Bible has ever had on earth, not even excepting the law-giver Moses of pre-Christian times. (Deut. 18:15-19; Acts 3:22, 23; Rev. 22:18-20) But he was also interested in prophecies

made by a prophet earlier than himself named Jeremiah.

⁶ Jeremiah was a member of a priestly

6. In whose name did Jeremiah come and speak, and how is this fact verified by statements from persons of that time?

family living in Anathoth, under the kingdom of Judah. Like Jesus Christ, Jeremiah did not come or speak in his own name, even though the obligations of a Levite priest fell upon him. As in Jesus' case, Jeremiah's prophesying roused opposition. His opposers, who desired to kill him, said to him: "You must not prophesy in the name of Jehovah, that you may not die at our hand." (Jer. 11:21) Once, when feeling discouraged, Jeremiah said: "I am not going to make mention of him, and I shall speak no more in his name." (Jer. 20:9) But he found himself so fired up with God's word that he could not stop proclaiming it. His prophecies came true with the destruction of Jerusalem in 607 B.C.E., and yet the Jewish survivors who were bent on their own ways said to him: "As regards the word that you have spoken to us in the name of Jehovah, we are not listening to you." (Jer. 44:16) In time those fighters against God had to take the consequences.

⁷ Little wonder that, 40 years earlier, in 647 B.C.E., Jehovah needed to say to the then young man Jeremiah: "You must . . . speak to them everything that I myself command you. Do not be struck with any terror because of them, in order that I may not strike you with terror before them. But as for me, here I have made you today a fortified city and an iron pillar and copper walls against all the land, toward the kings of Judah, toward her princes, toward her priests and toward the people of the land. And they will be certain to fight against you, but they will not prevail against you, for 'I am with you,' is the utterance of Jehovah, 'to deliver you.'"—Jer. 1:17-19.

⁸ Think of the resistance that Jeremiah had to put up, the endurance that he had

to display—for more than 40 years! He was one of Jehovah's spokesmen to whom the Christian disciple James directed our attention, saying: "Take as a pattern of the suffering of evil and the exercising of patience the prophets, who spoke in the name of Jehovah." (Jas. 5:10) Jeremiah's constantly reminding himself that he had not come in his own name, but that he spoke in Jehovah's name, strengthened him to endure and defeat the purpose of his attackers, who were really fighting against God. Jehovah did not strike Jeremiah with terror before those assailants, for Jeremiah did not let himself be struck with terror at their menacing appearance and numbers. That was excellent for 26 centuries ago, but do we have anything to duplicate this today—an up-to-date illustration? Yes, we do!

A MODERN JEREMIAH CLASS

⁹ We do not mean that Jeremiah himself has come back to life by a resurrection from the dead. That was what some first-century Israelites thought of Jesus Christ because of his coming in Jehovah's name and enduring so much religious opposition there in Israel. (Matt. 16:13, 14) Today we mean someone who was prefigured or typified by ancient Jeremiah. We have in mind the servant or slave about whom Jesus Christ spoke in his prophecy concerning "the sign of [his] presence [or, parousia] and of the conclusion of the system of things." (Matt. 24:3) Today, alert Bible students see the "sign" of the presence, or parousia, of the glorified Jesus Christ in heavenly Kingdom power. Hence, the servant or slave should now be here on earth to complete the "sign" in all its details. In Matthew 24:45-47, Jesus said:

¹⁰ "Who really is the faithful and discreet slave whom his master appointed

7. What reassuring words did Jehovah need to say to Jeremiah at the start?

8. What recollection strengthened Jeremiah to endure for so long, but what question do we now ask?

9, 10. As prefigured by Jeremiah, whom do we have in mind, and why is such a one now due to be here?

over his domestics, to give them their food at the proper time? Happy is that slave if his master on arriving finds him doing so. Truly I say to you, He will appoint him over all his belongings."—NW; compare the *Authorized Version*.

¹¹ The "slave" here foretold could not be an individual Christian man, for, in such a case, he would have to be more than 1,900 years old by now. The "slave" must be the entire Christian congregation made up of the 144,000 disciples who have been begotten by God's spirit to become joint heirs with Jesus Christ in his heavenly kingdom. This "slave" class had its start on the festival day of Pentecost in the year 33 C.E. The original part of the "slave" class came into existence when the glorified Jesus Christ was used to pour out the holy spirit upon the waiting disciples (about 120 of them) assembled at Jerusalem. That this newly created "slave" class was then appointed to give spiritual food at the proper time to the domestics of the glorified Jesus Christ the Master is shown by an outstanding fact. What is that?

¹² All those who were then anointed with the holy spirit began to speak with hitherto unknown foreign languages and to talk about "the magnificent things of God." (Acts 2:1-11) Right after that 3,000 truth-hungry Jews and proselytes were fed with spiritual food at that proper time and became baptized, spirit-begotten Christians, domestics of the Master Jesus Christ.

—Acts 2:14-42; Matt. 24:45.

¹³ Those first-century spirit-begotten Christians died off, but in the centuries since then members have been added to the "slave" congregation, all these awaiting the "presence" of the glorified Master Jesus Christ in Kingdom power. Since the

11, 12. (a) When did the "slave" appear on the scene, and how? (b) What showed that the "slave" was appointed to feed the "domestics" at the proper time? 13. (a) How has this "slave" been kept alive till now, and in expectation of what? (b) Why should the 63-year period since 1914 have a special significance?

year 1914 the "sign" has appeared and become constantly more impressive, to verify that the Master's presence in Kingdom power began at the close of the Gentile Times in 1914. (Luke 21:24; Dan. 4:16, 23, 25, 32) Since then, no period of just 63 years has seen all mankind plagued with such international wars, political upheavals, accompanied by so many earthquakes, pestilences of pandemic proportions, food shortages with spiraling food costs, outbursts of lawlessness, and loveless oppression and persecution of Christ's "slave" class world wide. Truly, this period between World War I of 1914 and now remains without historic parallel. It should have significance of world importance. It does! Jesus Christ, God's prophet greater than Moses, prophetically explained what it would mean. What?

¹⁴ That his "presence," or parousia, is now in effect since 1914 and that the end of this system of things draws ever closer!

¹⁵ The period of Christ's "presence" is the time for his judging of members of the "slave" congregation appointed 19 centuries ago to feed his domestics with spiritual food at the proper time. (Matt. 24: 45-47; 25:14-30) So the final remnant of the spirit-begotten "slave" class are now due to be here on earth and to be undergoing judgment. Their faithfulness and spiritual wisdom in the Master's service determines their worthiness to be put in charge of all the earthly belongings of their Master. Also, since our times correspond with the days of Jehovah's prophet Jeremiah, it is logical that there should be a class like Jeremiah today, coming in Jehovah's name. There is such! It is composed of the approved remnant of the "slave" class. And till now the fighters against God have not prevailed against it!

14. According to Jesus' explanation, what did this period mean?

15. Why should there be a Jeremiah class on earth today, and who compose it?

"The Watchtower" has increased its printing from 6,000 copies monthly in English



¹⁶ Let us look back 100 years—back to 1877 C.E. By that time the religious sects and denominations of the realm of Christendom had multiplied greatly. However, at that time there was a small congregation of dedicated Bible students in Allegheny (now a part of Pittsburgh), Pennsylvania, U.S.A. This congregation was completely divorced from the religious systems of Christendom, which was then under attack by the evolution theory, the so-called Higher Criticism and materialism. Within that small congregation in Allegheny unsectarian study of God's inspired Word aroused a driving sense of urgency. An elder of that congregation saw the need of publishing a new magazine that would champion the basic, underlying doctrines of the Holy Bible. His material wealth he decided to use in this behalf. So in July of 1879 he founded the desired magazine with himself as editor and publisher. This magazine was due to pose a problem for the world system of things, particularly for Christendom. It was entitled "Zion's Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence." Its editor and publisher was the self-sacrificing Bible student Charles Taze Russell.

¹⁷ This editor and fellow contributors to the new magazine and the congregation that backed it up stepped upon the world stage in the name of the God of Jeremiah, who served as priest at ancient Zion. The

16. (a) A hundred years ago what had begun to exist in Allegheny, Pennsylvania, with what relation to Christendom? (b) How did a vitally needed magazine then come to be published, and by whom?

17, 18. (a) Besides what is indicated by the title "Zion's Watch Tower," in whose name did those having to do with the magazine step out onto the world stage? (b) Why would the magazine never beg or petition men for support?

Bible speaks repeatedly of the Zion of Jeremiah's time as being the residence of Jeremiah's God. (Ps. 74:2; 48:1, 2) The magazine's designation "Watch Tower" had to do with the Bible text quoted on the title page: "Watchman, what of the night?" "The morning cometh." (Isa. 21: 11, 12, *Authorized Version*) This suggested the purpose that the magazine was going to serve with regard to the fulfillment of Bible prophecies. But on page 2 of the second issue of the magazine (Volume 1, Number 2), at the top of the first column there appeared the heading: "Do You Want 'Zion's Watch Tower'?" Under this heading, paragraph three said:

¹⁸ "Do not suppose these remarks to be an appeal for money. No. 'Zion's Watch Tower' has, we believe, JEHOVAH for its backer, and while this is the case it will never *beg* nor *petition* men for support. When He who says: 'All the gold and silver of the mountains are mine,' fails to provide necessary funds, we will understand it to be time to suspend the publication."

GOING FORWARD IN THE DIVINE NAME

¹⁹ There is no room for debating the point. The publisher of *Zion's Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence* stepped into the world arena of religious activity in the name of JEHOVAH, just as the prophet Jeremiah of old did. So, then, did Jehovah fail to provide the necessary funds for the continued publication of this magazine? The answer to this question is obvious

19. What shows whether Jehovah failed to provide funds for publishing the magazine?

semimonthly printing of 10,400,000 in 79 languages; ten of these are shown here:



from the fact that *never*, since July of 1879 till now, did this magazine, in spite of being banned at various times in various lands, suspend publication or miss even a single issue!

²⁰ Today the *Watchtower* magazine has increased its printing from an initial 6,000 copies monthly in one language (English) to a semimonthly printing of 10,400,000 copies in 79 languages. Today, ever since the issue of March 1, 1939, this magazine has been entitled "The Watchtower Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom." Also, today it has a companion magazine entitled "Awake!" printed by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., in 33 languages and with an average printing of 10,125,000 copies.

²¹ From its issue of January 1, 1926, the *Watch Tower* magazine made it its special endeavor to set the name of the Bible's God, Jehovah, most prominently before the whole world. It was only logical that, five years later (in 1931), those dedicated, baptized Christians who accepted the magazine as their official publication should embrace the name based on Isaiah 43:10, namely, Jehovah's Witnesses. Not strangely, such a coming and speaking in the name of Jeremiah's God from 1879 onward placed an obligation upon the publishers and supporters of the *Watch Tower* magazine and related publications. What? To herald to all mankind what Jehovah had declared in the Holy Bible. This resembled

20. What does the magazine's printing now amount to, and to what does its title call attention?

21, 22. (a) What was made an objective of the magazine, and what name did those accepting it as their official magazine embrace? (b) Thus what obligation, like that of Jeremiah, came upon them?

the responsibility that was laid upon Jeremiah, to whom God said:

²² "And as for you, you should gird up your hips, and you must rise up and speak to them everything that I myself command you."—Jer. 1:17.

²³ The Christian organization of Jehovah's Witnesses has recognized its obligation in that respect and has continuously striven to fulfill it. Not only do they publish the complete Bible in a number of translations, but they also publish and circulate bound books, booklets and tracts that explain Jehovah's written Word in its entirety, that is to say, "everything that I myself command you." Down till now they have not held back from doing this.

²⁴ Jesus Christ, as a prophet greater than Jeremiah, outlined the main work for his disciples when he said: "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations." Also: "Go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father [Jehovah] and of the Son [Jesus Christ] and of the holy spirit, teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you. And, look! I am with you all the days until the conclusion of the system of things."—Matt. 24:14; 28:19, 20.

²⁵ Such work as commanded by God's Son Jesus Christ has been pushed by Jehovah's Christian witnesses clear around

23. So what has the organization of Jehovah's Witnesses continuously striven to do, and how?

24. How did Jesus outline the main work for his disciples?

25. How have Jehovah's Witnesses carried forward this ordained work, but what about those fighting against this work?

the globe into 216 lands and island groups in 194 languages. Men who oppose them in this divinely ordained work make themselves in actuality fighters against God. In doing so, they are fighting a losing

battle. Desperately they persist in thinking that they will prevail against the small anointed Jeremiah class and their loyal companions. But we have Jehovah's Word for it that they will never prevail!

"They Will Be Certain To Fight Against You"

HOW would any of us feel as married persons if our legally wedded mate turned unfaithful to us and flagrantly committed adultery? Say a wife, wedded to us from her youth, broke her vows, left us and went selling herself to men of loose moral conduct. If a faithful husband, would we not feel hurt at heart? After hopes of reconciliation had been blasted, we might send her away with a bill of divorce. In our predicament, we might never want her back!

² Twenty-six centuries ago, in the days of the prophet Jeremiah, a case like that had developed, but on a national scale. It has a modern-day parallel, and so it concerns us today. It deserves our examination, to see how we may be involved. In the record of the case as set out by Jeremiah, we read this: "There is a saying: 'If a man should send away his wife and she should actually go away from him and become another man's, should he return to her anymore? . . . And you yourself have committed prostitution with many companions; and should there be a returning to me?' is the utterance of Jehovah. 'Raise your eyes to the beaten paths

and see. Where is it that you have not been raped? Alongside the ways you have sat for them, like an Arabian in the wilderness; and you keep polluting the land with your acts of prostitution and with your badness.'"—Jer. 3:1, 2.

³ The nation of Israel is the one here addressed. Accordingly we read: "'Do return, O renegade Israel,' is the utterance of Jehovah. 'I shall not have my face drop angrily upon you people, for I am loyal,' is the utterance of Jehovah." "'I shall not stay resentful to time indefinite. Only take note of your error, for it is against Jehovah your God that you have transgressed.'" "'Return, O you renegade sons,' is the utterance of Jehovah. 'For I myself have become the husbandly owner of you people; and I will take you . . . and I will bring you to Zion.'"—Jer. 3:12-14.

⁴ The one today who is like renegade Israel is Christendom. There are more than 900,000,000 persons who are yet tied in with Christendom, for they are enrolled church members in her many sects and denominations. Has Jehovah God ever been the "husbandly owner" of Christendom? Today she plays down the name of Jehovah and puts the name of Jehovah's Son

1. What reaction might we feel at the unfaithfulness of a marriage mate?

2. What case of infidelity on a national scale is set out in Jeremiah 3:1, 2?

3. What does Jehovah tell the renegade here addressed to do, and why?

4. Who today is like renegade Israel, and what question arises about husbandly ownership?

Jesus almost exclusively to the fore. More than 18 centuries before Christendom began to exist, Jehovah did become a "husbandly owner." To whom? To the nation of Israel. He gained ownership of them especially by liberating them from slavery in ancient Egypt and then by bringing them into a legal contract with himself at Mount Sinai, the prophet Moses being used as the mediator between God and man. (Ex. 19:1 through 24:8) But what now about Christendom?

⁵ Here is something that the anointed Jeremiah class of today must point out to Christendom, and this modern Jeremiah is doing so. Christendom had its roots in the Christianity of the first century C.E. The true Christian congregation came into being on the festival day of Pentecost in the year 33 of that century. It became "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for special possession," to Jehovah God. (1 Pet. 2:9) This meant that his marriage relationship with natural circumcised Israel was annulled, abolished. She became divorced! Jehovah now entered into the position of "husbandly owner" toward the newly born "holy nation," spiritual Israel. This "holy nation" he had bought with the precious blood of his Son Jesus Christ, the Greater Moses. He brought this "nation" into the "new covenant" that Jeremiah had foretold. (Jer. 31:31-34) Jesus was the Mediator of that new covenant. In autumn of the year 36 C.E. believing non-Jews were admitted to baptism and became part of spiritual Israel.

⁶ Then what? After the death of Christ's chosen apostles by the end of the first century, religious rebellion began to take root in the congregation of spiritual Israel against its "husbandly owner," Jehovah God. (Matt. 13:24-28, 36-39) This apost-

tasy among professed Christians grew, until early in the fourth century Emperor Constantine of the Roman Empire was influenced to take advantage of the situation. Although he was not baptized and was still Pontifex Maximus of the Roman pagan religion, he declared the nominal Christianity of his day to be the State religion for the Roman Empire. From this a marriage of apostate Christianity with the political State resulted.

⁷ To present-day Christendom Jehovah's Christian witnesses have the duty to speak just as Jeremiah spoke to the apostate nation of Israel of the seventh century before our Common Era. With what words from Jehovah God? These: "Upon every high hill and under every luxuriant tree you were lying sprawled out, prostituting yourself. And as for me, I had planted you as a choice red vine, all of it a true seed. So how have you been changed toward me into the degenerate shoots of a foreign vine?"—Jer. 2:20, 21.

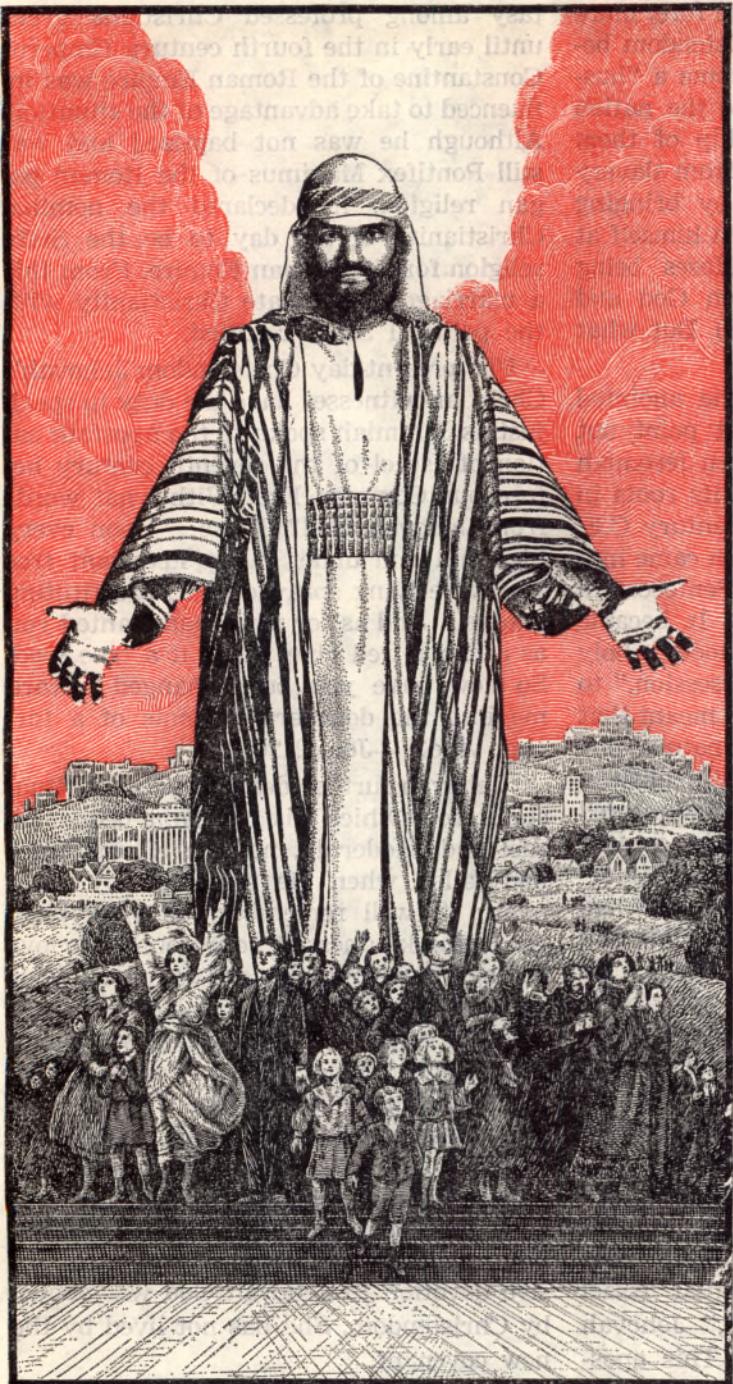
⁸ Jehovah further described the spiritual state from which his covenant people Israel and, modernly, nominal Christianity had fallen when He also said by Jeremiah: "I well remember, on your part, the loving-kindness of your youth, the love during your being engaged to marry, your walking after me in the wilderness, in a land not sown with seed. Israel was something holy to Jehovah, the first yield [the firstfruits] to Him." (Jer. 2:2, 3) The sacredness of that covenant relationship with Jehovah as God was lost sight of by natural Israel, except for a faithful remnant that included Jeremiah. A similar failure to appreciate the fitness of exclusive devotion to Jehovah God was shown by Christendom. She has not lived by the new covenant.

5. (a) In what did Christendom have its roots? (b) In 33 C.E., with whom did Jehovah enter into a husbandly relationship, and how?

6. To what did religious apostasy among professed Christians lead in the fourth century C.E.?

7. According to Jeremiah 2:20, 21, what degeneration must Jehovah's Christian witnesses call to Christendom's attention?

8. How does Jeremiah 2:2, 3 show a fall on Israel's part from an honorable spiritual state?



The young Jeremiah class (as pictured in an early Watch Tower Society calendar) is "over the nations" in having a God-given position and work

⁹ Who, though, are Jehovah's Christian witnesses of today that they should take it upon themselves to act like Jeremiah and charge Christendom with falling short of God's requirements for spiritual Israelites in the new covenant? Who are *they* that *they* should be accusing Christendom of being guilty of spiritual adultery toward the God of the new covenant? (Jas. 4:4) That is how Christendom views the work of Jehovah's Witnesses. Measured from the time of Constantine the Great, Christendom is more than 1,600 years old and has millions of congregations!

¹⁰ In contrast, Jehovah's Christian witnesses of today are but a century old, measured from the founding of the Allegheny (Pennsylvania) congregation of unsectarian Bible students. Christendom views them as just a young upstart congregation without the Biblical scholarship of which she can boast. What, though, of Jeremiah's age when Jehovah commissioned him to be a prophet?

¹¹ Jeremiah's youth did not matter with Jehovah. Godly devotion and willingness to serve under unpleasant circumstances

9, 10. Why does Christendom ask questions about the fitness of Jehovah's Christian witnesses to act like Jeremiah?

11. According to Jeremiah 1:4-6, did Jeremiah's youth matter with Jehovah?

were the qualities that counted with Jehovah. This is evident from the Bible record: "And the word of Jehovah began to occur to me, saying: 'Before I was forming you in the belly I knew you, and before you proceeded to come forth from the womb I sanctified you. Prophet to the nations I made you.' But I said: 'Alas, O Sovereign Lord Jehovah! Here I actually do not know how to speak, for I am but a boy.'"—Jer. 1:4-6.

"BUT A BOY"

¹² However, was this son of Hilkiah the priest too young in 647 B.C.E. for Jehovah to select him as "prophet to the nations"? No, for even before Jeremiah was conceived in his mother's womb, hence long before his birth, Jehovah saw that a son from Hilkiah would be suitable for this responsible office—just at the right time, too. Also, if Jehovah could sanctify such a son before Hilkiah begot him, certainly this Almighty God could introduce that son into the sacred office, say about 20 years after his birth, or, better still, 25 years after his birth, when he would be qualified to enter the first phases of priestly service at the temple in Jerusalem. So Jeremiah's birth was well timed, for Jehovah wanted the desired prophet-priest to be a young man at the beginning of his career.

¹³ Jehovah purposed for Jeremiah to serve as prophet for a long time, for more than 40 years, or till old age. So it was not accidental that Jehovah's prophetic word began to come to Jeremiah in the thirteenth year of the reign of King Josiah of Jerusalem. (Jer. 1:1, 2) But Jeremiah himself felt too young to undertake prophetic work that required speaking,

12. Why was Jeremiah not too young in 647 B.C.E. for Jehovah to select him to be "prophet to the nations"?

13. During whose reign did Jehovah's word come to Jeremiah, and why did he feel too young to speak as prophet?

publicly. Also, since this would involve speaking to the elders of the nation, men of advanced age, Jeremiah felt himself to be "but a boy."

¹⁴ The kings, princes, priests and people of the land looked down upon Jeremiah's youth, this reminding us of how the Christian apostle Paul told his missionary companion Timothy not to let anyone look down upon his youth when he was carrying out Paul's orders to him. (1 Tim. 4:12) Jehovah did not do so. He did not speak to Jeremiah in a boyish way, and he did not inspire Jeremiah's first prophecy to be couched in boy's talk. It was addressed to adults and in their dignified language.

¹⁵ All along, Christendom's much older religious systems have looked upon Jehovah's Christian witnesses as "but a boy," in comparison with themselves. It is true that C. T. Russell was just 27 years old when he founded and started editing *Zion's Watch Tower*, but he kept on editing it for 37 years, till he died when 64 years old. He served as president of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society for almost 32 years (1884-1916). As that Society was incorporated in December of 1884, the work carried on in conjunction with it by those now organized as Jehovah's Christian witnesses has been for only about 100 years. Yes, youthful they were when stepping into the arena of modern religious controversy, yet they went out onto the field with courage. It was like the teenage shepherd boy David, when he challenged the heavily armed Philistine giant Goliath. (1 Sam. 17:23-54) Like David, they knew that they were going forth in Jehovah's name and that "to Jehovah belongs the battle."—1 Sam. 17:47.

14. How did Jehovah's attitude toward Jeremiah's youth contrast with that of the prominent people of the land?

15. How has Christendom all along looked upon the Jeremiah class, and how has the courage of this class been like that of David?

¹⁶ Regardless of their age, Jehovah is able to qualify those whom he chooses for his service. The experience of Jeremiah as a pre-Christian witness of Jehovah proves that to be true, for our encouragement today. Jeremiah's own biography says: "And Jehovah went on to say to me: 'Do not say, "I am but a boy." But to all those to whom I shall send you, you should go; and everything that I shall command you, you should speak. Do not be afraid because of their faces, for "I am with you to deliver you," is the utterance of Jehovah.' At that Jehovah thrust his hand out and caused it to touch my mouth. Then Jehovah said to me: 'Here I have put my words in your mouth. See, I have commissioned you this day to be over the nations and over the kingdoms, in order to uproot and to pull down and to destroy and to tear down, to build and to plant.'" —Jer. 1:7-10.

¹⁷ The Jeremiah class of our time understand their commission from Jehovah. They know that this commission does not authorize them to indulge in worldly politics, to promote or take active part in political revolutions or to engage in nihilistic, anarchistic movements. That is not God's way for them "to uproot and to pull down and to destroy and to tear down." Their being "over the nations and over the kingdoms" is not that they may dictate to the nations and kingdoms or take over full control of them. In Jeremiah's day he did not carry out his commission from the Most High God in that way. Neither do those of the anointed Jeremiah class of today do such a thing. They are peaceful, orderly, law-abiding citizens of the land of their residence.

¹⁸ In what sense, then, are they "over

the nations and over the kingdoms"? How do they carry out their supranational commission from Jehovah, in whose name they have been sent? Well, they are given a position or office that comes from a source higher than the worldly nations and kingdoms. For this reason they are duly authorized to make pronouncements world wide that these nations and kingdoms would not commission the Jeremiah class to pronounce without worldly diplomacy. With authority from the Most High God and in the language of his Bible, they merely *declare* that these nations and kingdoms will be uprooted from their entrenched places, pulled down, torn down and destroyed at God's due time and by his chosen means. (Compare Ezekiel 43:3; Genesis 41:11-13.) It is as if the Jeremiah class were doing the uprooting, pulling down, tearing down and destroying, for what God's Word tells this class to declare He himself will fulfill.—Jer. 18:7-10.

¹⁹ In that way God shows himself to be "King of the nations," showing himself to be superior to them all. None of their kings and rulers can equal him.—Jer. 10:7; Rev. 15:3, margin; *The Jerusalem Bible; The New American Bible*.

²⁰ It takes courage for those of the Jeremiah class to fulfill this commission, for their message is unpopular world wide. Like Jeremiah of old they have to declare the destruction of all worldly nations. (Jer. 25:15-30) So they cannot share in the fanatical patriotism of these doomed nations. They cannot imbibe the nationalistic spirit of modern times. Kings and rulers of today consider the message of the Jeremiah class to be seditious, disloyal, damaging to the morale of their subjects and weakening to the defense forces of their lands. So they threaten these proclaimers

16. In spite of Jeremiah's objection as to his being "but a boy," what did Jehovah then do?

17. What does Jehovah's commission to the Jeremiah class not authorize the members of it to do?

18. In what sense is the Jeremiah class over nations and kingdoms, and in what sense does this class act as commissioned toward such nations and kingdoms?

19. What does Jehovah thus prove himself to be to the nations, relatively speaking?

20. Because of what international reactions does it take courage for the Jeremiah class to carry out its commission from God?

of Jehovah's prophetic message to the modern world. In many cases they back up their threats with suppression of the Jeremiah class and with various forms of punishment to try to deter this class. So

it becomes necessary to imitate Jeremiah and obey Jehovah as "King of the nations" rather than men. That is what Christ's apostles of the first century did.—Acts 4: 19, 20; 5:29.

"They Will Not Prevail Against You"

THE year 1919, the year of the Versailles Peace Treaty following World War I, marked a turning point for the anointed Jeremiah class. In no uncertain Bible terms they took up Jehovah's message of destruction for this system of things during God's approaching war at Har-Magedon.—Rev. 16:13-16.

Certainly now, when more than 57 years have passed by since 1919, there is no time to lose. In Jeremiah's case, he had only a limited time—40 years—in which to declare Jerusalem's impending destruction. His modern counterpart likewise has only a limited time. There is every reason for us to keep awake. Now, so many years after Jehovah commissioned the Jeremiah class, He is still awake to his purpose with special regard to this "time of the end" in which the nations find themselves. (Dan. 12:4) He is keeping awake as to what he has purposed to do when this "time of the end" terminates. Jeremiah 1:11, 12 makes this certain:

"And the word of Jehovah continued to occur to me, saying: 'What are you seeing, Jeremiah?' So I said: 'An offshoot of an almond tree [Hebrew, *shaqed*] is what I am seeing.' And Jehovah went on to say

to me: 'You have seen well, for I am keeping awake [*shaqed*] concerning my word in order to carry it out.'

Who, then, of us today, whether we belong to the anointed Jeremiah class or belong to those actively supporting that class, dares to discontinue his own personal wakefulness? We do the wise thing if we imitate Jehovah himself. To illustrate his own wakefulness he caused Jeremiah to see in vision the "offshoot of an almond tree." Jeremiah knew that the word for "almond tree" (*shaqed* in Hebrew) means "one awakening." This tree is the first one to awake in the spring of the year by its blossoming. Jehovah was like the "offshoot of an almond tree" in his own awakening to the season into which the nations and kingdoms were entering. His prophetic Word applies at a certain time, and at that time he will carry it out. His word will never fail owing to any inattentiveness on his part. Do we believe that today when we are at the threshold of the year 1978?

Because Jehovah has kept awake during all these decades within this "time of the end," he has continued sending forth the Jeremiah class to serve notice upon the nations and kingdoms. (Compare

1, 2. Why, in this "time of the end," is there no time to lose on the part of the Jeremiah class?
3, 4. How did Jehovah illustrate to Jeremiah his own wakefulness as regards his purpose, and now what question do we properly ask ourselves?

5. How did Jehovah show his wakefulness toward the increasing urgency of his message, and how should we correspond with this?

2 Chronicles 36:15, 16, NW; *Byington*.) As the time for Jehovah's executing of judgment upon the nations and kingdoms gets ever closer, the situation becomes more urgent for him to see that such warning notice is served world wide, especially for the benefit of individuals who must take a personal stand. Keeping in mind that Jehovah is as awake as ever and will be ready on time, those of the Jeremiah class should keep awake to the increasing urgency of their message. They should keep themselves awake by steady activity in widely proclaiming it.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE END OF THIS SYSTEM

⁶ By Jehovah's inspired Word we know the Source of the destruction that impends over the present system of things. Hence, we know the direction from which the destruction comes, and also the agency that will be used. We get a further clue concerning this from the illustration that Jehovah sent to Jeremiah at the time of commissioning him to be "prophet to the nations":

⁷ "And the word of Jehovah proceeded to occur to me the second time, saying: 'What are you seeing?' So I said: 'A wide-mouthed cooking pot blown upon is what I am seeing, and its mouth is away from the north.' At this Jehovah said to me: 'Out of the north the calamity will be loosened against all the inhabitants of the land. For "here I am calling for all the families of the kingdoms of the north," is the utterance of Jehovah; "and they will certainly come and place each one his throne at the entrance of the gates of Jerusalem, and against all her walls round about and against all the cities of Judah. And I will speak with them my judgments over all their badness, in that they have

6, 7. By the illustration that Jehovah next gave to Jeremiah, what do we know about the impending destruction of the present system?

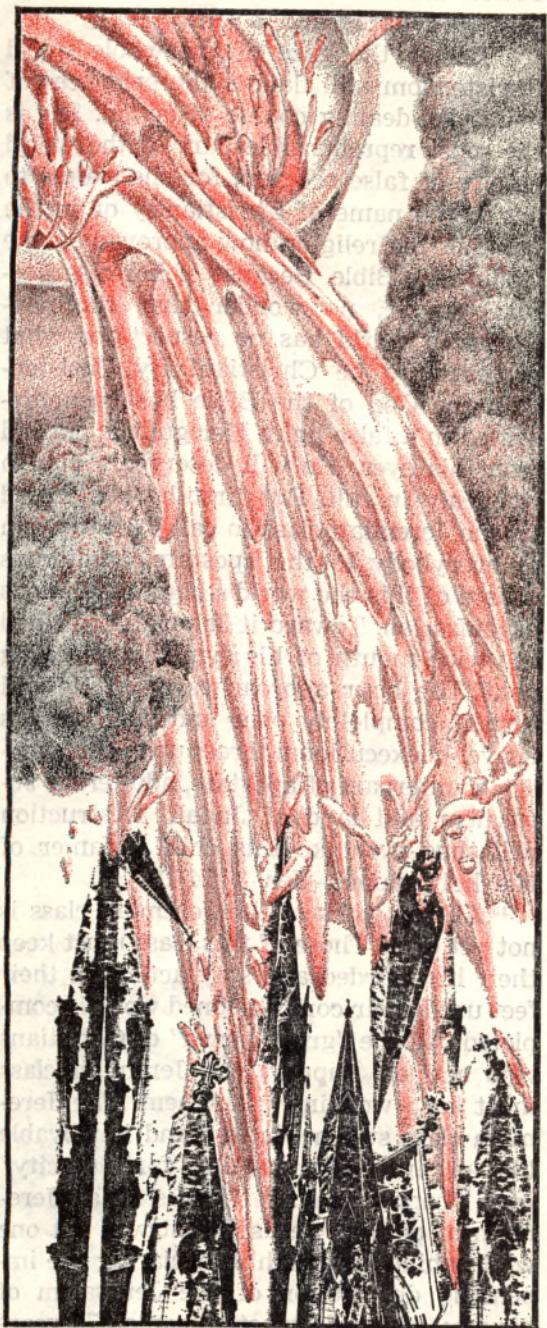
left me and they keep making sacrificial smoke to other gods and bowing down to the works of their own hands.'" —Jer. 1:13-16.

⁸ We remember that Jeremiah was raised up in 647 B.C.E. and commissioned to be "prophet to the nations." Disastrous trouble was already then brewing for Jerusalem and the land of Judah. What was being boiled in the cooking pot seen in Jeremiah's vision was nothing good for renegade Jerusalem and the other cities of Judah. The purpose for which the cooking pot was being "blown upon" was not to cool the contents of the pot but was to fan the flames of the fire underneath this caldron. The fact that the wide mouth of the pot was tilted away from the north meant that the boiling hot contents were to be poured out upon what lay to the south. That meant Jerusalem and the land of Judah. The calamity upon them was not to come up from Egypt to their south. It would come southward by a northern route upon the doomed cities.—Jer. 4:6, 7; 6:1, 22.

⁹ The contents of the symbolic cooking pot that Jehovah would dump out upon the land of Judah would be "all the families of the kingdoms of the north." Babylon would therefore be the leading figure in this invasion of the land of Judah, for the Babylonian Empire was then rising to become the Third World Power of Bible prophecy. Jeremiah as prophet had to wait 27 years before he saw that symbolic cooking pot pour out its first invasion of the land of Judah by Babylon's military forces, in 620 B.C.E. Three years later there came another spillage of the symbolic cooking pot with a second invasion by the Babylonians, and Jeremiah finally came under the kingship of Zedekiah the vassal

8. Why was the visionary cooking pot blown upon, and what was indicated by its being tilted away from the north?

9. What spillages of the symbolic "cooking pot" did Jeremiah see poured out upon the land of Judah?



Jehovah's "cooking pot" of calamity will be poured out upon Christendom

of Emperor Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. Then came Zedekiah's revolt, and in 609 B.C.E. the symbolic cooking pot was completely turned over for a third and final spillage of Babylonian hordes upon the cities of Judah.* In the summer of 607 B.C.E. the "calamity" reached its peak in the destruction of Jerusalem. By early autumn of that year all the land of Judah was left desolate.

¹⁰ Those of the Jeremiah class today expect to witness what was foreshadowed by that ancient "calamity"! Yes, they expect to see "calamity" upon a far greater scale befall Christendom, the modern counterpart of renegade Jerusalem and the land of Judah.

¹¹ Age-old Christendom is marked by 'all the badness' that perverted ancient Jerusalem and the land of Judah. The Bible searchlight, when turned upon Christendom, reveals that, in spite of Jehovah's Ten Commandments, she sacrifices to "other gods." Yes, she worshipfully bows down to the work of human hands. She professes to be Christian, but she does not imitate Jesus Christ in being separate from this ungodly world. She is pervaded with the divisive, war-breeding nationalism of the day. Let a national crisis come along, and she shows herself to be a worshiper of the political State, the work of human hands. The vast wealth of the churches of Christendom brands her as a worshiper of materialism. Active friendship with this world makes her Jehovah's enemy!

¹² Jeremiah of old had to point out that

* See 2 Kings 24:1 through 25:2, *Jerusalem Bible*, footnotes; Josephus' *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book X, chapter 6; *Jewish Encyclopedia*, under "Jeholakim"; *All Scripture Is Inspired of God and Beneficial*, page 295, under 628 B.C.E. through 609 B.C.E.

10. The Jeremiah class expect to witness what was foreshadowed by that ancient "calamity" visited upon whom?

11. How does the Bible searchlight reveal Christendom's "badness" to be like that of renegade Jerusalem and Judah?

12. Of what did Jehovah forewarn Jeremiah, and what promise did Jehovah give him, for our encouragement also?

Jehovah was justified in pouring out national calamity upon the Israelites for breaking their holy covenant with him. Jehovah knew that what he began commanding Jeremiah in 647 B.C.E. to speak to the inhabitants of the land of Judah would not please the majority. So he forewarned Jeremiah by frankly telling him that the kings of the land, the princes, the priests and the people of Judah would fight against him. His very life would be threatened. So, what if Jehovah had not promised the young prophet that all these foes would not prevail against him? Would he have had the heart to carry on doggedly for 40 years as Jehovah's "prophet to the nations" and finally see his vicious enemies go down in defeat? It is hard to think so! Jehovah's promise to Jeremiah of old applies to the Jeremiah class of today and to their supporters!

¹³ Jehovah's symbolic "cooking pot" for this "time of the end" is boiling today. As in the case of the "seven golden bowls that were full of the anger of God" as seen in Revelation 15:7, the "cooking pot" represents the container of the full-scale "calamity" from Jehovah upon Christendom. Christendom certainly has a pile of immoralities for which Jehovah must call her to account inasmuch as she claims to be in the "new covenant" with him through Christ. He now finds her hands drenched with the blood of two world wars, besides her violent persecution of his Christian witnesses. Appropriately it is His words as set forth in Jeremiah 2:34 that the Jeremiah class of today direct against Christendom, namely: "In your skirts there have been found the blood marks of the souls of the innocent poor ones. Not in the act of breaking in [on the part of the poor innocent ones like burglars] have I found them, but they are upon all these [skirts]."—See *The Watch-*

^{13.} In view of what pile of charges against Christendom is the symbolic "cooking pot" boiling against her?

Tower under date of November 1, 1923, page 327, paragraph 3 (6).

¹⁴ Before the gaze of the whole world Christendom still flaunts the evidences of her death-dealing course of action. She is the most reprehensible part of the world empire of false religion, for she claims to act in the name of Christianity or in the name of the religion now approved by the God of the Bible. Because of her disgraceful example, no wonder that the non-Christian world has no respect for what professes to be Christian! By Christendom the God of the Bible has been presented in a false light. Her guilt is not hid from his eyes. He will deservedly punish it openly in full. But first he has raised up the Jeremiah class to call the attention of everybody to the apostate, adulterous course of this the world's biggest religious organization. Toward it Jehovah has tilted the wide mouth of his symbolic "cooking pot." The hour approaches when He will turn it completely over and spill out his heavenly executional forces upon this modern counterpart of apostate, adulterous Jerusalem and land of Judah. Destruction will thus overtake this chief defamer of His holy name.—Jer. 1:14-16.

¹⁵ All the work of the Jeremiah class is not yet over. Those of this class must keep their hips girded and stay active on their feet until their commissioned work is completed. All the "great crowd" of Christians who actively support the Jeremiah class must keep working with them. The Jeremiah class still needs to stand immovable like an "iron pillar" and a "fortified city" with "copper walls." This is what Jeremiah of old did. Jesus Christ was not one whit behind Jeremiah in declaring the impending destruction of the Jerusalem of his day, which destruction came 676 years

14. (a) Why is Christendom the most reprehensible part of the world empire of false religion? (b) What will Jehovah spill out upon her from his symbolic "cooking pot"?

15. Why must the Jeremiah class keep hips girded and stay active on foot, and until when?

after the Jerusalem of Jeremiah's day perished. As anointed followers of Jesus Christ the Jeremiah class of today must do the same thing, until they witness the destruction of the antitypical unfaithful Jerusalem and Judah of our times.

¹⁶ Like Jesus, the Jeremiah class must declare, not just the "acceptable time," "the year of goodwill on the part of Jehovah," but also "the day of vengeance on the part of our God."—Isa. 61:1, 2; 49:6; 2 Cor. 6:2; Jer. 11:20; 20:12; 46:10; Luke 21:22, *Authorized Version*.

¹⁷ These "last days" of this system of things are no time for us to "put on the soft pedal," just because Christendom's kings, princes, priests and people will intensify their fight against us. With more than 57 years of public service world wide already behind it, the Jeremiah class is no longer "but a boy." Since 1919 it has put up with warfare waged against it by the political, religious, and popular elements of this old world.

¹⁸ By now the enduring Jeremiah class should have attained to manhood, adulthood. Because faithful members of the Jeremiah class die off, it may grow fewer in numbers yearly; yet it persists in its work from the High Commissioner, Jehovah. Till now his reassuring words have proved true, that the opposing kings, princes, priests and people would not prevail against it. His words will prove equally true in the more strenuous days just ahead as the time for his vengeance to be poured out from his symbolic "cooking pot" draws near. Our war-minded enemies will not prevail against us! Why not? Because the Sovereign Lord, Jehovah of armies, remains with us, to "deliver" us in the fu-

16. Like Jesus, the Jeremiah class must declare what two themes?

17. Intensification of their fight against us should not cause us to do what respecting kings, princes, priests and people?

18. What reassuring words of Jehovah have already proved true regarding the Jeremiah class, and what does this mean for the future?

ture just as he has done in the past. So we shall see our foes bite the dust!

"TO BUILD AND TO PLANT"

¹⁹ Jeremiah of old was commissioned as "prophet to the nations," not only to uproot, pull down, tear down and destroy, but also "to build and to plant." (Jer. 1:10) Not "build" what was pulled down and torn down, not "plant" what had been uprooted and destroyed, but foretell the building of what Jehovah purposed to be built and the planting of what he purposed to be planted and grow up to full fruition. This part of Jeremiah's commission definitely now relates to the true kingdom of Jehovah God now that, since 1914 C.E., "the kingdom of the world did become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ." (Rev. 11:15) Hence, there must now be the global fulfillment of Christ's words: "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations." (Matt. 24:14) The doing of this carries with it the planting of true Christianity and the building up of it in many territories newly witnessed to by the Jeremiah class and their active supporters. The spiritual paradise needed to be built up.

²⁰ Long ago, in 647-607 B.C.E., Jeremiah himself did a work of planting and building up a class of non-Israelite individuals who were to survive Jerusalem's destruction in 607 B.C.E. These were the Rechabites, the descendants of Jonadab, and the Ethiopian eunuch named Ebed-melech. (Jer. 35:1-9; 38:1-13; 39:15-18) These God-fearing friends of Jeremiah pictured the "great crowd" who today befriend the Jeremiah class and actively aid this anointed remnant in their work. With the Jeremiah class they face the mounting oppo-

19. What positive work was the Jeremiah class commissioned to do, and how has it done this?

20. How did Jeremiah do a building and planting work in his day, and who figure in the fulfillment of such work today?

sition of kings, princes, priests and people.—See pages 62-67 of the book *You May Survive Armageddon into God's New World*, edition of 1955.

²¹ The unbreakable loyalty of the "great crowd" to the Jeremiah class will be amply rewarded. Against them the present-day fighters against God will not prevail. With the Jeremiah class they will survive

21. How will the loyalty of the "great crowd" to the Jeremiah class be amply rewarded?

the "war of the great day of God the Almighty" at Har-Magedon. They will form the basis for the "new earth" under Jehovah's "new heavens." (Rev. 7:9-17; 21:1-4) Great is the pleasure that the Jeremiah class has in building up in the "great crowd" the valid hope of inheriting the approaching earthly paradise according to the loving purpose of the Sovereign Lord Jehovah!

Singing Jehovah's Praise in the Marshalls

"**S**ING to Jehovah a new song, . . . in the islands let them tell forth even his praise," declared the prophet Isaiah. (Isa. 42:10-12) How fitting those words are when we consider the Marshall Islands! Jehovah's Christian witnesses here are joyfully singing God's praises and telling others about him.

Most of the Marshall Islands really are atolls, or coral reefs, fringing beautiful blue lagoons. The Marshalls consist of two "chains" of islands about 800 miles (1,287 kilometers) long and 130 miles (209 kilometers) apart. To the Marshallese, the eastern group is known as *Ratak* ("Sunrise") and the western "chain" as *Ralik* ("Sunset"). The tropical Marshalls are situated 2,000 miles (3,200 kilometers) southwest of Hawaii.



GETTING BETTER ACQUAINTED

The Marshallese are a short, stocky, congenial people. They are a mixture of southeastern Asiatic (primarily Indonesian) and Caucasian races, but are not considered Polynesians. Theirs is a relatively unruled world, tempered by soft south sea breezes, tropical heat and high humidity. Some of the best navigators are among the Marshallese, for they display a remarkable talent for navigation without instruments.

During World War II, Kwajalein, the most widely known atoll of the Marshalls,

was a Japanese stronghold. The Japanese were ousted from Kwajalein in just five days of fierce fighting in 1944, but, in the two-month period prior to this, Allied forces had dropped 15,000 tons of explosives on the atoll. Both the Japanese and the Americans have left their influence on the Marshallese. Middle-aged and older persons here speak and read Japanese, whereas those of the younger generation can 'get by' with English. However, everyday conversation is almost entirely in Marshallese. Today the population is divided between Catholicism and Protestantism. But true worship also is practiced here. How did this come about?

Powell Mikklesen, a United States businessman, was the first witness of Jehovah to arrive in the Marshalls. He began declaring the Kingdom message here in the latter part of 1960. Later, he and his wife Naoma sailed their 30-foot (9-meter) yawl, "Integrity," the 2,000-mile (3,200-kilometer) voyage from Hawaii to the Marshalls. A navigational error brought them to Aur Atoll, where they found the natives on the verge of death by starvation. They saved them by sharing their own supplies. This led to a favorable response to the request for missionaries of Jehovah's Witnesses to enter the Marshall Islands, a request that had previously been denied. These missionaries came from Hawaii, and have courageously carried forward the fine work started by the Mikklesens.

THE ISLANDERS RESPOND

The "good news" is bringing many Marshallese spiritual freedom. For instance, the Protestant and Catholic churches here teach that hell is a large boiling "iron pot" in *heaven* where the wicked suffer by being dipped into the boiling water, while the other half of the body experiences the agony of being eaten by maggots. However, Jehovah's Witnesses

show those who will listen that the Bible hell is the common grave of mankind, and that the dead are not conscious or suffering torment anywhere.—Eccl. 9:5, 10; Ezek. 18:4.

What a joy to see the powerful effect that God's Word and spirit have had on family life here! One couple with children was on the verge of separation. Hesburn, the husband, had the reputation of being a heavy drinker and a rabble-rouser. At times he would beat his wife, Tarelong, who began studying the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses. One evening, after taking a drunken beating, Tarelong felt a strong urge to commit suicide, but she turned to Jehovah in prayer and asked for strength. Within a few minutes her husband returned to the house and, for the first time, apologized for his cruel treatment. He learned that Tarelong was planning to be baptized and said that he wanted to be immersed too. A missionary visited Hesburn to ascertain his motives, and this former opposer insisted on being baptized. So, a "crash course" of study was begun and within two weeks Hesburn was able to answer fundamental Bible questions satisfactorily. This couple legalized their marriage and underwent immersion at a circuit assembly. Today, Hesburn is an appointed elder in the Majuro Congregation and Tarelong is daily proclaiming the "good news" to others as a regular pioneer.

Spiritism is very rampant in the Marshalls. Living on each atoll are persons who cure and curse with "demon power." Worejabato and Limokein are the names of two famous "demons," and persons working under their control claim power, not only to cure sickness, but to put a death curse on an unsuspecting relative. A man may pay the medicine man to make his favorite girl fall in love with him. Many persons walk around in a dazed state, or act strangely, and those knowing

them say that these individuals have been cursed by "demon medicine."

Levi and Liellen, an elderly couple, were noted for their mystical powers. Many persons, including some holding high positions in Christendom's churches, consulted this couple, paying high prices for cures and curses on others. However, upon learning the Bible truth that spiritism is from the Devil and is a 'detestable thing' in God's sight, Levi and Liellen promptly gave up this life-long practice and means of livelihood, much to the disappointment of their former customers. What relief and joy the truth brings to those freed from the enslaving power of the demons!—John 8:32; Deut. 18:10-12.

BIBLE TRUTH OVERCOMES FEAR

One elderly woman whose love for Bible truth overcame fear of men was Anne Lelet. She was married to a Protestant minister and personally taught at mission schools in Kwajalein and Majuro. In 1966 her right side was paralyzed due to a stroke. Five years later, she found in her Bible the Marshallese booklet "*This Good News of the Kingdom*." It had been put there by her daughter, who was studying with Jehovah's Witnesses on Ebeye. Anne desired to study, too, and quickly accepted the fundamental truths of the Bible.

Less than a month later, at the death of her daughter-in-law, Anne was confronted with a test of faith involving the Marshallese custom of "Eoreak." According to it, six days after the burial of the dead, all relatives and friends gather to bring the period of mourning to an end. At that time, the spirit of the dead is believed to rise, walk toward the lagoon, bathe in water, clap its hands and ascend heavenward. All relatives and friends observe this day to effect a reconciliation where needed or to resolve differences that may have existed with the departed

one. Because of Anne's refusal to comply with this unscriptural custom, her son asked her and her sick, bedridden husband to move out of his home. However, she continued to study and exercised great confidence in God's Word.

Desiring to attend her first Christian meeting, Anne waited for a taxi. When it did not come, she walked the 350 yards (320 meters) to the Kingdom Hall, which, in her condition, was quite a strain. She arrived exhausted, for this was the first time that she had walked such a distance since her paralysis. In April 1972, at the age of 72, she began publishing the "good news" from house to house. People were astonished at this Protestant teacher's change of religion and at her great improvement in health. Apparently her door-to-door witnessing activity has resulted in greater strength and ability to walk. Anne became a widow in December 1972, was baptized the next month, and became a full-time proclaimer of the Kingdom, a regular pioneer, in December 1975.

EXCELLENT PROSPECTS

Today, 192 Kingdom proclaimers serve in three congregations on Majuro and Ebeye. The people here in the Marshall Islands respond well to the truth. This interest is reflected in the attendance of 539 at the observance of the Memorial of Jesus Christ's death in 1977.

During the 1977 service year, Jehovah's Witnesses in the Marshalls realized a 3 percent increase in those preaching the "good news" to others, and 15 percent of them were in the full-time pioneer work. What a joy to see one Witness to every 130 persons in the far-flung and remote islands and atolls of the Marshalls! With God's spirit upon them, Marshallese Christians are enduring in Jehovah's worship, zealously 'telling forth his praise' in these beautiful atolls of the Pacific.—Isa. 42:12.

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Questions from Readers

- What is the meaning of Amos' prophecy directed against the "cows of Bashan"? T215H

This prophecy is found at Amos 4:1-3 and reads: "Hear this word, you cows of Bashan, who are on the mountain of Samaria, who are defrauding the lowly ones, who are crushing the poor ones, who are saying to their masters, 'Do bring, and let us drink!' The Sovereign Lord Jehovah has sworn by his holiness, 'Look! There are days coming upon you, and he will certainly lift you up with butcher hooks and the last part of you with fishhooks. And by breaches you will go forth, each one straight ahead.'" "

These "cows of Bashan" were the women of Samaria who, to continue living in luxury,

goaded on their husbands to defraud and oppress the lowly. They asked their "masters," or husbands, to obtain for them the things that they desired for a life of self-indulgence. The Most High, however, did not look with favor upon such unrighteousness. He is holy, clean or pure and, therefore, swore by his holiness to act against the "cows of Bashan." They would be violently torn away from Samaria as with butcher hooks and the surviving remnant as with smaller fishhooks. The enemy would drive these women through the breaches made in the walls of the conquered city.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

January 15: Fighters Against God Losing the Battle. Page 748. Songs to Be Used: 51, 33.

January 22: "They Will Be Certain to Fight Against You." Page 754. Songs to Be Used: 7, 11.

January 29: "They Will Not Prevail Against You." Page 759. Songs to Be Used: 16, 39.