

# The **WATCHTOWER**

JUNE 15, 1973

Semimonthly

BE "SOUND IN MIND"  
AS THE NEW ORDER  
DRAWS NEAR

MOTIVATED BY A GODLY  
CONSCIENCE

WHERE DOES YOUR CHURCH STAND  
ON HOMOSEXUALITY?

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*Announcing*  
**JEHOVAH'S  
KINGDOM**



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

## THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER"

Every watchtower has its purpose. It serves as an elevated place for a wide-awake person with sharp vision. It enables him to see far ahead into the distance and tell those below for whom he is a watchman what is drawing near, whether it is a danger against which to prepare or it is something good over which to be glad with strong faith and hope.

Because of having the name "The Watchtower" this magazine justly has to render a similar useful service to the people of all nations. This is an international magazine and makes no racial distinctions, for we are all facing a common world danger; we are all hoping for a common good.

Ever since "The Watchtower" began to be published in July of 1879 it has looked ahead into the future, always striving to aid its readers to advance in knowledge and to gain a clearer picture of the glorious new order of things that is in store for righteous mankind. No, "The Watchtower" is no inspired prophet, but it follows and explains a Book of prophecy the predictions in which have proved to be unerring and unfailing till now. "The Watchtower" is therefore under safe guidance. It may be read with confidence, for its statements may be checked against that prophetic Book.

Among the many nations of today there are hundreds of differing religions. Which one does this magazine present? Not the confused religions of Christendom, but the religion of the oldest sacred Book on earth. Which Book? The Sacred Bible of the Holy Scriptures, written by inspiration in the name of the Creator of heaven and earth, the only living and true God.

The sacred, nonpolitical purpose of "The Watchtower" is accordingly to encourage and promote study of the Holy Bible and to give our many readers the needed unsectarian help to understand that Book of true religion and infallible prophecy. Thus this magazine will be helping them to prove worthy of perfect life and happiness in God's promised new order under His everlasting kingdom of righteousness.

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

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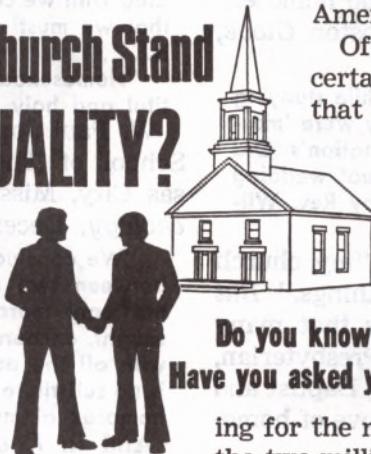
## Where Does Your Church Stand ON HOMOSEXUALITY?

**T**REMENDOUS changes have been going on in the churches, including changes in their views on homosexuality. *The Christian Century*, December 15, 1971, notes:

"More and more 'mainline' denominations are now prepared to welcome homosexuals to membership and participation in their life, both in England and in the United States."

So you see, the questions asked here are appropriate ones. Do you really know where *your* church stands on homosexuality?

The apparent success of churches established especially for homosexuals has had a lot to do with the 'mainline' churches changing their attitude toward homosexuality. The first homosexual church was organized in 1968, but now there are reportedly 43 homosexual congregations in 19 states and London, with an international membership of 15,000! Also, there is the homosexual synagogue Beth Chayim Chavdashim in California, and Rabbi Erwin Herman says that its "chances are excellent" for membership in the Union of



**Do you know for sure?  
Have you asked your minister?**

American Hebrew Congregations.

Of course, it is still true that if certain 'mainline' churches learn that their minister is a homosexual, they may remove him. But such action is counter to the trend. No longer, for example, is it the policy at

Union Theological Seminary to dismiss known homosexuals study-

ing for the ministry. In fact, in June 1972 the two-million-member United Church of Christ ordained an openly declared homosexual minister. In the voting, 27 clergymen favored the ordination, 13 opposed.

With the changes in view, some religious leaders are now openly declaring their homosexuality. One wrote in *The Christian Century*, September 27, 1972:

"I hold the highest degree one can earn in religion; I have taught at the university level for almost 20 years; and I am an ordained minister. . . . I prefer the company of men—in bed and out."

Are you disgusted by this? If we love God and his inspired Word we will be, for the Bible says: "You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination." Also, instead of treating homosexuals as Christians, the apostle Paul declared: "Do not be deceived; neither the immoral . . . nor homosexuals . . . will inherit the kingdom of God."

They could become Christians only after abandoning immoral ways.—Lev. 18:22; 1 Cor. 6:9, 10, *Revised Standard Version*.

Despite these plain Scriptural statements, many churches are welcoming practicing homosexuals. In fact, the Washington *Daily News* reported: “An increasing number of clergy (both homosexual and heterosexual) are officiating at ‘marriages’ of both male and female homosexuals.” As an example, the *Boston Globe*, April 8, 1973, observed:

“Two Boston men who met while studying for the United Methodist ministry were ‘married’ yesterday in the denomination’s Old West Church . . . The homosexual wedding ceremony . . . was performed by Rev. William E. Alperts, pastor.”

“However,” you may say, “*my church would never approve such things.*” *But are you sure?* Did you know that many leaders of the Episcopal, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Catholic, Methodist, Baptist and other religious bodies *do* approve of homosexuality?

EPISCOPAL Bishop J. Brooke Mosley, president of Union Theological Seminary in New York city, recently said:

“I firmly believe that a homosexually oriented person can be a sound and faithful Christian; and what’s more, that he or she can be a dedicated Christian minister—and some of them already are.”

In 1970 the 182nd General Assembly of the UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH published and recommended for study a report that states:

“The ethical reflections and personal attitudes of the Christian community should be such that homosexual persons will not be made to feel that their sexual preference is in irresolvable conflict with their membership in the Christian fellowship.”

Also in 1970, in its Fifth Biennial Convention, the LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA approved this statement on homosexuality:

“Persons who engage in homosexual behavior are sinners only as are all other

persons—alienated from God and neighbor. . . . It is essential to see such persons as entitled to understanding and justice in church and community.”

ROMAN CATHOLIC priest Henry Fehren, writing in the September 1972 *U.S. Catholic*, which magazine was “published with ecclesiastical approval,” said:

“If God does not abhor, but rather loves, the homosexual with the nature he was created with we can do no less. And this means that we must accept the homosexual as he is. . . .

“Homosexual love can be as noble, beautiful and holy as heterosexual love.”

W. Paul Jones, professor at Saint Paul School of Theology METHODIST, Kansas City, Missouri, wrote in *Pastor Psychology*, December 1970:

“We conclude that . . . profound relation between two members of the same sex is not only morally permissible but is to be sought, encouraged, supported, and enabled with all the powers at our command. There is no substitute for such relation, and of it the homosexual must not be denied.”

And in *Review and Expositor*, Spring 1971, a journal published by the faculty of the SOUTHERN BAPTIST Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky, Professor John H. Boyle said:

“The roots of the sin lie not in the homosexual act itself. . . .

“If the Church is true to her calling she must declare boldly that homosexuals are persons, made in the image of God, for whom Christ died, and that by God’s grace they who were no people are God’s people, for once they had not received mercy but now they have received mercy.”

Yes, eminent religious leaders of the ‘mainline’ churches do approve of homosexuality. They have rejected the Bible. As Episcopal Bishop Brooke Mosley said: “Our understanding of Christian morality has advanced far beyond the Old Testament laws . . . and the St. Paul edicts.” If the leaders of the ‘mainline’ churches say such things, can you really be sure that your minister does not feel similarly? Why not ask him?

# MOTIVATED by

# A GODLY CONSCIENCE

SOME time ago one of Jehovah's witnesses in Palm Springs, California, was visited by his brother and his brother's fiancée. As evening approached, the Witness could see that his non-Witness brother was planning to stay overnight, and to sleep with his fiancée. What would you have done?

It was an awkward situation. But the Witness told his brother that he could not, in his house, sleep with a woman to whom he was not married. This surprised the brother. He was quite indignant, feeling the Witness was very narrow-minded. After all, both he and his fiancée were old enough to have grandchildren, and they were to be married in a few days.

Why did the Witness take such a stand, knowing as he did that it would cause strained feelings and unpleasantness? His conscience was involved.

#### WHAT IS CONSCIENCE?

Have you ever said: "I knew in my heart it was not right"? Or, "I cannot do what you ask, because something inside me says it is wrong"?

That was your conscience speaking. Conscience is that inward realization or sense we have of right and wrong. God created the first human pair with this faculty of conscience, and we have all inherited it from them. It is wise never to go deliberately contrary to the dictates of a properly trained conscience. Why?

Because our moral sense or conscience can, as a result, be damaged or even ruined. It can become seared "as with a

branding iron." (1 Tim. 4:2) When this occurs, our inward sense of right and wrong ceases to function properly. Then it will no longer direct us properly. But we can avoid having this happen.

#### SENSITIVE TO GOD'S MORAL LAWS

Jehovah God has made provision to fortify our conscience by giving us righteous laws and principles in the Bible, and for this provision we have good reason to be thankful. We can study these, and our conscience can then apply them to the various circumstances that arise. In this way we will be motivated by our conscience to do what pleases God.

As a person studies the Bible, he learns that God's law prohibits fornication and adultery. (Heb. 13:4; 1 Cor. 6:9, 10) The Witness mentioned earlier was sensitive to that law. His conscience would not allow him to be a party in any way to fornication—to condone it, in effect, by permitting it in his home. That is the way persons feel who really come to love God's law.

A few years ago a woman in Honduras, Central America, who owned a rooming house began studying the Bible with Jehovah's witnesses. In time, she said that her conscience was bothering her. Why?

Because men would commonly use her rooming house as a place to bring prostitutes. As a result of her newly acquired love for God's law, the woman felt bad about letting her house be used for immoral purposes.

So she began refusing to allow anyone a night's lodging if it was to commit immorality. In each of the rooms she put small signs saying: "Sir, please cooperate with this Family Rooming House. Do not bring indecent women. Thank you." Former patrons quit coming. However, the loss of business was only temporary; soon she had a clientele of respectable families.

What, though, if you are employed in a place that is commonly used for immoral purposes? Of course, in the world fornication and adultery are rampant, and the Scriptures show that to quit mixing entirely with fornicators is impossible. (1 Cor. 5:9, 10) But what if immorality where one works becomes obvious, even gross, and one feels that one's conscience and spirituality are becoming endangered?

In such cases Jehovah's witnesses have made adjustments in their employment. In April 1972, three women began working as maids at a newly opened motel in Oakford, Pennsylvania. In time, they noticed that the same men would bring different women to the motel on a regular basis. "Our consciences got to bothering us," reports one of the Witnesses. So they all left that place of employment.

How do you personally feel about God's moral laws? How sensitive is your conscience on such matters?

#### **WILLINGNESS TO SUFFER LOSS**

Would you be willing to suffer material loss to keep a clear conscience? A young movie and television actress was.

She eventually gave up her career after

becoming one of Jehovah's witnesses. Acting roles frequently called for her to embrace and kiss men to whom she was not married. "I could not continue to do this," she said. "How could I teach others the high principles of God's Word and yet be seen on screen making love to men other than my husband?"

A copywriter for an advertising agency in New York refused to work on cigarette ads. Then miniature cigars were introduced, and she was asked to write an ad designed to stimulate women to smoke these. But she would not do this either. "My conscience will not allow me to have any part in advertising products that are harmful to health," she explains, "even if this refusal results in losing my job."

In a somewhat different situation, a saleslady for a large department store in New York city refused to wear a Christmas corsage, decorated with holiday symbols. The floor manager said that unless she wore it he would see that she was fired. The saleslady went to the office and explained why her conscience would not permit her to wear the corsage, and thus join in the spirit of a holiday tainted with paganism. The management understood, and she was not fired.

How important to you is doing what pleases God? Are you motivated by a godly conscience?

#### **HONEST IN ALL THINGS**

True Christians feel as did the apostle Paul, who said: "We trust we have an honest conscience, as we wish to conduct ourselves honestly in all things." (Heb. 13:18) Does your conscience motivate you to conduct yourself honestly?

A few years ago an art director for a large New York ad agency became one of Jehovah's witnesses. Previously he had

"padded" his expense account, putting down things that were not direct business expenses. "This is a common, even almost an expected practice," he notes. "But after learning Bible principles my conscience would not let me do it anymore. This has meant, in effect, taking a voluntary cut in pay," he explains. How would you view such a matter?

Sometimes pressures to be dishonest are great. A twenty-seven-year-old Witness started working early last year in the insurance office of an agent for the New York Life Insurance Company. At the end of the first month of employment she was handed a paper to sign on which were reported her month's earnings. But the figure was 25 percent more than she actually received! She was puzzled.

She soon learned, however, that her employer received reimbursement for secretarial expenses. Thus a reported higher salary would mean more money in her employer's pocket. What could she do? Signing the paper would be dishonest; it would violate her Bible-trained conscience. And yet if she did not sign, she might lose her job, which she needed badly to support herself in the Christian ministry. What would you have done?

The girl mustered up courage, approached her employer, and said: "Sir, I just can't sign this paper."

"Why not?" he demanded.

"It's just not honest. I didn't make that much money," she replied.

"Oh, but it's standard business practice. Everybody does it," he claimed.

"I can't help it. I just can't sign," she answered.

The man was outraged, berating the girl for her stand. But then he sat back in his chair for a long time, apparently in deep thought. Finally he spoke: "You're

right. You're right. We'll do it the right way," he said.

Another common practice is for car dealers to turn back odometers on used cars so that they show fewer miles traveled than is actually the case. However, when one of Jehovah's witnesses in Albany, Georgia, was asked by his employer to do this, his conscience would not allow him. He lost his job, but he kept a good conscience. Would keeping a clean conscience mean that much to you?

Dishonesty is also common in automobile repair work. When newly employed as Service Manager by a Cadillac-Oldsmobile garage in Ogden, Utah, one of Jehovah's witnesses had to deal with such practices. As he explains: "The mechanic was doing a job on a transmission and, in order to make extra money on the job, charged additional labor. I questioned him about it, but he said that no one would know the difference and that the company would profit from it. I told him I could not tolerate such dishonesty.

"The mechanic was upset and so went to the owner and related what had happened. I was told to come to the office and was questioned about the matter in front of the mechanic. I told the owner that I would have no part in such dealings, and that, whereas such a man might steal *for* the company, he would also steal *from* it. The owner smiled and said, 'We appreciate your honesty and high principles. That is why we wanted you for this job.'"

What kind of conscience do you have? Are you motivated by a conscience sensitive to the teachings of God's Word? If so, you will not be nagged by feelings of guilt, but will enjoy real contentment and peace of mind. You will always be guided to do what is pleasing to God. This will eventually mean for you God's blessing of endless life in his righteous new system of things.

# BE "SOUND IN MIND"

EVIDENCE abounds that a new order is near. On the one hand, we find ourselves living in a unique time as regards the present world order. For the first time in human history, all the systems that men have set up are in a state of crisis. Look where you will, consider any of the many systems that combine to form the present order, and you see signs of grave trouble. Political systems, religious systems, social systems, police systems, educational systems, transportation systems, monetary systems—the list of those in crisis is almost endless. Even the most fundamental things, such as air, water and food, are seriously endangered.

<sup>2</sup> The present order is like an old building whose foundations, supports and beams are all seriously fractured, decayed or corroded. Men may add lots of fresh paint or fancy decorations and new furniture, but nothing can give the rotted structure the strength it needs to remain standing for long. No matter how much men may try to cover up and 'plaster over' the serious divisions that lie deep within human society as it is now structured, they cannot prevent the consequences pointed to in Jesus' words: "A house divided against itself falls."—Luke 11:17.

<sup>3</sup> But the finest, most convincing evidence that a new order is near comes from

1. What visible evidence is there pointing to an early end of the present world order?
2. Why can men not give permanence to the present order?
3. What is the truly solid basis for believing that a new order is near?

## AS THE NEW ORDER DRAWS NEAR

"The end of all things has drawn close. Be sound in mind, therefore."—1 Pet. 4:7.

the promises and prophecies of God's Word, the Bible. Its prophecies not only

foretold the present decay of morality and the turning away from truth and righteousness that have brought the present order to its state of global crisis, but they also tell us God's declared purpose to sweep away all these present systems in an unequaled "great tribulation" within "this generation" and to establish his own order with new systems founded on righteousness, on love of God and love of neighbor.—Matt. 24:21, 33, 34; Rev. 7:14-17.

<sup>4</sup> "There are new heavens and a new earth that we are awaiting according to his promise, and in these righteousness is to dwell." (2 Pet. 3:13) The "promise" to which the apostle Peter here refers is found at Isaiah 65:17 in the Hebrew Scriptures. Bible scholars have long recognized that the "heavens" and "earth" here are symbolic. M'Clintock and Strong's *Cyclopaedia* (Vol. IV, pp. 122-127), for example, comments: "In Isa. LXV [65], 17, a new heaven and a new earth signify a new government, new kingdom, new people . . . ."

<sup>5</sup> This means a new order. God's king-

- 4, 5. What does the Bible promise of "new heavens and a new earth" mean for us?

dom by his Son having come against all enemies of God's sovereignty, it will then put God's will into effect in all the earth, even as the well-known Lord's Prayer petitions. (Matt. 6:10) That 'kingdom of the heavens' will thus provide "new heavens" to guide and govern mankind. And the new earthly society of persons surviving into that new order will not be plagued by the imperfect, unworkable, greed-ridden systems that now cause such irritation and frustration and danger. Founded and structured on righteousness, that society will enjoy new systems as directed by the heavenly government over it.

#### SEARCHING QUESTIONS IN ORDER

<sup>6</sup> Faced with such a prospect, how do we feel? Are our thoughts in line with those of the inspired apostle, who wrote: "Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of persons ought you to be in holy acts of conduct and deeds of godly devotion, awaiting and keeping close in mind the presence of the day of Jehovah"?—2 Pet. 3:11, 12.

<sup>7</sup> With that new order now so imminent, do you not incline to pause and ask yourself: 'Really, what sort of person am I as to "holy acts of conduct and deeds of godly devotion"? Am I truly the sort of person that God wants in his new order? Do I myself really *want* to live in an earth where "righteousness is to dwell," prevailing throughout all the earth?' These are soul-searching questions, but now is the time for them.

<sup>8</sup> Some, however, may incline to say: 'If we just knew more about what life will be like in the New Order, more details, perhaps we could answer those questions better.' True, the prospect of a genuinely

6, 7. How do the apostle's words at 2 Peter 3:11, 12 bring up searching questions for us today?

8, 9. What information about the New Order would some like to know, in view of the vast change it promises to bring?

new order excites wonderment and many questions easily come to mind. For example, some ask, 'In that new order, who will supply all the services the present worldly systems have been providing? If all the present systems end in the coming "great tribulation," how will the survivors communicate with one another around the earth? With mail, telephone, telegraph and radio systems gone, how could there be any unified direction of activities, as by an earthly governing body serving under the heavenly kingdom?' Others ask: 'How will people know where to live? Will it be a case of everyone just picking out the area he likes and settling there, in effect staking out a claim, as was done in the days of the "frontier West" of the United States? If not, how and by whom will land be assigned out?'

<sup>9</sup> Still others wonder about transportation methods then, whether there will be automobiles, airplanes or other such powered means of travel. Among feminine questioners there may be more concern as to whether such conveniences as electric stoves, electric washing machines and similar devices will be available. And, for that matter, what about really fundamental things, such as clothing? When the clothing or shoes one is wearing at the time of survival wear out, where will new ones come from? Or if one wants to build, where will one obtain such things as hammer, nails, saw and other equipment now supplied by the systems of this present order?

<sup>10</sup> Questions like these are multiple. But there is a simple and brief answer to them all. It is: God's Word, the Bible, does not say and so we do not know.

<sup>11</sup> But does this not put us at a disadvantage as to preparing for life in God's

10, 11. What is the answer to their questions, and what effect does this have on our preparing for life in the New Order?

new order? No, for we do not need this to prepare fully, since such questions deal with matters that are not at all vital to our preparation. What, then, are some of the truly vital things for us to concentrate on in our preparing ourselves for life in that coming new order?

#### MAINTAINING SOUNDNESS OF MIND

<sup>12</sup> "The end of all things has drawn close," wrote the apostle Peter in his first letter (4:7). While the then existing Jewish system of things was due to end a few years after this letter was written (as the Romans destroyed Jerusalem and its temple in the year 70 C.E. and brought to an effective end the Jewish priesthood and its functions and sacrifices), the apostle's inspired words have prime application and significance for our time when an entire world order is due to end. The apostle's many references in this letter to the time for the "revelation" of Jesus Christ assure this.—1 Pet. 1:5, 7, 13; 2:12; 4:13.

<sup>13</sup> The apostle followed his own counsel to be "awaiting and keeping close in mind the presence of the day of Jehovah," God's time for ending the present world order and introducing his righteous new order. There is safety in keeping that time "close in mind," not viewing it as far off, as allowing ample time for indulging oneself in selfish pursuits and still being able to 'swing back' to righteousness in time for escaping the global destruction. We are alive *now*; we have no way of knowing whether we will be alive tomorrow or next week. So the time for preparing ourselves for God's new order is *now*.—Jas. 4:13-15.

<sup>14</sup> In view of the now fast approaching end, on what should we focus attention? "Be sound in mind, therefore," is the in-

spired writer's counsel, "and be vigilant with a view to prayers." (1 Pet. 4:7) In place of 'being sound in mind' other translations read "remain calm" (*The New American Bible*), "sane" (*Revised Standard Version*), "be of sound judgment" (*New American Standard*). The apostle Paul used the same Greek word used by Peter when urging, "Let us not sleep on as the rest do, but let us stay awake and *keep our senses*." (1 Thess. 5:6) Obviously this is no time for being senseless, frivolous or rash in judgment. It is a time for sober thought and conduct.

<sup>15</sup> We need to manifest that same soundness of mind as to our hope of life in God's new order. Why are we striving for it? What draws us to that hope? Is it primarily material and physical benefits? Should it be? Perhaps a text like Isaiah 65:21 may come to mind: "And they will certainly build houses and have occupancy; and they will certainly plant vineyards and eat their fruitage." On that basis should we envision ourselves living in great mansions, virtual palaces, and be attracted by this? Really the text only mentions "houses," does it not? And that is what most of us live in today. Actually the prophecy had its initial fulfillment on Israel's return from exile to the desolated, houseless, vineless land of Judah. After arrival, they built houses and planted vines. In our own day there has been a spiritual fulfillment of the prophecy since 1919, as God's people who serve in the same way that Israel did as Jehovah's witnesses (Isa. 43:10-12) came forth from a spiritual exile and began restoring their spiritual 'land' or field of activity and worship, building congregations and cultivating spiritual fruitfulness.

12. Why can we believe that the apostle's counsel beginning at 1 Peter 4:7 fits us at this time?

13. How can we, like Peter, keep "close in mind" Jehovah's day, and why is this vital today?

14. What is the meaning of the counsel to "be sound in mind"?

15. (a) How can we test our 'soundness of mind' as regards our future hopes, including our viewpoint of such texts as Isaiah 65:21? (b) What fulfillments has this text already had?

**PRIME REASONS FOR DESIRING  
NEW ORDER**

<sup>16</sup> Undoubtedly, after the "great tribulation" there will be much home building. And, free from the crushing burden of the present system and its commercial greed, the earthly survivors living in God's new order will surely be able to build truly pleasant places of residence. What point is being made, then? This: That God's Word does not set forth in any detail what those homes will be like, as to their size, their modesty or their grandeur. Throughout its pages it leaves this unstated. Why? Because its appeal is not materialistic; it places greater emphasis on other blessings as the important things to focus our prime attention on. Consider, for example, the delightful picture presented us at Psalm 85:10-13. Showing what God's favor and blessing can result in for a land and its people, it says:

"As for loving-kindness and trueness, they have met each other; righteousness and peace—they have kissed each other. Trueness itself will sprout out of the very earth, and righteousness itself will look down from the very heavens. Also, Jehovah, for his part, will give what is good, and our own land will give its yield. Before him righteousness itself will walk, and it will make a way by his steppings."

<sup>18</sup> Note that this picture draws its beauty primarily from spiritual blessings, with only brief mention of material blessings from the land's "yield." The spiritual blessings are what should make us yearn for God's new order. It is because of these things that we should be willing to work, sacrifice, yes, and even die in order to gain life in God's new order. For these spiritual things are what the present sys-

tem has never given and will never give us. In place of "loving-kindness" the present order is at heart cold, greedy, using one as long as one serves its purpose and then casting that one aside as worn out and to be forgotten. It abounds in falsehood, hypocrisy, double-dealing and fraud, not in "trueness." Righteousness and peace have certainly not "kissed each other" in the present order. But in God's new order these spiritual blessings will be evident earth wide and will combine in beautiful harmony to make life genuinely delightful—for those whose hearts are righteous. The old order is capable of granting big homes, even mansions, to people, along with fine food—in some lands a remarkable number of people have these. But it has not and never will bring the loving-kindness, trueness, peace and righteousness distinguishing God's new order.

<sup>19</sup> Preparing for life in the approaching new order, then, calls for our keeping a right focus as to promised blessings and placing highest value always on the spiritual ones. If we do this, then when the storm of Armageddon finally passes, the rumble of its thunder fades away, and the earth stops shaking under the impact of divine fury expressed against the nations, we will come out from wherever Jehovah God has seen fit to preserve us and we will rejoice in the morning of a new day, the dawn of his new order. When we gaze around, possibly all that will meet our eyes may be rubble and ruin—but, if so, it should look *beautiful* to us. Why? Because we can then say from the depths of our hearts, 'Thank God, finally the old order with all its corruption, cruelty and rebellion against God, is gone for all time! Now righteousness will dwell in the earth.' We can show that this is the way we feel

16. What point is here made as to the Bible's appeal in its presentation of the hope of a new order?

17, 18. (a) How does Psalm 85:10-13 illustrate this point? (b) What, then, are the features of New Order living that should have the greatest motivating force for us, and why?

19. What attitude is essential with regard to the New Order, and how can we show we have that attitude now?

even now by not letting material things crowd out spiritual matters in our lives or become of greater attraction.

#### **OBEDIENCE FROM THE HEART**

<sup>20</sup> In being "sound in mind," we do well to meditate on some of the things we do know about the coming new order. We know that obedience to God's sovereignty, expressed through his Kingdom government, will be required. At Revelation 20: 11, 12, we are informed that during the thousand-year reign of God's Son 'scrolls will be opened.' All those living, including those resurrected from the dead, will be judged "according to their deeds" as being in harmony or out of harmony with those "scrolls." Scrolls, as dealt with in Bible prophecy, almost invariably refer to some revelation of God's will, a revelation set out in written form. Thus it appears that during the millennial reign of Christ Jesus there will be further revelations of God's will and purpose and that these will be in published form so that all may be informed. Then it will be up to each one to demonstrate his worthiness of life everlasting by harmonizing his deeds with those scrolls.

<sup>21</sup> Survival of the "great tribulation," therefore, does not necessarily guarantee survival to life everlasting. Nevertheless, some may feel that, once this old order is gone and, as the book of Revelation foretells, Satan and his demons are 'abyssed,' then the matter of being obedient will be relatively simple, almost a foregone conclusion. Is this being "sound in mind," and does it prepare us for life in the New Order?

20. What is something we definitely know about the New Order, and what does Revelation 20:11, 12 reveal? 21, 22. (a) Why might some feel that, having survived the "great tribulation," gaining life everlasting will then be relatively simple? (b) What important factor may be overlooked?

<sup>22</sup> True, the passing of the old order with all its temptations and pressures toward evil will be a grand relief. So also will be the freedom from the war we now must wage against the "wicked spirit forces" invisibly dominating the present order. (Eph. 6:10-13) Yet are those two great sources of opposition to righteousness the only ones we have to contend with? Is there not another major source? Yes; and unlike those external sources this one is internal, within us. It is our inherited sinful nature, the legacy we have all received from Adam. And 'soundness of mind' will cause us to realize that this is the force that is probably the most dangerous, the decisive one. How so?

<sup>23</sup> Consider the origin of unrighteousness, of disobedience to divine rule. True, in Eden, Eve was subjected to outside influence and she, in turn, exercised influence on her husband. But what of the one who initiated rebellion? What external influence operated on that spirit son of God to make him go bad? Certainly God neither tempted nor pressured him to do so, nor did anyone else. Yet that spirit son became a rebel against his heavenly Father. The source of his rebellion was—not external—but internal, from within his own heart. (Compare James 1:13-15.) So with us, no matter what adverse external forces there are, the decisive factor for faithfulness is *within us*, what we have in our hearts. This will still be true during the millennial period when persons are judged "according to their deeds."

<sup>24</sup> One might say, however: 'Well, I recognize that I have some bad habits, wrong traits and ways that I haven't overcome

23. What does the origin of unrighteousness show as to the relative seriousness of external and internal forces that work in opposition to our obedience to God?

24. In what do some trust to make needed changes in their personality and habits? And what do we want to determine in a succeeding study?

as I should. But I'm sure that once we pass through the "great tribulation" I'll be different—not perfect yet, of course, but different." Is this being "sound in mind"? Should we think that the awesomeness

of the "great tribulation" and its Armageddon war will somehow work in us some corrective transformation as to our hearts? Consider the information that follows.

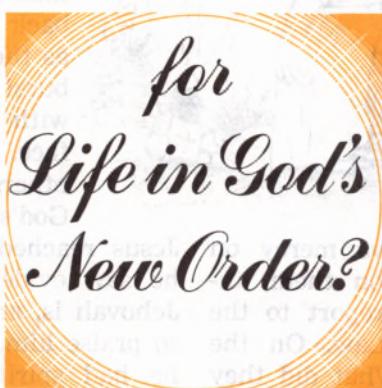
**T**HINK back to the time of ancient Israel's exodus from Egypt. Reaching the western shores of the Red Sea, the Israelites found themselves trapped as Pharaoh's forces advanced on them from behind. They broke out in murmuring and complaint: 'This Moses, why has he brought us into the desert to be slaughtered with our wives and children?' They showed lack of faith in God's direction. Yet Jehovah instructed Moses to extend his rod over the sea, and then God caused the sea to open up, forming a path through it to the eastern shores. Some three million persons may have been involved, and as the book *Aid to Bible Understanding* (page 546) points out:

"Since Israel crossed the sea in one night, it could hardly be assumed that the waters parted in a narrow channel. Rather, it must have been a mile (1.6 kilometers), or some miles, in width. Though in fairly close marching formation, such a group, along with what wagons they had, their baggage and their cattle, even when rather closely ranked, would occupy an area of perhaps three square miles (7.7 square kilometers). . . . It would take such a column several hours to get into the seabed and travel across it."

<sup>2</sup> What a tremendous experience it would have been to make that march through

1-3. (a) What awesome experience did Israel have at the Red Sea? (b) Did it change the Israelites? How do we know?

## ARE YOU READY



the sea to the other side and, once there, to turn and see the waters surge back again and drown Pharaoh's forces like trapped rats! Awesome, thrilling, indeed! But did it change the Israelites? Were they different persons on the eastern shores of the Red Sea from what they had been on the western shores?

<sup>3</sup> Read the account and you will see that *within a month* their com-

plaining and murmuring had broken out again—now there was not sufficient water. In this and subsequent murmuring they did not lift their faces heavenward and complain directly against God. No, they complained against the visible human agency he was using. Their lack of faith continued.—Ex. 15:22-24; 16:1, 2.

<sup>4</sup> Whether a mighty act of God has only a momentary effect or actually changes a person depends on whether that person's heart is affected or not. This was true of the miracles that God's prophets and his own Son performed. Who has not heard of leprosy, a dreaded ailment that attacks various parts of the body—fingers, toes, ears, nose, lips? These are gradually consumed. Suppose this happened to you and you had to see your body and face slowly suffer such disfigurement. But

4-6. (a) What determines whether miracles or other awesome experiences have a lasting effect on one or not? (b) How does Luke 17:11-19 illustrate this?

what, then, if someone healed you, restored your body and face to health so that the experience became as a nightmare that had now passed? How would you feel? What would you say?

<sup>8</sup> At Luke 17:11-19, we read of Jesus' encounter with ten lepers, while he was traveling from one village to another. As the Law prescribed, these men stood at a distance, and they cried out, "Jesus, Instructor, have mercy on us!" He did have mercy on them, instructing them to go and report to the priests, according to the Law. On the way all ten were healed. What did they then do?

<sup>9</sup> Only one returned to Jesus to express thanks, and he was a Samaritan. The other nine? They doubtless continued on their way rejoicing. They had received what they wanted. And what was that? Physical health.

<sup>10</sup> Whom do we resemble here? It is natural for us to anticipate the physical health that God's new order will bring. (Rev. 21:3, 4) But, then, how many people do you know that would not like to have perfect health, be free from aches and pains, or who would not like to retain or regain youthful vigor? Obviously, the vast majority on earth today would. So how could mere desire for physical health be a distinctive factor marking us as persons prepared for life in God's new order? There must be something more than that. There must be the right motive for de-



Does having a desire for physical health mean that one is ready for life in God's new order? Ten lepers sought healing from Jesus, but only one had a heart that moved him to give glory to God. How is your heart?

siring the perfect health that God's new order offers.

<sup>11</sup> We need to be like the one man who turned around and went back to Jesus, doubtless feeling as though his heart was about to burst from his chest and perhaps with tears streaming down his face. How did he differ from the others? The difference was that God's kindness through Christ

Jesus reached his heart. In his healing he saw evidence of what a grand God Jehovah is, and he was filled with desire to praise him. He had the right attitude; he had spiritual appreciation. We, too, should realize the need, when considering each of the many blessings the New Order offers, to think about what they tell us of our God. Then they will build up in us increased appreciation for him and develop strong desire—not just for perfect health and endless life in themselves—but to have these blessings so as to be able to serve our grand Creator and to be able to show love for our neighbors as well.

#### PERSONALITY CHANGES NOT BY DIVINE MIRACLE

<sup>12</sup> Even a resurrection from the dead will not—of itself—change people. We know this because of Jesus' saying to the people of certain cities of Israel: "It will be more

8. (a) How did the one leper who returned to Jesus illustrate the right attitude? (b) When reading the Bible promises of New Order blessings, what should we always endeavor to do?

9. (a) Why will even a resurrection from the dead not of itself transform persons for righteousness? (b) How does Matthew 21:31, 32 show why people of Tyre, Sidon and Sodom might progress better in God's new order than the people of the cities Jesus rebuked?

7. Does a strong desire for physical health demonstrate that we are preparing for life in God's new order?

endurable for Tyre and Sidon [and the land of Sodom] on Judgment Day than for you." (Matt. 11:20-24) Why? Because these people in ancient Tyre, Sidon and Sodom had not had the benefit of the preaching, teaching and performing of powerful works that these first-century Jews were receiving through God's Son. So, Jesus was saying that when the residents of such cities as Capernaum, Chorazin and Bethsaida returned in the resurrection during his thousand-year reign they would return with the same proud, stubborn personalities they were then manifesting. Though clearly unrighteous, the people of Tyre, Sidon and Sodom had not manifested such traits and so would be in better position as to accepting truth and instruction in God's righteous principles.—Compare Matthew 21:31, 32.

<sup>10</sup> Being "sound in mind," then, we will not count on some mighty event, even as great as the "great tribulation" ahead, to work some magical transformation in us that will assure our success in God's new order. And we will realize that, in the final analysis, whether we gain everlasting life is not going to depend merely upon association with a certain people or organization. In the final analysis it is going to depend upon *what we are as persons*, what our personal qualities are.

<sup>11</sup> So, in all seriousness and in full possession of our senses, we must be honest in our appraisal of ourselves, not minimizing or glossing over wrong habits or attitudes that betray serious spiritual weakness. A man, for example, might have what some call 'roving eyes.' He may not be a fornicator or adulterer in the literal sense, but his interest in the opposite sex

10. What will 'soundness of mind' tell us as to the prime factor for our gaining everlasting life in the New Order?

11, 12. (a) Illustrate how serious spiritual weaknesses now, if uncorrected, could hinder progress to perfection on the part of survivors into God's new order. (b) Who will bear the blame if one fails to live up to the contents of the "scrolls" opened then?

is excessive; his eyes rove from this one to that one. If such a one does indeed have the awesome experience of surviving the "great tribulation," his eyes may look 'straight ahead' for a time. But if he has not really set his heart against lustful inclinations, his eyes may soon begin roving again, yes, even though he is in the New Order. The same would be true of the person who lets himself be overly dependent on alcoholic beverages. Though not a drunkard, if his interest in it is immoderate and he fails to correct the matter, it may cause him problems later as a possible survivor into the New Order. The absence of an alcoholic beverage industry would not prevent this, any more than it prevented Noah's overindulgence on one occasion after the global flood.—Gen. 9:20, 21.

<sup>12</sup> So, too, with other dangerous habits or personality traits. Tendencies toward selfish ambition, boastfulness, envy, gossiping, sheer laziness, or lack of submission to headship—there are numerous things that could create problems for us if we do not learn how to get them under control. They could hinder or block our making progress to perfection during the thousand-year period in which Christ Jesus and his heavenly joint heirs will serve as priests for the healing of the earthly subjects of the Kingdom. (Gal. 5:19-21; Rev. 5:10; 22:1, 2) If any of us should fail to qualify for life by failing to live in harmony with the contents of God's "scrolls" then, we will have no one to blame—not the present wicked world, nor Satan and his demons—but only ourselves.

#### VIGILANCE AS TO PRAYER

<sup>13</sup> We can readily see why, after exhorting to 'soundness of mind' in view of the nearness of the "end of all things," the apostle Peter then urged, "be vigilant with

13. What is involved in being "vigilant with a view to prayers"?

a view to prayers." (1 Pet. 4:7) While prayers at customary times, as at meal-times, on arising or retiring, are certainly appropriate, is this being "vigilant with a view to prayers"? Rather, we want to be 'seeking Jehovah's face' throughout the day, praying not only with our voices or lips but with our hearts. (Ps. 27:8, 9) We want to be sensitive to our need for his help and turn to him for guidance and strength whenever we sense any weakening whatsoever in our faith or any tendency toward drifting from Jehovah's righteous principles.

<sup>14</sup> Are we alert in our dealings with others, watchful so as not to cause offense, to avoid danger or to see that our commercial dealings are successful? How much greater should be our vigilance and alertness as to maintaining a fine relationship with Jehovah God and availing ourselves of his full help and direction! Our need for prayer is urgent now. It will not cease simply upon our entry into the coming new order.

<sup>15</sup> When we talk to God we can show we are not complacent or routine but, rather, are opening up our hearts to him, telling him of our problems, our efforts to improve and perhaps our disappointment in ourselves, seeking his help and undeserved kindness, asking him to show us compassion. Vigilance and sensitivity to the need for prayer now will certainly do much to equip us for life then. Heartfelt prayer is evidence of deep faith.

#### RESPECT FOR THEOCRATIC HEADSHIP

<sup>16</sup> Such faith will contribute greatly to our success in God's new order. Among

the things we do know about life then is that *headship* will be in operation. As King David recognized: "Yours is the kingdom, O Jehovah, the One also lifting yourself up as head over all." (1 Chron. 29:11) In the rightful exercise of his sovereignty, Jehovah has made headship one of the basic principles of the divine arrangement. Whether it be headship exercised by individuals, as by the King Jesus Christ or by individual family heads, or headship exercised through a body of persons charged with giving direction or making decisions and judgments under God's appointed King, will we respect such headship in the New Order? Do we respect it now?

<sup>17</sup> During the thousand-year reign Christ Jesus will fully carry out his role as a "leader and commander" for all his subjects. (Isa. 55:4) His government will replace those of "Caesar" and will be an *active* government whose direction of earth's affairs will be felt in many ways. Will we willingly respond to the King's commands? Progress to perfection and even life itself will depend on this.

<sup>18</sup> After the global flood of Noah's day, Jehovah God instructed survivors to spread out and fill the earth. When many, congregated on the plains of Shinar, decided otherwise and determined to concentrate in a large city, Jehovah enforced his sovereign will, confusing their language and thus "scattered them from there over all the surface of the earth." (Gen. 9:1; 11:1-9) In a reverse direction, many centuries later when returned Jewish exiles rebuilt Jerusalem, Nehemiah's records show that the city was underpopulated, and so lots were cast and evidently one family head out of every ten was selected to move into the city with his family. Apparently still others volunteered to do so

14, 15. (a) What relationship merits the greatest vigilance as to maintaining it in a fine state? (b) What kind of prayer demonstrates readiness for life in the New Order?

16, 17. (a) How do we know that the principle of headship will be in operation in God's new order among earthly survivors? (b) What questions does this raise as to our readiness for life then?

18. What contrasting situations arose on the plains of Shinar and in restored Jerusalem illustrating the effect of headship on persons' living circumstances?

and were blessed by the people for this. Not all those selected may have particularly liked the idea of moving into Jerusalem. But their response evidenced faith and concern to see the "holy city" able to function effectively.—Neh. 7:4; 11:1, 2.

<sup>19</sup> What, then, if in God's new order you were instructed to move to another area, perhaps even a distant place, and make that your home?

Would you respond? What if you were requested to move into a more populated area, a community where some special work of the Kingdom government was being car-

rried out that called for group effort and cooperation? Or what if opportunity were given you to volunteer to make such a move? What would you do? Would you let personal preference govern you, and would you feel that your happiness was inseparably tied in with some geographical area or setting of your own choosing?

<sup>20</sup> To a certain degree, we can show our right disposition now by our willingness to respond to opportunities or suggestions of at least a somewhat similar nature. Even in such small things as requests to cooperate in filling certain seats in a meeting place or in an assembly, do we respond willingly? In the work of preaching the good news, are we reluctant to serve in certain local territories? Circumstances and personal obligations or duties allowing, do we volunteer to serve where the need is greater even though this means our 'pulling up roots,' as it were, and perhaps sacrificing certain personal conve-

19, 20. (a) What questions does this raise for us as we contemplate life in God's new order? (b) How can we show ourselves prepared now as regards such aspects of New Order living?

niences and likes? How much do we show faith and sincere concern for promoting the interests of the "New Jerusalem," God's Kingdom government by Christ Jesus?

#### RESPECTFUL DESPITE IMPERFECTIONS

<sup>21</sup> Along with this we must recognize the need for faith in the ability of Jehovah

God and his Son to use human representatives in governing. One might respond with alacrity to instructions or assignments spoken by an angel or transmitted by a powerful, even thundering, voice

from heaven. But what if an assignment comes through human representatives of the heavenly government? This calls for more faith, does it not?

<sup>22</sup> Today, bodies of elders function within local Christian congregations and a governing body of elders serves the congregation earth wide. Those now forming such bodies are all imperfect men; but by the help of God's holy spirit they are able to serve His will and purpose well. Do we find it hard to respect such ones or co-operate with them because we are aware that they are not perfect? What, then, of the *initial* period of the New Order?

<sup>23</sup> While from its start God's new order should bring great joyfulness, nevertheless, imperfection will not disappear the first day, week, month, year or even the first decade after the "great tribulation" and the abyssing of Satan. If that were

21. How does God's use of human representatives call for genuine faith on our part?

22, 23. (a) To what extent does human imperfection affect the service of these earthly representatives, and how might it affect us? (b) Will imperfections, mistakes and errors in judgment disappear immediately after the "great tribulation"? (c) What questions does this raise?

#### THE NEXT ISSUE

- Organized to Praise God.
- Identifying the Right Religion.
- Is Perfect Health in a Perfect Environment Possible?

the case, why set aside a *thousand years* for complete restoration of perfection and full reconciliation of mankind with God? What, then, if some imperfection on the part of persons charged with responsibility as Kingdom government representatives were to affect one of us adversely, perhaps result in some act or arrangement that we feel is not just as it should be, causing us a measure of unpleasantness or dissatisfaction? Will we become impatient and get excited if matters are not immediately corrected? Will we be tempted to 'take' matters into our own hands' to try to rectify what we believe needs correcting? How do we react now to similar circumstances as we prepare for life in God's new order?

<sup>24</sup> We have an example to guide us in the occasion of David's attempt to bring the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem. Rather than having the ark transported on poles on the shoulders of the Kohathite Levites (according to the Law), it was placed in a wagon. At a certain point the cattle pulling the wagon "nearly caused an upset," and a man named Uzzah reached out and grabbed hold of the ark. What resulted? Jehovah God "struck him down there for the irreverent act, so that he died there close by the ark." (2 Sam. 6: 1-7) What was wrong?

<sup>25</sup> God's law specifically prohibited any but the authorized priestly representatives from touching the sacred ark, on pain of death. The law was publicly known, and as Uzzah was undoubtedly a Levite (but not a priest), he should have known better than others God's express command. He chose to violate that command, perhaps assuming that circumstances warranted it. He may have felt that if *he* did not act to steady the ark it was sure to

fall. If so, he lacked faith in God's power to care for matters in such a way that none of his servants need disobey his express commands. On the other hand, he may have thought he had an opportunity to make a 'hero' of himself, gaining lasting fame as 'Uzzah, the man who kept the sacred ark from falling.' Either way he showed disrespect.

<sup>26</sup> Unscriptural actions and methods, presumptuousness and usurpation are never justified. With so many causes for rejoicing in God's new order, any initial conditions then reflecting human imperfection should not cause us to become heated up nor to speak or act rashly. We need to 'keep our senses in all things,' realizing that the principle, "better is the end afterward of a matter than its beginning," will hold true even in the thousand-year reign of God's Son, and "better is one who is patient than one who is haughty in spirit . . . for the taking of offense is what rests in the bosom of the stupid ones."—2 Tim. 4:5; Eccl. 7:8, 9.

<sup>27</sup> If we are not authorized to act in a certain matter, we can inform those who are. Rather than thereafter impatiently try to 'steady the ark' ourselves, we can then show trust in God's direction of matters, confident that in time he will cause only good to result. As Psalm 4:4 counsels: "Be agitated, but do not sin. Have your say in your heart, upon your bed, and keep silent."—Compare Psalm 63:6-8.

<sup>28</sup> We can, therefore, prepare for God's new order now by showing respect for the arrangements his Son puts into effect in the Christian congregation, having the certainty that Jehovah God and Christ Jesus are never uninformed or unaware of things needing adjustment or correction.

26. What vital lesson do we gain from this that will protect our life interests in the New Order?

27, 28. When some matter appears to need correcting or rectifying, what is the right course to take to ensure God's favor and blessing?

24, 25. (a) Why did Uzzah die at God's hands? (b) What motive may he have had, and what attitude did it manifest?

ABOVE ALL THINGS,

# Have Intense Love for One Another

**I**N VIEW of the near "end of all things," what is the outstanding thing that those desiring life in the New Order ahead should cultivate? At 1 Peter 4:8-10, the inspired apostle writes:

<sup>2</sup> "Above all things, have intense love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another without grumbling. In proportion as each one has received a gift, use it in ministering to one another as fine stewards of God's undeserved kindness expressed in various ways."

<sup>3</sup> We have no way of knowing what part, if any, such things as automobiles, television sets, stereophonic sets or similar things will play on earth during God's new order. But there is something that we do know is going to be in that new order, something present that we deal with every day. What is that?

<sup>4</sup> People; people who, like yourself, love what is right. So, rather than build our interests and lives around manufactured items and gadgets of this present order, things that have no certainty of continuance, how much better and wiser to make *people* our real interest and learn to find genuine joy in doing things for others. Life in the approaching new order will surely be brim full of such loving service and "ministering to one another." If we can find real pleasure and satisfaction in

1, 2. According to the inspired apostle, what, above all else, should we cultivate if we want to live in God's new order?

3, 4. In view of what we know will definitely be in God's new order, in what should we find real interest now?

doing that now—loving to serve others, to be helpful, to work for their best interests, being considerate and hospitable—we are well on our way toward success in New Order living.

<sup>5</sup> To do that our love must be, as the apostle says, "intense," or, as other translations put it, "at full strength," "never insincere." (*New English Bible; Jerusalem Bible*) Literally, the original Greek word rendered "intense" means "stretched out." Our love, therefore, cannot be half-hearted, restricted to doing only what we feel we must do, or what we feel will not inconvenience us, nor be limited to a favored few. It must reach out, extend itself both as to taking in as many as possible and also as to exerting itself with intensity. Only that kind of love will enable us to maintain vital unity with our brothers under a wide variety of circumstances that could strain our relations and cause us to become critical, or be inclined to expose and make issues of the imperfections and faults of our brothers. But an "intense love" will 'stretch out' to encompass any such circumstances.—Compare Proverbs 10:12; Colossians 3:12-14.

<sup>6</sup> Is our love like that now? In the few hours a week we generally spend with our brothers, does our love cover over the faults of others? Or do we incline to become upset and provoked at such faults? Some find it hard to get along with others, and so allow differences to develop, coolness to set in. But if a person finds it hard to get along with his brothers now for a few hours a week, what, then, if he survives into God's new order and finds himself surrounded by his brothers on all sides, every day and throughout the day?

<sup>7</sup> An "intense love" will not let one mull

5. (a) What will an "intense love" accomplish, and why is this vital? (b) Please comment on the scriptures at the end of this paragraph.

6, 7. (a) What questions might we ask ourselves to determine whether we are lacking in intensity in our love? (b) How is it that such love "covers a multitude of sins"? Why will this be necessary even after the "great tribulation"?

over offenses, nourishing memories of them to the point of feeling bitterness toward individuals, holding on to such unpleasant thoughts and not letting them die away. Putting them out of mind and heart or taking positive steps toward improving relations, such love 'covers a multitude of sins.' It moves us to extend our help to those inclining to weaken or slip away into error, not merely being critical or gossiping about them. (Jas. 5:20) Since sins will not disappear from earth overnight in the coming new order, we need such intense love to assure our maintaining a fine relationship with Jehovah God, who "is love," and with his Son, whose own intense love moved him to give his very life on behalf of sinners.—Rom. 5:6-8.

<sup>8</sup> We can also show such love by our hospitality. "Be mutually hospitable"; "welcome each other into your houses without grumbling." (1 Pet. 4:9, *New American Bible; Jerusalem Bible*) Yes, whatever we do along these lines should be free from complaint, for only the "cheerful giver" is beloved of God. (2 Cor. 9:7) There possibly may be much sharing of material things to be done in the initial period after the "great tribulation" passes. Any inclination toward being ungenerous or stingy could create grave difficulties for us then. If, on the other hand, we show a spirit like the Christians in Jerusalem who opened their homes to receive and feed their new brothers from among the three thousand newly baptized disciples, then we are making ourselves ready for New Order living. (Acts 2:46; 4:32-35) As the apostle Paul urges: "Share with the holy ones according to their needs. Follow the course of hospitality."—Rom. 12:13.

8. (a) What course does Peter further urge as an expression of intense love? (b) How will this aid us in preparing for the New Order?

#### FINE STEWARDS OF GOD'S GIFTS

<sup>9</sup> "In proportion as each one has received a gift, use it in ministering to one another [put yourselves at the service of others, *Je*]." In this way we act "as fine stewards of God's undeserved kindness expressed in various ways." (1 Pet. 4:10) And, indeed, none of us are without something to give in ministering to our brothers. Everyone who comes into God's theocratic arrangement receives a gift. Each one has things to do, assignments of service or responsibilities. We are not, as it were, all cast in an identical mold, having identical personalities, abilities, talents, strengths, knowledge or possessions. But whatever we have, in the final analysis, we owe to God. (Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 4:7) Appreciating this, we will not let our "gift" lie idle, as if stuck away in a treasure chest. (Matt. 25:14-30) We must use it, employ it, in the service of others.

<sup>10</sup> The fact that we are called "stewards of God's undeserved kindness" shows that the "gift" is a trust. With acceptance of such gift the receiver comes under responsibility to the Giver, Jehovah God. A "steward" or house administrator in Bible times was appointed by the owner of the house and had to deal with the various members of the household. He was to treat them in a helpful way. Fellow servants were encouraged by the steward to carry out their own duties in faithfulness. Has God favored us with privileges, opportunities, assignments or responsibilities? This is an undeserved kindness on his part and we want to make use of that undeserved kindness to accomplish his will, to fulfill the purpose for which such kindness or favor was shown us.—Compare Luke 12:42-44.

9. How has each one in the Christian congregation "received a gift," and what should he do with it?

10. What does our being "stewards of God's undeserved kindness" mean?

<sup>11</sup> In his wisdom God has provided for "varieties of ministries" guided by the same spirit, and "varieties of operations, and yet it is the same God who performs all the operations in all persons." By his spirit, God can help each of us to use or develop what we have, "for a beneficial purpose." (1 Cor. 12:4-7) Though all of them are to fulfill basic requirements, elders, as God's 'stewards' (Titus 1:7), also have their particular strengths and abilities. Some may excel in teaching from the platform, while others may be stronger in teaching on a more informal basis, perhaps in aiding congregation members or families with personal problems through home visits or in private conversation. —Acts 20:20.

<sup>12</sup> Similarly, the individual members of the congregation have varying gifts that they can use in ministering to one another. All can share in meetings, and the variety of expressions and abilities has an enriching effect. In sharing in preaching the good news of the Kingdom to people in their homes, some may be able to set an excellent example in placing Bible literature or in starting conversations and in answering objections. Others may do especially well in starting and conducting home Bible studies. Some may have fine ability to make newcomers at meeting places quickly feel welcome and 'at home.' Or one may have unusual ability to deal with young people or children, who also need to feel that they matter and merit attention. Another may do a fine service when it comes to visiting congregation members who are ill or perhaps undergoing depression, being able to cheer them up and encourage them in their faith in Jehovah's goodness. As Paul wrote to the

Christians in Rome concerning the gifts God gave them: "Since, then, we have gifts differing according to the undeserved kindness given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the faith proportioned to us; or a ministry, let us be at this ministry; or he that teaches, let him be at his teaching; or he that exhorts, let him be at his exhortation; he that distributes, let him do it with liberality; he that presides, let him do it in real earnest; he that shows mercy, let him do it with cheerfulness."—Rom. 12:6-8.

<sup>13</sup> So, while we all can continually seek to improve and also learn from the fine examples of others, we need never feel discouraged because we cannot accomplish just what another can. We can all receive of "God's undeserved kindness expressed in various ways" and give of what we have received. If each one contributes what he or she has to give, the congregation is made spiritually rich by the wide variety of gifts and is like a healthy body, its many members all working together harmoniously for the good of the entire body. (Compare Romans 12:3-5.) Such unselfish giving on behalf of others will not stop when Jehovah God brings his people through the "great tribulation" into his new order.

#### SPEAKING AND MINISTERING TO GOD'S GLORY

<sup>14</sup> Certainly all of us should want to fill our minds and hearts with the truths of God's inspired Word, being diligent in our study thereof. Then we will always have something truly worth while to contribute of a spiritual nature, something far surpassing any gifts of precious gems or gold and silver, because of the grand

11. How is it that God's undeserved kindness, of which we can be stewards, is "expressed in various ways," and is this true also of elders?

12. (a) How is similar variety seen among all congregation members in using their 'gifts' in ministering? (b) Please comment on Romans 12:6-8.

13. Rather than lead to self-satisfaction, how should the variety of expression of God's undeserved kindness encourage us, and what effect should this have on the congregation?

14. What "gift" should we especially appreciate for "ministering to one another," and what should this move us to do?

blessings resulting. (Prov. 2:1-6; 3:13-18) Especially those privileged to serve as elders in the congregations should want to do this. They should be particularly concerned with carrying out the apostle Peter's further counsel:

<sup>15</sup> "If anyone speaks, let him speak as it were the sacred pronouncements of God; if anyone ministers, let him minister as dependent on the strength that God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. The glory and the might are his forever and ever. Amen."—1 Pet. 4:11.

<sup>16</sup> Now, as the end of the old order draws so close, there is real need for speaking with conviction and with faith. Is that the way you speak when privileged to serve before the congregation or in talking with your brothers on spiritual matters? Are you like Paul, who "did not come with an extravagance of speech or of [human] wisdom," but whose speech and preaching were "with a demonstration of [God's] spirit and power," that his hearers' faith might be "not in men's wisdom, but in God's power"? (1 Cor. 2:1, 4, 5) Not one's personal cleverness or a pleasing 'way with words,' but solid knowledge of God's Word and its principles and full consciousness of the need to represent faithfully and adhere reverently to that Word will enable us to do this.

<sup>17</sup> The days ahead between now and the "great tribulation" may see God's people face very serious circumstances, dangers and problems. Those privileged to "shepherd the flock of God" should certainly want to be able to show that their counsel, guidance and judgment are soundly founded on the unerring Word of God. Like Jesus, they want to be able to say: "It is

15, 16. How can we "speak as it were the sacred pronouncements of God" in accord with the counsel of Peter and Paul?

17. Why should elders particularly seek to apply this counsel as we draw near to the New Order?

written." (Matt. 21:13) Then their brothers will know that their confidence and trust are well placed—not in humans but in God, who, through his Son and by his spirit, is using such men on behalf of his servants. Lives are at stake, and lack of diligence or concern in this regard could never merit the approval of the Great Shepherd, Jehovah God, and his Fine Shepherd, Christ Jesus. And whatever service Christian elders may be called on to perform in the future in the new order of righteousness, their equipping themselves and training themselves in this way now will certainly stand them in good stead then.—John 10:11; Acts 20:28-30; 1 Pet. 2:25; 5:1-4.

<sup>18</sup> Elders, of course, are to be "examples to the flock," and so what is true of them is true of all of us. (1 Pet. 5:3) If we really believe in the promises of God's new order and the nearness of it, this will show in our speech. We will show that we are "keeping close in mind the presence of the day of Jehovah." (2 Pet. 3:12) But speaking can be mere words, and we do not want to make a pretense of "intense love" merely 'in word or with the tongue, but show it in deed and truth.' (1 John 3:18) And so the apostle's inspired counsel adds:

<sup>19</sup> "If anyone ministers, let him minister as dependent on the strength that God supplies." (1 Pet. 4:11) To speak and teach in imitation of Jesus, Peter, Paul, John and other faithful shepherds, elders in congregations have to work hard, and those who do are to be "reckoned worthy of double honor" and be given "more than extraordinary consideration in love because of their work." (1 Tim. 5:17;

18. How can all of us follow the good example of elders in our speaking, and what do we want to guard against?

19. (a) Why does ministering within the congregation call for much strength? (b) Why can those so ministering be encouraged to keep working hard and exerting themselves?

1 Thess. 5:12, 13) Their labors on behalf of the congregation, ‘admonishing the disorderly, speaking consolingly to the depressed souls, supporting the weak, being long-suffering toward all,’ can be taxing on their strength. (1 Thess. 5:14) They may feel that, like Paul, they are being “poured out like a drink offering upon the sacrifice and public service to which faith has led” their brothers. But the blessings this results in can cause them to “be glad and rejoice,” as their hard-working example stimulates their brothers to whole-hearted service to God.—Phil. 2:17, 18; Heb. 13:7.

<sup>20</sup> The “older men of the congregation” of Ephesus well knew the course the apostle Paul had set among them of “slaving for the Lord with the greatest lowness of mind and tears and trials.” So his words should have carried great weight with them when he exhorted: “Keep awake, and bear in mind that for three years, night and day, I did not quit admonishing each one with tears. . . . I have coveted no man’s silver or gold or apparel. You yourselves know that these hands have attended to the needs of me and of those with me. I have exhibited to you in all things that by thus laboring you must assist those who are weak, and must bear in mind the words of the Lord Jesus, when he himself said, ‘There is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving.’”—Acts 20:17-20, 31-35.

<sup>21</sup> In his mercy God has given us all the privilege of ministering, of serving as “fine stewards of God’s undeserved kindness expressed in various ways.” If we rely in faith on “the strength that God supplies,” we will not “give up in doing what is fine,

20. Why did the apostle Paul’s exhortation to elders regarding this same point carry so much weight, and what do we learn from that counsel?

21. How can we all “minister as dependent on the strength that God supplies,” and with what confidence?

for in due season we shall reap if we do not tire out.” (1 Pet. 4:10, 11; Gal. 6:9) The certainty of his promised new order should draw us onward, and its nearness should infuse greater determination in us. With the apostle, we can say: “Therefore we do not give up, but even if the man we are outside is wasting away, certainly the man we are inside is being renewed from day to day.” Nothing that God has given us to do is beyond our doing it if we “minister as dependent on the strength that God supplies.” He grants us “power beyond what is normal” so that ‘for all things we have the strength by virtue of him who imparts power to us.’—2 Cor. 4:7, 16; Phil. 4:13.

<sup>22</sup> What we may be accomplishing may seem small in our eyes and bring us no prominence. Yet Jehovah is never unappreciative of what we do nor is he “unrighteous so as to forget your work and the love you showed for his name, in that you have ministered to the holy ones and continue ministering.” With the longed-for time of his new order so near, this is the time of all times to continue to “show the same industriousness so as to have the full assurance of the hope down to the end.”—Heb. 6:10, 11.

<sup>23</sup> Grand blessings await us if we do this. And thereby we will be equipped to share fully and happily and successfully in those splendid times in God’s new order because we have focused our attention on those matters that are truly vital now.

<sup>24</sup> Whatever we do, and in all that we do—in our daily occupations and affairs and family life, in our ministering the word of life to those in the world of man—

22, 23. Why should we never become disheartened or weaken in our ministering but, rather, strive to do yet more?

24. In order that “in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ,” what must we do both now and in the coming new order?

kind, and in our ministering to one another in the Christian congregation—may we "do all things for God's glory," proving ourselves true disciples of his beloved Son, Jesus Christ. (1 Cor. 10:31) Then we, all

together, can serve as a jewel of praise to Jehovah's name in all the earth, as a people prepared for life in his new order. For "the glory and the might are his forever and ever. Amen."—1 Pet. 4:11.

# "The Way of FAITHFULNESS I HAVE CHOSEN"

As told by  
Paul Wrobel

**I**N AUGUST 1914 the world was shaken by news of mobilization for war. We lived on the German border, in the province of East Prussia. We six children had enjoyed peaceful times with our parents, but as my eldest brother was called to war, my mother cried bitterly. I tried to comfort her, but she said: "We are now entering dreadful times."

As I was only fifteen years old at the time, I wondered how my mother could know what troublesome days were lying ahead. It turned out that mother based her views on Bible prophecy about the "last days." She had often been visited by a traveling minister, whom she hospitably received and who left a few tracts, which mother kept in her Bible. Mother read the Bible often and taught us good principles. Father, too, read to us from the Bible. So from our youth on we were raised to fear God.

We were soon surrounded by war. We saw the bombers, heard cannons boom, saw Russian soldiers, the dead and the

wounded. We had to flee. In 1918 I also became a soldier.

After the war and my release from the Army, I moved to the Ruhr territory, where I found some of my relatives, and took up work in the mines. In this territory I also met a girl who has been my life's companion now for over fifty years.

#### I CHOOSE "THE WAY OF FAITHFULNESS"

In time the Watch Tower Society's books *The Harp of God* and *Studies in the Scriptures* came into our home. I read them thoroughly. By means of these books I began to understand the Bible. This kindled within me the desire to serve God and to follow the way of His truth. I felt as did the psalmist: "The way of faithfulness I have chosen."—Ps. 119:30.

I put forth every effort to grow in Bible knowledge. And when a minister representing the Watch Tower Society invited us to a meeting of the Christian congregation, we accepted. The first public Bible talk I heard captured my interest so much

that I invited the speaker to visit us, and until late in the night we sat and profited from his Bible knowledge. From that time on down until this day, Bible reading and study, with the help of the Watch Tower Society's publications, have become part of my daily program.

However, from a human standpoint, I felt weak and unqualified to share Bible truths in the house-to-house ministry. But now that I was associating with the Christian congregation and attending meetings regularly, I took to heart the encouragement to have a part in the field ministry. So one morning I put my Bible in a new leather case, went to a Christian brother and asked him to take me with him in the house-to-house ministry. After listening to him for about an hour, I asked him for a few books. I went to the doors with three books and a few magazines, and soon had placed all these Bible study aids in the hands of householders.

From that time on I went alone in the field ministry. I felt I had now overcome a big weakness. At that time I had no idea what a blessed door of activity was then opened to me.

The congregation with which I associated, Bochum-Langendreer, was made up of about forty persons. Association with this congregation continued to build me up. And in August of 1925 I symbolized my dedication to Jehovah by water baptism. In 1928 my wife was also immersed, and from then on we have traveled together the Christian road of activity and faithfulness and have enjoyed Jehovah's goodness.

Ever since my baptism I had wanted to enter the full-time preaching work, but since we had three children, I had to be patient. I kept busy in the congregation, promoting Kingdom interests, taking care of various assigned duties, and increasing in zeal and ability.

Our family enjoyed many blessings through association with mature Christian brothers. We appreciated the words in 1 Peter 4:9: "Be hospitable to one another without grumbling." How often I admired the ability of my wife to prepare a delicious meal from a few things we had. My Christian brothers always felt at home with us, and we never lacked the necessities of life.

#### TEST OVERCOME

##### BY JEHOVAH'S UNDESERVED KINDNESS

After Hitler banned Jehovah's witnesses, we had to carry on our preaching work underground. On October 7, 1934, our entire congregation took part in sending a protest resolution to Hitler. Then came April 27, 1936, when I was arrested by the Gestapo. The Gestapo wanted me to write down all the names of the "leaders" of Jehovah's witnesses. In the face of torture, would I hold to the "way of faithfulness" to God? Jehovah strengthened me to do so. I made a resolve not to betray my Christian brothers, even if I had to die. What I wrote down for the Gestapo to read was a witness about God's kingdom.

During my two years of imprisonment, I was able to strengthen some of my Christian brothers who were in spiritual need. In May 1938 I was released from prison, and now I fell into spiritual need myself. This is because shortly before my release nearly all of my Christian brothers in the area had been arrested. I seemed to have no contact with God's organization. There was little spiritual food available.

I was under police surveillance and was without work because of refusing to join the "workers' front." As a jobless person, I was finally sent back to my old place of work in the mine by the employment office. Toward the end of World War II, as the "people's troop" was conscripted,

I thought I would soon be with my Christian brothers in the concentration camps. However, I unexpectedly received a double "UK" (*unabkömmlich*, indispensable) certificate due to the military importance of mining. Officials of higher rank in the mine began to show interest in Bible truth, and I was often able to give a witness about God's kingdom.

In the meantime, however, I had depleted my entire supply of Bible literature. I prayed as the psalmist: "Do not take away from my mouth the word of truth entirely, for I have waited for your own judicial decision." (Ps. 119:43) After a heavy bombing raid, I remembered an old Witness and decided to visit him and see how he was getting along. After traveling through rubble-strewn streets, I arrived just as he was trying to hide a great number of *Watchtower* magazines in his wrecked chicken house. He was happy when I took the priceless cargo of spiritual food on my bicycle and brought it to a more secure place.

Jehovah had heard my prayer. We now had spiritual food. The *Watchtower* articles "The Theocracy," "The Little Flock," "The Drama of Ezekiel," "The Ransom," "Religion," "Deliverance," "Government and Peace" and the articles explaining the prophecies of Zechariah and Micah, and many others, provided a rich spiritual feast from Jehovah in the midst of our enemies. I was now able to share this spiritual food with those of my Christian brothers whom I could reach. How could I ever repay the kindness of Jehovah for all these spiritual benefits? Only by showing greater zeal in fulfilling my dedication.

In the summer of 1945, as the Witnesses came out from underground, fifteen of us met together in happy reunion to discuss the future. On Sunday twenty-seven Witnesses were present, willing to support

the Kingdom work in an organized manner. Love and appreciation for one another unified us, and Jehovah began to bless our congregation with great increases.

#### INCREASED PRIVILEGES IN FULL-TIME PREACHING

Because I love people and desire to speak to their heart, I enjoy the house-to-house ministry so much. In fact, for twenty years it was my desire to enter the full-time preaching work. Now the favorable time arrived. Our two eldest children had become of age and were steadfast in God's truth. However, sad to say, our youngest son was a victim of the war; to this day he is still listed as missing.

But now a physical ailment loomed up and seemed to prevent me from entering the full-time ministry. My doctor predicted that in two years I could expect a paralysis of my right hip. That was in 1946, so I decided to use those two years in the full-time ministry and to do my best.

In the meantime, twenty-seven years have slipped by! Although I have never been able to walk without difficulty, still the predicted paralysis did not set in. In 1947 I was called to Magdeburg to be trained for the ministry as a traveling overseer of the Watch Tower Society. For nearly twenty years, up to the time of a severe illness in October 1966, I was able to serve in that capacity and taste the goodness of Jehovah in bountiful measure. An abundance of joy was my daily portion.

Organizing new congregations and strengthening small groups brought many joys and blessings. However, one had to be willing to suffer some privation. For example, one presiding overseer of a small congregation of seven Witnesses wrote me that my visit would have to be canceled as he had to go to a sanatorium, and the

congregation was so small that there was no place for me to stay. Despite this, I traveled to the town and looked up another overseer in the congregation. He lived with his family in a very crowded room. His landlord had some farming land, so I asked the Witness if he would speak with his landlord. The result was that I was able to sleep in a small room above the cow stall. There was a small army cot with a straw mattress for me to sleep on, and I shared the room with a traveling salesman. Since it was autumn, I had to sleep with my clothes on to keep from getting cold.

During the week I was able to obtain a room in the school for a public Bible talk and to visit all the Witnesses, who, on Sunday, took part in distributing invitations to the talk. Sunday afternoon, to the astonishment of all, fifty-six persons filled the room and all listened attentively. From that time on, the congregation grew, and soon they had their own Kingdom Hall.

Another experience I had was in connection with a circuit assembly that the Watch Tower Society arranged to be held in Paderborn in the 1950's. The city gave us neither a hall nor a lot where we could have our assembly. We were able, however, to rent from a restaurateur a rifle-corps clubhouse about two kilometers away in a small village called Nauhaus. The local priest, who was also chairman of the rifle corps, tried to pressure the restaurant owner by threatening him with excommunication if he did not break the contract. The restaurant owner, however, said that he was a businessman and had already received the rent from the Witnesses in advance, whereas the Catholic Church still owed him money for two Christmas celebrations.

During the assembly the priest cursed

the Witnesses, the restaurateur, the people who gave the Witnesses accommodations and the businessmen who sold groceries to us. The priest's conduct prompted many persons to leave the church. The restaurateur was excommunicated but had the sympathy of the townspeople. Today we are able to have circuit assemblies in Paderborn, and there is a flourishing congregation of over one hundred Witnesses.

#### **DESPITE WEAKNESS—STILL BUSY**

In October 1966 I was in the Society's branch office building in Germany attending the Kingdom Ministry School for overseers when I took ill with pneumonia. Until I was able to return home, I enjoyed the loving care of the Bethel family. Since some of my internal organs ceased to function, my physical condition deteriorated, and I concluded that my earthly service would soon end. But after some time I recuperated and was able to get back on my feet with at least half of my strength, which was satisfying. And I have been able to continue on in the full-time preaching work.

For the past four years I have had the privilege of serving as an overseer in my home congregation, Bochum-Langendreer, and of enjoying the hearty association and loving support of my Christian brothers in furthering Kingdom interests.

When I look back after nearly forty-eight years of dedicated service to God, I realize that Jehovah has helped me to walk in the way of faithfulness; he has let me have a part in the goodness shown his people. Looking to the Source of strength and salvation, my decision remains: "The way of faithfulness I have chosen." "I will sing to Jehovah, for he has dealt rewardingly with me."—Ps. 119: 30; 13:6.

# A WAY OF LIFE

## Opened to Mankind

"**T**HE spirit and the bride keep on saying: 'Come!' And let anyone hearing say: 'Come!' And let anyone thirsting come; let anyone that wishes take life's water free."—Rev. 22:17.

These words near the close of the Bible give an optimistic hope. They give promise of a life that is better than the short, troubled life-span that we have today. Is there an opportunity to begin to get a hold on that kind of life now?

There is. Jesus Christ said that he came that people might have *life in abundance*. What, then, is this water of life, and how can it be obtained?—John 10:10.

It was the sacrifice of Jesus' own life that opened up the way for eternal life for mankind. So, Jesus showed that life-giving water is connected with his sacrifice when he told a Samaritan woman: "Whoever drinks from the water that I will give him will never get thirsty at all, but the water that I will give him will become in him a fountain of water bubbling up to impart everlasting life."—John 4:14.

Does this everlasting life that Jesus gives mean that all who live everlasting must go to heaven? By no means. For the prophecy at Revelation says of the crystal-clear water of the river of life: "The spirit and the *bride* keep on saying: 'Come!'" Now, the bride is the Christian congregation of which Christ is husbandly Head. (Col. 1:18; Eph. 5:23; 2 Cor. 11:2) These who share heavenly life with Jesus Christ number 144,000 persons. (Rev. 14:1, 3) The 'water of life' is offered by the spirit

and the bride to yet others. It therefore symbolizes God's provision for *earthly life*, everlasting human life in perfection on an earth transformed into a paradise, suitable for perfect humans.

The 'water of life' represents all the provisions for life through Jesus Christ. Is *all* this available now? No, for God must first remove the present wicked system of things with its invisible ruler Gog, who is Satan the Devil since being cast out of heaven (as discussed in the two preceding issues of this magazine). But we can take what is available of this "water" now by hearing and obeying the good news of the Kingdom and conforming our lives thereto.—John 3:16; Rom. 12:2.

### THE TEMPLE FROM WHICH WATER OF LIFE FLOWS

God's prophet Ezekiel was given a vision that complements the apostle John's vision in the book of Revelation. Therein Ezekiel saw a temple. It was not any temple built by humans, such as those of Solomon or Zerubbabel, for at the time there was no temple at all in Jerusalem, it having been destroyed by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon about fourteen years previously, and Jerusalem itself lay desolate. This temple was different in design from Solomon's temple. The vision pictures it as already put up, ready for inspection and measurement. It was prophetic, however, of something actually to be set up later. It pictured the "true tent, which Jehovah put up, and not man."—Heb. 8:2.

The Christian writer of the letter to the Hebrews discusses this tent or temple in detail, showing that it replaced the former temples, the last of which was Zerubbabel's temple, rebuilt by King Herod. This "true tent" came into existence in 29 C.E., when Jesus made himself available to be offered on the "altar" of God's will for him as "the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world." After Jesus' resurrection he entered into the Most Holy compartment of that temple, heaven itself, to present to God the merit of his perfect human sacrifice that he had offered on earth upon Jehovah's spiritual altar, God's "will."—Heb. 9:23, 24; John 1:29.

In Ezekiel's vision he saw the temple "upon a very high mountain," which would locate the time of the fulfillment of Ezekiel's vision far down the stream of time, when, as prophesied by Isaiah, "the mountain of the house of Jehovah will become firmly established above the top of the mountains, and it will certainly be lifted up above the hills." Ezekiel was conducted on a tour of the temple by an angel, represented in the vision by a man. "His appearance was like the appearance of copper, and there was a flax cord in his hand, and a measuring reed."—Ezek. 40:2, 3; Isa. 2:2.

At the present time Jehovah has restored to his people on earth a 'spiritual paradise.' They are enjoying the understanding of God's purposes and are prosperous in proclaiming these purposes world wide. Jehovah's worship is "firmly established" and "lifted up" today.

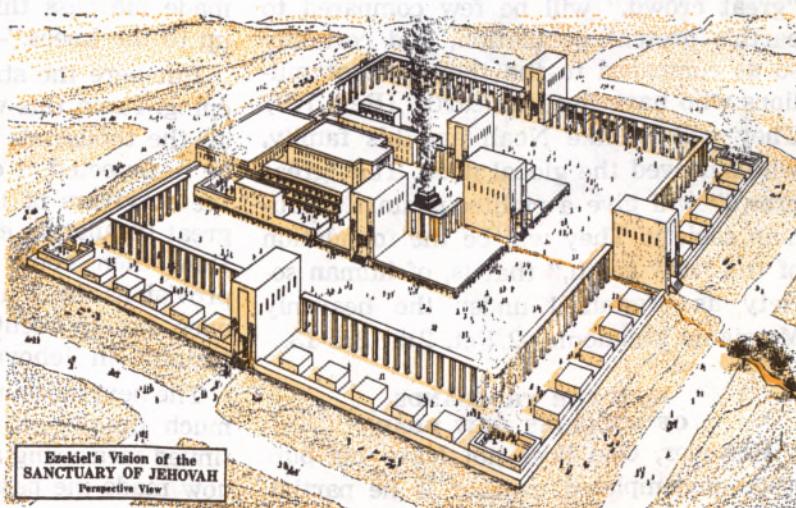
Many hundreds of thousands are beginning to drink of "life's water free." They, in turn, say to others: "Come!" and the congregations of Jehovah's witnesses flourish in peace and good order, constantly increasing in numbers.

#### LIFE FOR HAR-MAGEDON SURVIVORS

But Ezekiel saw something beyond this. He had been shown the defeat of Satan's earthly forces and the wiping out of the "land of Magog," the invisible realm from which Satan now troubles the earth. (Ezek. 39:6) Then Ezekiel was given a clear picture of what will take place on earth during the righteous thousand-year reign of Jesus Christ, when there will be no "Gog," Satan the Devil, nor any of his demons, to interfere. The angel guiding Ezekiel in the vision took him on an inspection tour of the temple. Then Ezekiel says:

"Gradually he brought me back to the entrance of the House, and, look! there was water going forth from under the threshold of the House eastward, for the front of the House was east. And the water was going down from under, from the right-hand side of the House, south of the altar."—Ezek. 47:1.

The water came out from where Jeho-



vah resided in the sanctuary and flowed eastward past the altar in the courtyard, showing that the Life-Giver, Jehovah God, recognizes the ransom sacrifice of his Son and High Priest Jesus Christ. The water ran on outside the courtyard and was directed to where life was needed.—Compare 1 John 1:7; 5:11, 12.

Now Jehovah's angel used his measuring line made of flax. Says Ezekiel: "When the man went forth eastward with a measuring line in his hand, he also proceeded to measure a thousand in cubits and to make me pass through the water, water up to the ankles."—Ezek. 47:3.

It is significant to note that the angel measured eastward in thousand-cubit distances, repeatedly reminding us that all the things pictured as accomplished by the stream take place during Christ's thousand-year reign. On the first measurement, the water was not very deep, coming just to the ankles. 'Ankle-deep' will be enough life-giving water immediately after the war of Har-Magedon, in which Gog's earthly forces are defeated. Why? Because only those who take a firm stand for God's kingdom before the "great tribulation" that culminates in that war will survive. These, though designated as a "great crowd," will be few compared to earth's present population, and certainly so as compared to the thousands of millions who have lived on earth. (Rev. 7:9) They will be like Noah and his family, who survived the global flood. The "great crowd" will give a righteous start to human society. They will be the foundation of the "new earth," that is, of human society as organized under the heavenly Messianic kingdom.—2 Pet. 2:5; 3:5-13.

#### LIFE FOR THOUSANDS OF MILLIONS NOW DEAD

However, God does not leave his purposes uncompleted, neither is he partial.

(Isa. 46:9, 10; Acts 10:34, 35) The life-giving benefits of the ransom sacrifice of Jesus Christ are for mankind in general. Of its application to many others, we read: "We behold Jesus, who has been made a little lower than angels, crowned with glory and honor for having suffered death, that he by God's undeserved kindness might taste death for every man." (Heb. 2:9) Also: "He is a propitiatory sacrifice for our sins, yet not for ours only but also for the whole world's." (1 John 2:2) "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, a man, Christ Jesus, who gave himself a corresponding ransom for all."—1 Tim. 2:5, 6.

On the basis of this, Jesus Christ said: "The hour is coming in which all those in the memorial tombs will hear his voice and come out." (John 5:28, 29) Ah, yes, as the apostle Paul declared: "There is going to be a resurrection [of the dead] of both the righteous and the unrighteous."—Acts 24:15.

As the dead are resurrected, there will be enough of life's water to heal and restore them to fullness of life. This is assured as we see the stream increasing in depth: "And he [the angel] continued measuring a thousand [cubits] and then made me pass through the water, water up to the knees."—Ezek. 47:4.

But here the stream did not stop deepening. From this we may assume that not all the thousands of millions of dead will be resurrected at once, which would cause the survivors of Har-Magedon to have a great population explosion on their hands. How, then, could the necessary material provisions be made for the resurrected ones, not to mention their teaching and training in Jehovah's way of life?

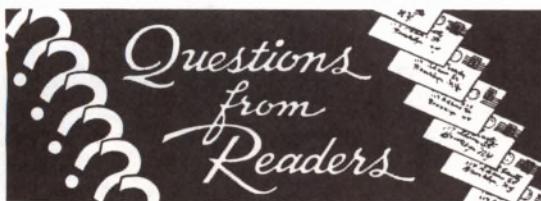
The next measurement found the stream much greater in volume: "And he continued measuring a thousand [cubits] and now made me pass through—water up to

the hips." (Ezek. 47:4) As the thousand years progress, the numbers resurrected will increase, for there will be more loyal subjects of the Kingdom to take care of them. Some among the resurrected ones, however, will not appreciate Jehovah's undeserved kindness and will not be obedient, as we shall see in the further development of the prophecy, to be discussed in a later issue of *The Watchtower*. But the obedient thousands of millions will become co-workers in paradise restoration and in assisting the later-resurrected ones to come to know Jehovah the Life-Giver and his Son, the King, receiving his life-restoring ministrations as God's High Priest.

Finally, the angel "continued measuring a thousand [cubits]. It was a torrent that I was not able to pass through, for the water had got high, water permitting swimming, a torrent that could not be passed through."—Ezek. 47:5.

Before the thousand years of Messiah's reign are ended the common earthly grave of mankind (Ha'des) and the sea of watery graves for many humans must be emptied of those held in them in death. (Rev. 20:13, 14) The symbolic 'water of life' must be extended to the very last one of the ransomed dead of mankind. Nothing can prevent the torrent of the 'water of life' from coming to mankind to bring them life in abundance.

Jehovah gives this advance knowledge of his grand arrangements for mankind with a purpose in mind. First, it gives hope in a world without hope. (1 Thess. 4:13) Also, it motivates appreciative-hearted ones to invite everyone they can reach to begin drinking of this life-giving water now, for people are so much in need of it. All who hear, and really understand, gladly join with the spirit and the bride in saying, 'Come! Take life's water free.'



- Was it not wrong for Judah to have relations with a woman he thought to be a harlot, as the Bible says that he did?—U.S.A.

In reality, Judah did not have relations with a harlot, but unwittingly took the place of his son Shelah in performing brother-in-law marriage and fathering legal offspring. Consider the background:

After Judah's second son Onan died in execution of divine judgment, Judah sent his daughter-in-law Tamar back to her father's home until such time as his third son Shelah was old enough to be united with her. But even

after Shelah had grown up, Judah did not give him in marriage to Tamar. So when Judah lost his wife in death, Tamar disguised herself as a prostitute and then seated herself on the road that Judah would be traversing. Not recognizing his daughter-in-law and assuming her to be a prostitute, Judah had relations with her.—Gen. 38:11-18.

Since Tamar was being held in reserve for brother-in-law marriage with his third son Shelah, when Judah learned that Tamar was pregnant he pronounced the judgment of death on her for having prostituted herself. When it came to light that Judah himself had unknowingly made her pregnant, Judah exclaimed: "She is more righteous than I am, [why?] for the reason that I did not give her to Shelah my son." Judah was not married at the time; he was a widower, and so he was not sinning against a wife of his. And the disguised Tamar he mistook to be an unmarried prostitute, in no sacred bonds of marriage. When the woman

whom he assumed to be a prostitute could not be located, he realized that he could fall into contempt, that is, for claiming to have had relations with a temple prostitute, when no such prostitute was known to be thereabouts.—Gen. 38:20-26.

As for Tamar, her course was not an adulterous one. Her twin sons were not considered to be the dishonorable sons of sin, sons of fornication. For, when Boaz of Bethlehem took the Moabitess Ruth in brother-in-law marriage, the elders of Bethlehem said to Boaz: "May your house become like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah, from the offspring that Jehovah will give you out of this young woman." (Ruth 4:11, 12) And so Perez is listed among the respectable ancestors of Jesus Christ. (Matt. 1:1-3; Luke 3:23-33) Perez' mother, Tamar, was like Ruth in not going sexually after a young man.—Ruth 3:10.

As far as Judah was concerned, he thought he was having relations with a prostitute. In this he was not acting right, for it was God's original purpose for a man to have relations

with his wife and not for the earth to be filled with prostitutes. Still, Judah did not sin in the sense of transgressing a specific command of God's law, for the Mosaic law was not given until much later.—Gen. 2:24; compare Leviticus 19:29.

The account about Judah and Tamar is not in the Bible to entertain. Rather, it forms an essential part of the historical narrative showing how the human line of descent leading to the promised Christ or Messiah, Jesus, was preserved.

#### "WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

July 22: Be "Sound in Mind" as the New Order Draws Near. Page 360. Songs to Be Used: 77, 70.

July 29: Are You Ready for Life in God's New Order? Page 365. Songs to Be Used: 63, 88.

August 5: Above All Things, Have Intense Love for One Another. Page 371. Songs to Be Used: 15, 45.