

The WATCHTOWER

Announcing
**JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM**

FEBRUARY 15, 1961

Semimonthly

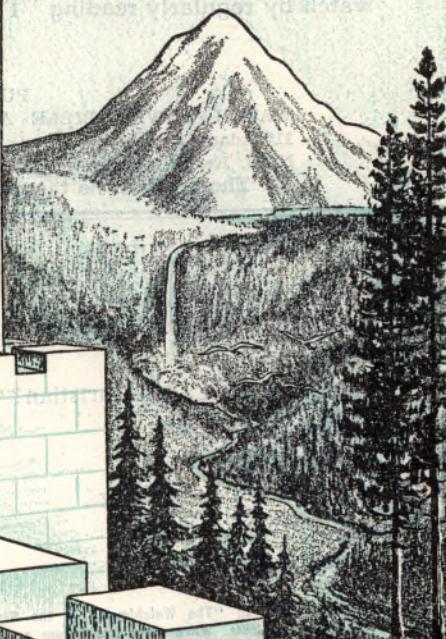
**FINDING JOY
FOR EVERLASTING LIFE**

HOLD FAST YOUR JOY!

EUTHANASIA AND GOD'S LAW

IS HEAVEN YOUR DESTINY?

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

THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER"

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

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

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

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

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

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N. H. KNORR, President GRANT SUITER, Secretary
"They will all be taught by Jehovah."—John 6:45; Isaiah 54:13

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Announcing
Jehovah's
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Number 4

DO YOU, like most persons in Christendom, hope to go to heaven when you die? Yes? But have you ever given it serious thought as to just why you have that hope? Do you really want to go there, or would you rather stay on this beautiful earth, especially if it were to become a paradise? Could it be that, after all, you are like the ones a popular song tells about: "Everybody wants to go to heaven, but nobody wants to die"?

Not that there is anything wrong with wanting to go to heaven. Heaven will be the destiny of certain ones, for Jesus plainly told his apostles: "In the house of my Father there are many abodes. Otherwise, I would have told you, because I am going my way to prepare a place for you. Also, if I go my way and prepare a place for you, I am coming again and will receive you home to myself, that where I am you also may be." Because of this promise Peter could write to certain Christians: "He gave us a new birth to a living hope . . . to an incorruptible and undefiled and unfading inheritance . . . reserved in the heavens."—John 14:2, 3; 1 Pet. 1:3, 4.

While 'everybody may want to go to heaven,' the Bible shows that very few will. Thus Jesus spoke of these as but a "little

Is HEAVEN Your Destiny?

flock," while the apostle John gives us the exact number, "a hundred and forty-four thousand." Compared with earth's billions, certainly 144,000 is a few, a little flock.—Luke 12:32; Rev. 7:4; 14:1.

One factor that limits the number going to heaven is that Jesus Christ first opened the "new and living way" to heaven by his sacrificial death and resurrection. That is why not even John the Baptist will be in heaven, even though we have Jesus' own words for it that John was without peer as a prophet of God. "No man . . . ascended into heaven" ahead of Jesus.—Heb. 10:20; Matt. 11:11; John 3:13.

Does this mean that, aside from the very few that go to heaven, all the rest of mankind are lost? Not by any means! All others who are amenable to righteousness will have an opportunity to gain everlasting life, now or later by means of a resurrection, right here upon the earth. These will be the subjects and beneficiaries of the 144,000 that go to heaven to rule with Christ a thousand years. Yes, while there is but one salvation, there are two distinct destinies, a heavenly one and an earthly.—Rev. 20:6.

Because of mistakenly construing liter-

ally what the Bible says about a fiery end to this world, many have entirely overlooked what God's Word has to say about the destiny of this earth. Far from its being destroyed, God "has founded the earth upon its established places; it will not be made to totter to time indefinite, nor forever." God did not create the earth "simply for nothing" but "formed it even to be inhabited."—Ps. 104:5; Isa. 45:18.

Not only will this earth continue forever, but God has promised glorious things for it. That is why Jesus taught us to pray: "Let your kingdom come. Let your will come to pass, as in heaven, also upon earth." (Matt. 6:9, 10) Then "they will not do any harm or cause any ruin . . . because the earth will certainly be filled with the knowledge of Jehovah as the waters are covering the very sea." Gradually God "will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be any more." Note that this promise applies, not to heaven, but to the earth, where mankind has been suffering for the past six thousand years.—Isa. 11:9; Rev. 21:4.

It simply has to be this way, because that was God's original purpose regarding the earth and man. Did not God tell our first parents to become fruitful, fill the earth, subdue it, that is, make it all like the garden of Eden, and exercise dominion over the lower animals? Simply because Adam disobeyed and therefore failed to carry out this mandate properly does not mean that God's purposes regarding the earth failed. "My word that goes forth from my mouth . . . will not return to me without results, but it will certainly do that in which I have delighted, and it will have certain success in that for which I have sent it." If certain creatures fail, it merely means that God will use others to accomplish his purposes.—Gen. 1:28; Isa. 55:11.

Most persons hope to go to heaven because of never having heard of this earthly destiny and because of having been mistakenly taught that they have an immortal soul that at death goes to either heaven or a burning hell. However, the Bible plainly shows that man *is* a soul and that when he dies he remains dead until the resurrection.—Gen. 2:7; Eccl. 9:5; John 5:28, 29.

Those who qualify for the heavenly destiny do so only because of certain steps that they take and that God takes on their behalf. They must take in knowledge, exercise faith, dedicate themselves and be baptized and thereafter remain faithful to their dedication even until death, doing their "utmost to render the calling and choosing of" themselves firm. On his part God individually chooses them, declares them righteous, brings them forth as his spiritual sons and anoints them with his spirit as members of Christ's body.—2 Pet. 1:10.

Those with whom God is so dealing have a firm conviction based upon their study of God's Word, by God's dealings with them and by their own course of action. Like the apostle Paul, they are able to say: "The spirit itself bears witness with our spirit that we are God's children," and they will be "glorified together" if they continue faithful.—Rom. 8:16, 17.

But unless we have taken these steps and have evidence of God's thus dealing with us and, in particular, have a strong hope and earnest longing for the heavenly reward, we undoubtedly are among those whose destiny, if they prove worthy, is a glorious paradisaic earth. There is nothing wrong with not wanting to go to heaven, but it would be foolish for one to want to if he had no basis for such a hope. All God's blessings are undeserved, and love and wisdom indicate that we accept with gratitude whatever destiny may be ours.

FINDING JOY FOR EVERLASTING LIFE

IS EVERLASTING life on earth possible? Looking at the state of affairs on this earth today, one might be excused for thinking that the everlasting extinction of the human race is a possibility. While world leaders rotate from country to country talking "peace," their arms arsenals continue to roll out more and more horrible secret weapons. They are caught in the mesh of this loveless nuclear age, and each one strives to outdo the others in preparing the instruments of death. All lovers of life with joy must conclude that the administration of this present world is death-dealing and corrupt. The Bible shows that it is Satan's system of things, controlled by "the one having the means to cause death, that is, the Devil." (Heb. 2:14) This world system is in its time of judgment and is about to meet up with

1. (a) Does the administration of the present world hold out hope of life? (b) What does the Bible show concerning the present system?



the execution of that judgment, its "sudden destruction" at the hands of Jehovah God.—1 Thess. 5:2, 3.

² With Satan's death-dealing administration gone, will everlasting life then be possible on this earth? The Bible answers, Yes! Moreover, it shows that a new administration for life will bring blessings as yet untold to all men who love righteousness. Concerning this new administration, the eternal God, Jehovah himself, declares: "For here I am creating new heavens and a new earth, and the former things will not be called to mind, neither will they come up into the heart. But exult, you people, and be



joyful forever in what I am creating. For here I am creating Jerusalem a cause for joyfulness and her people a cause for exultation. And I will be joyful in Jerusalem and exult in my people; and no more will there be heard in her the sound of weeping or the sound of a plaintive cry."—Isa. 65:17-19.

³ The typical Jerusalem of ancient Palestine has long since ceased to be "the ex-

2. What invitation does Jehovah extend to lovers of life, and why may they rejoice?
3. What are the "new heavens" and the "new earth," and when do they become a cause for joy?

ultation of the whole earth," and certainly Jehovah finds no joy in the strife-torn Jerusalem of modern Jordan, which banned the activity of His witnesses. However, Jehovah finds joy without measure in the "New Jerusalem," his administrative "new heavens" of a peaceful new world, through which he gathers "all things together again . . . , the things in the heavens and the things on the earth" under "the kingdom of the Son of his love." (Eph. 1:7-10; Col. 1:13) Under this kingdom of the heavens Jehovah has now planted a "new earth" organization, the New World society of his witnesses, embracing lovers of righteousness "out of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues." (Rev. 7:9) Since A.D. 1914 in the heavens and A.D. 1919 on earth, this glorious creation of God has been a source of joy and refreshment to all who reside within its boundaries.

⁴ The demonic "heavens" of Satan, as well as his earthly rule by corrupt politicians and greedy dictators, will soon be swept into oblivion by the "war of the great day of God the Almighty." (Rev. 16:14-16; 19:11-21) Then the "New Jerusalem" of God's "heavens" will come down to earth in the sense that it will shower blessings without number upon obedient mankind. How joyful that new-world relationship between God and man! For, "look! the tent of God is with humankind, and he will reside with them, and they will be his peoples. And God himself will be with them. And he will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more." (Rev. 21:1-5) Eternal deathlessness for God's own children! Through the administration of his "new heavens" Jehovah has commanded this blessing, "even life for evermore."—Ps. 133:3, AS.

4. What blessing does Jehovah command, and how will he administer it?

⁵ Nourished by these grand Bible truths, the united worshipers of Jehovah joyfully bear witness to the ends of the earth, comforting millions with the hope of life in God's new world. What joy they find in ministering God's message to others! How strikingly their spiritual prosperity contrasts with the spiritual famine among the sectarian religions of this modern world! It is just as the Lord Jehovah foretold: "Look! My own servants will rejoice, but you yourselves will suffer shame. Look! My own servants will cry out joyfully because of the good condition of the heart, but you yourselves will make outcries because of the pain of heart and you will howl because of sheer breakdown of spirit." (Isa. 65:13, 14) How true of world religion today! It finds no joy in its multitude of sects, and it refuses to place itself under the unifying rule of the "happy God" and Supreme Sovereign of the universe, Jehovah. It rejects the original religion of the eternal God.—1 Tim. 1:11, 17.

EXAMINING THE MULTITUDE OF SECTS

⁶ However, do not some of the sectarian religions claim to have the original religion? Do these not point the finger of scorn at Jehovah's witnesses, and say, "You are a new religion"? It should now be of interest to examine their claims in the light of history and of Bible truth. At the outset one thing is clear: The original religion cannot be a sectarian religion. It cannot be a religion of one family, one community, one tribe or even one nation. A man of God rightly stated a fundamental truth 1,900 years ago, when he said: "For a certainty I perceive that God is not partial, but in every nation the man that fears him and works righteousness is acceptable

5. (a) Where do Jehovah's witnesses now find joy? (b) How does their condition contrast with that of sectarian religions?

6. (a) What study will now be of interest? (b) From what standpoint should the world's religions be examined?

to him." (Acts 10:34, 35) To appreciate the original religion, man must lift himself out of his local environment, strip himself of the proud traditions that divide mankind and seek the one God and Father who "made out of one man every nation of men, to dwell upon the entire surface of the earth." (Acts 17:26, 27) With such a broadened outlook, examine now the world's religious systems.

⁷ First, there is the Protestant system. This began as new sects, or breakaways from Catholicism. Often the reason for schism was political, matrimonial, or some other secular interest, so that Protestantism still retains much of the doctrine of Catholicism. Though little more than four hundred years old, Protestantism itself has now broken up into over two hundred conflicting sects, several of the leading sects in the United States having again split on doctrinal or organizational issues into as many as twenty or more groups. The eternal God, Jehovah, could not be the author of such confusion! (1 Cor. 14:33, 40) What, then, of the Catholic system? Catholicism boasts of its greater age. However, history shows that the Roman Catholic sect in fact dates back no farther than the year A.D. 312, when Emperor Constantine established it as the official religion of the Roman Empire, with himself as the Pontifex Maximus, or first pope. Thus Roman Catholicism originated as a state religion. It is only one of a number of conflicting Catholic sects, which include the Greek Orthodox, the Coptic, the Armenian Catholic, and others. Moreover, the Catholic sects are young in comparison with the Oriental systems of Confucius, Brahma and Buddha, all of which had their beginnings at least eight hundred years before Catholicism. Are the Oriental systems, then, the original religion? Ex-

amination shows that these religions have a confusing pantheon of gods and that they also have broken up into a multiplicity of sects. The Buddhism of Ceylon, Burma and Thailand differs from the Buddhism of China. This, in turn, is entirely different from the Buddhism of Japan, which has a long history of division into warring sects, the number growing to at least 165 in the spiritual vacuum that followed World War II.*

⁸ Why does this world present such a sorry picture of a multitude of religious sects and a multitude of gods? One reason is that world religion has no firm foundation of truth. It has no solid basis of an inspired written word, such as true Christianity has in the Bible. Its basis is often shifting sands of superstition or the philosophies of worldly-wise men who ignore the Word of the true God. Moreover, the Bible and secular history, as well as similarities of form and doctrine, show that all systems of world religion today have a common ancestress that has spawned division. Whether it be the infant Protestantism, the middle-aged Catholicism or the hoary-headed religion of the Orient—all can be traced back to the "mysteries" of ancient Babylon, the city founded by Nimrod more than 4,000 years ago, shortly after the great flood of Noah's day. Do you doubt that Babylon is the fountainhead of modern-day sectarian religion? Consider the following example:

⁹ The "mysteries" of Babylon proclaimed the unity of the "Only God," comprising three persons, and this unity in trinity was represented in an equilateral triangle.† Ad-

* *Directory of Buddhist Denominations*, published by The International Institute for the Study of Religions, Inc., October, 1957. (Tokyo, Japan).

† Layard, *Babylon and Nineveh*, p. 605.

8. (a) What are some of the reasons for sectarian confusion? (b) To what common origin may present-day sectarian religions be traced?

9. How widespread is the trinity doctrine, and why?

7. (a) Can Protestantism lay claim to being the original religion? (b) Can Catholicism? (c) Can the Oriental religions?

mittedly, such a teaching concerning the Divinity is mysterious and confusing, and, sad to say, this Babylonian confusion has spread throughout the earth. The ancient Egyptians adopted the same teaching, and again a triangle was used in symbol of the "triform divinity."^{*} To this day, Hinduism honors the triune god, Trimurti, whose three-faced image is found in India's Elephanta Caves, and a curse is pronounced on all who distinguish between Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, the three gods represented in that image.[†] Japanese Buddhism has a triune image, San-Po-Kojin, an angry god with three heads and six arms, who guards the "three treasures" of the abstract, triune Buddha, Bu-Po-So.[‡] A "Holy Trinity" of three Gods in one God is also worshiped by most Catholic and Protestant sects, this having first been adopted as Catholic doctrine at the Nicene Council of A.D. 325. Though the "Holy Trinity" is mentioned nowhere in the Bible, *The Catholic Encyclopedia* describes it as "the central doctrine of the Christian religion." In support of the trinity doctrine the Catholic church has also used images with three heads on one body, as in the monastery of the Trinitarians, in Madrid, Spain.[§]

¹⁰ However, the trinity is just one example of many doctrines and practices, found both in Christendom and in the Oriental religions, and which originated in the "mysteries" of Babylon. Cardinal Newman, a spokesman for the Catholic religion, supports this view in his *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*: "The use of temples, and these dedicated to particular saints, and ornamented on occasions with branches of trees; incense, lamps, and candles; . . . holydays and sea-

sons, use of calendars, processions, blessings on the fields; sacerdotal vestments, . . . images at a later date, perhaps the ecclesiastical chant, . . . are all of pagan origin, and sanctified by their adoption into the church." To the cardinal's list might be added the rosary, repetitious prayers, halos—in fact, the Oriental who visits the West, or the westerner who visits the Orient, cannot fail to be struck by the similarity of the two systems of religion. It all descends from Babylon of old!

¹¹ Some materialist may now say, "But look at communism—there is one system that has renounced religion." However, can it really be said that the Communists are godless? Have they not adopted the cult of hero worship, with Marx and Lenin as "gods," and in 1950 the People's Assembly in satellite Albania even voted to erect a statue to "the deity, Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin"? Are not Red China's holy days celebrated beneath towering portraits of Mao Tse-tung and other Communist idols? This is the same kind of worship that marked the founding of Babylon, when the militaristic Nimrod, who "displayed himself a mighty hunter in opposition to Jehovah," was exalted as "god" and dictator in Babylon. (Gen. 10:9, 10) In the same way modern communism, as the "king of the north" of Bible prophecy, speaks marvelous things against the God of gods' and honors "the god of fortresses" by amassing a terrible array of nuclear armaments. (Dan. 11:36, 38) The spirit of proud Babylon is perpetuated in the not-so-godless Red religion of communism.

¹² Does this mean that Babylonish religion, with its branches extending throughout the earth, constitutes the original re-

* Maurice, *Indian Antiquities*, Vol. iv, p. 445.

† Kennedy, *Hindoo Mythology*, p. 211.

‡ Niimura, *Kojien*, p. 897.

§ Hislop, *The Two Babylons*, p. 17.

10. What does an eminent Catholic spokesman say concerning the origin of his religion's teachings and practices?

11. In what respects does communism resemble the Babylonian religion?

12. (a) Why may the religion of Babylon be termed a religion of the dead? (b) What pronouncement of doom and warning does heaven make concerning her?

ligion for mankind? Far from it! The religion of Babylon was the original post-Flood sectarian religion, set up in opposition to Almighty God. It is a religion of the dead, and not of the living. To this day the chief duty of many of her priests is to bury the dead and to intone prayers on behalf of the dead. Whether in the West or in the Orient, or in Moscow's Red Square, she continues to enshrine and glorify the ancestral "greats," while ignoring Jehovah, the God of life. All who seek life with joy must heed heaven's pronouncement of doom against modern Babylon: "Get out of her, my people, if you do not want to share with her in her sins, and if you do not want to receive part of her plagues. And a strong angel lifted up a stone like a great millstone and hurled it into the sea, saying: 'Thus with a swift pitch will Babylon the great city be hurled down, and she will never be found again.' "—Rev. 18:4, 21; see also Jeremiah 51:6-8.

THE RELIGION OF LIFE

¹³ What, then, is the religion of life? Just as it is important to see worldly religion today in its true perspective as a worldwide system of sectarian confusion, so it is necessary to get the right perspective on the true religion. First, let it be noted that this is no man-made religion. It is not the religion of *your* choice, but the religion that Jehovah God has chosen, not only for mankind, but for all obedient creatures in His vast creation. It is far, far older than Babylon's brief 4,000 years. The true religion centers in no earthly palace or temple, but in the exalted presence of Jehovah God, the eternal King and the Source of all life and energy in the universe.—Isa. 66:1; Ps. 10:16; 36:9.

13. Who only may choose the true religion for mankind, and where does this religion center?

¹⁴ How do we know this? It is known because it is written in the Bible, which is the oldest and most reliable record, both historical and prophetic, on the vital matter of religion. The opening part of the Bible is "a history of the heavens and the earth in the time of their being created, in the day that Jehovah God made earth and heaven." (Gen. 1:1-2:4) However, the Bible also shows that Jehovah brought forth a glorious spirit creation of "sons of God" long before he laid the material foundations of this earth. The first of these spirit sons is called "the Word of God." (Rev. 19:13) He is also described under the figure of "Wisdom" and as saying, at Proverbs 8:22-31: "Jehovah himself produced me as the beginning of his way, the earliest of his achievements of long ago. From time indefinite I was installed, from the start, from times earlier than the earth. . . . Then I came to be beside him as a master worker and I came to be what he was specially fond of day by day, I being glad before him all the time." With joy of heart the Son worshiped the Father, obediently carrying out the divine will as a master worker.

¹⁵ In the course of time other spirit sons were created, and these also found exhilarating joy in the worship of Jehovah. These sons were present at the creation of the earth, as Jehovah later explained to his human servant Job: "Where did you happen to be when I founded the earth? . . . When the morning stars joyfully cried out together, and all the sons of God began shouting in applause?" (Job 38:4, 7) Is it to be supposed that these sons of God stood idly by, applauding while Jehovah and his first Son did all the work? Rather, it is certain that all His sons had assignments of work, in harmony with Jehovah's will

14. (a) What reliable record does the Bible provide?

(b) Whom did Jehovah first create, and of what did true worship then consist?

15. In what did God's spirit sons find exhilarating joy?

and purpose, and that in their obedient, devoted service they gave worship to Jehovah. Productive work in harmony with the divine will is a foundation principle in the original religion of life.—John 5:17; 15:8.

¹⁶ With the creation of the first man, Adam, the worship and service of Jehovah came to be the true religion for this earth. The accurate time-record of the Bible shows this to have been a little more than 5,980 years ago. Of what did that original religion for mankind consist? It could not be ancestor worship, for Adam had no ancestors. It was not concerned with rites for the dead, for there were no dead. Nor was man's original home, the garden of Eden, a place of temples, idols or incense. It was a "paradise of pleasure," a place of great natural beauty. There God set before the first man, not a mysterious, formalistic religion, but an assignment of service that would bring boundless joy in its accomplishment. Jehovah gave the man a lovely wife and work mate to assist in this assignment.

¹⁷ "And God proceeded to create the man in his image, in God's image he created him; male and female he created them. Further, God blessed them and God said to them: 'Be fruitful and become many and fill the earth and subdue it, and have in subjection the fish of the sea and the flying creatures of the heavens and every living creature that is creeping upon the earth.' " Adam was required to carry out this assignment of service in humble recognition of his dependence upon his Creator, and for this reason the further command was given: "From every tree of the garden you may eat to satisfaction. But as for the tree of the knowledge of good and bad you must not eat from it, for in

the day you eat from it you will positively die." (Gen. 1:27, 28; 2:16, 17) Through obedient and joyful service to Jehovah God, Adam could have found everlasting life here upon this earth.

¹⁸ How, then, did false religion get started? It began when an ambitious spirit son of God rebelled against Jehovah. He persuaded Eve and, through her, Adam to abandon Jehovah's service for the sectarian religion that he, Satan the Devil, now introduced into the earth. They lost their joyful privilege of service in Eden's sanctuary. They lost life itself, not only for themselves, but for all their offspring. (Rom. 5:12-14) Does this mean that the original religion, the religion that holds prospect of everlasting life, perished from the earth? Not so! Jehovah has 'given the earth to the sons of men,' to be a sanctuary of beauty, peace and joy for all time. That purpose has not changed. (Ps. 115:16; Isa. 55:11) Moreover, Jehovah made promise in Eden that he would bring forth from his wifelike organization in heaven a Seed, a Kingdom heir, who would sweep sectarian worship out of heaven and earth and become the Chief One in God's "new heavens" for blessing all mankind. (Gen. 3:15; 2 Pet. 3:13) From Eden until now true witnesses of Jehovah have testified to this hope. Witnessing to Jehovah's name and purpose, and not an empty display of pomp and ritual, constitutes the true religion for mankind down to this day.—Isa. 43:10-12.

¹⁹ The line of integrity-keeping witnesses of the true God starts with Adam's son, Abel. Then it descends through Enoch, who prophesied concerning Jehovah's judgment against the ungodly, and Noah, the "preacher of righteousness," who was

16, 17. (a) When did the true religion first appear on earth, and in what did it consist? (b) How could man then have found everlasting life on earth?

18. (a) How did false religion get started? (b) Did Jehovah's purpose toward the earth then change, and how was true religion now perpetuated on earth?

19. Concerning what did Jehovah's early witnesses on earth preach, and what hope did they hold?

saved with his family through the great deluge. (Jude 14, 15; 2 Pet. 2:5) Later, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob bore joyful witness, and Jehovah blessed them, promising that the Kingdom heir, or Seed, would come from their family line. "In faith all these died, although they did not get the fulfillment of the promises, but they saw them afar off and hailed them and publicly declared that they were strangers and temporary residents in the land. . . . But now they are reaching out for a better place, that is, one belonging to heaven. Hence God is not ashamed of them, to be called upon as their God, for he has made a city ready for them."—Heb. 11:4-16.

²⁰ Since these men of faith all died without getting "the fulfillment of the promises," how can it be said that theirs was the religion of life? It is because Jehovah has promised them a resurrection to life here on the earth, so that they may continue to serve Him joyfully through all the ages to come. "But that the dead are raised up even Moses disclosed, . . . when he calls Jehovah 'the God of Abraham and God of Isaac and God of Jacob'. He is a God, not of the dead, but of the living, for they are all living from his standpoint." (Luke 20:37, 38) Jehovah is also the God of Moses, of David, and of all who joyfully witness to his glorious name and concerning his promise of the Seed and Kingdom heir.—Ex. 3:15; Psalm 145.

²¹ Then, after 4,000 troubled years of human history, a wonderful thing happened! Jehovah sent his own Son, his first creation and the chief joy of all his heavenly family, here to this earth. "So the Word became flesh and resided among us, and

we had a view of his glory, a glory such as belongs to an only-begotten son from a father, and he was full of undeserved kindness and truth." (John 1:14) The Son himself declared: "For this purpose I have been born and for this purpose I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth." (John 18:37) He taught his followers to walk according to the religion of life, and to find joy in doing the divine will. Concerning these meek, sheeplike persons he said: "I have come that they might have life and might have it in abundance. I am the right shepherd; the right shepherd surrenders his soul in behalf of the sheep." (John 10:10, 11) His perfect human life he gave as a ransom for all men who love righteousness. Even though this meant death on a torture stake, the Son, Jesus Christ, found an incomparable joy in doing the divine will as Jehovah's Chief Witness on earth.—John 4:34; Heb. 12:1, 2.

²² After Jesus' resurrection and ascension into heaven, the joyful witness concerning Jehovah's kingdom and the hope of eternal life gained further impetus, as Jesus poured out God's spirit upon his disciples, empowering them to preach "to the most distant part of the earth." First a few from among the Jews, and then men of all nations accepted the joyful message of life. "When those of the nations heard this, they began to rejoice and to glorify the word of Jehovah, and all those who were rightly disposed for everlasting life became believers. And the disciples continued to be filled with joy and holy spirit." The religion of life and joy prospered in the earth, as the believers bore "thorough witness concerning the kingdom of God." —Acts 1:8; 8:25; 10:42; 13:48, 52; 28:23.

20. How can it be said that these Witnesses practiced a religion of life?

21. (a) What wonderful thing then happened? (b) How did the Son fulfill God's purpose in sending him to the earth?

22. How did Jesus' disciples practice their religion, and with what success?

²³ However, what of this twentieth century, this nuclear space age, when evil men threaten to snuff out all life on earth with their megaton bombs? Is the religion of life to be found in the earth today? Does it hold out hope of survival for humankind? Certainly modern Christendom is proclaiming no such hope. It has become sectarian, and a part of this world, and is described by Christ himself as "weeds" that an enemy oversowed in the true field of witnessing. This same Son and

Heir, who is now enthroned as King in Jehovah's "new heavens," sends forth his angels to 'collect the weeds' and "pitch them into the fiery furnace" of Armageddon destruction. But what of true Bible Christianity? The same prophecy continues: "At that time the righteous ones will shine as brightly as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." (Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43) How wonderfully has this prophecy been fulfilled in the modern-day witnesses of Jehovah! For forty years now the anointed remnant of these Christian witnesses have been letting their light shine to the ends of the earth. With joy, those of good will from among the nations are learning the religion of life, so that they too are becoming zealous witnesses for Jehovah's name and kingdom. From a few thousand in 1919, there has been a phenomenal growth to 851,378 active Witnesses in 179 lands world-wide in 1960. These continue to teach from door to door, "praising God

23. (a) Why has Christendom failed to perpetuate the true religion? (b) What do prophecy and the facts indicate as to the religion of Jehovah's witnesses?

and finding acceptance with all the people," and 'Jehovah continues to join to them daily those being saved.' Yes, daily! For the past two years more than 180 new ministers were ordained for this service every day of the year!—Acts 2:47.

²⁴ Wherever you

live on earth today, you may hear the joyous news concerning Jehovah's "new heavens" and "new earth." If you should live in any of forty countries of Africa, you may hear it from one of the 119,409

Witnesses who are

spreading light in that continent. In sixty-seven countries and islands of the Americas, there are 353,632 zealous Witnesses. In nineteen countries of Europe, 195,295 ministers are preaching this same grand message in many languages. Forty-six countries of Asia and islands of the Pacific are served by another 59,659 ministers. Even where communism casts its dark shadow, in seven Soviet-dominated countries, 123,383 Witnesses refuse to be silenced in the face of cruel persecutions. Men of good will in all the earth are being served with the religion of life! This global witness must go on until all persons of good will on the face of the earth have been gathered as 'the offspring of God's people,' to stand forever in the joy of life eternal in God's new world. "For just as the new heavens and the new earth that I am making are standing before me,' is the utterance of Jehovah, 'so the offspring of you people and the name of you people will keep standing.'"—Isa. 66:22.

24. To what extent are men of good will now being served by the religion of life, and with what prospect?

ASK FOR THE NEXT ISSUE

- "The Congregation's Place in True Worship" and "The Congregation in the Time of the End." Read them, and learn how you can identify God's congregation, how it is organized according to Bible standards, and how you can share in its activity now.
- Also read "Materialism or Spirituality?" "What Is the Destiny of the Wicked?" "Joseph—A Faithful Witness of Jehovah" and "Be Humble in Walking with God."

All in the next issue!

HOLD FAST your JOY!

STRANGE as it may sound, there are some people today who say they do not want to live forever. Their concept of living is based on the present-day struggle for survival, with its fears and uncertainties, its pains, its aches and its worries, and they can envision no better way of life. Some even say everlasting life would be everlasting boredom. Others say that everlasting life is impossible, and they dismiss it with a knowing shrug. They ignore the findings of modern medical research, which show that it is possible to perpetuate living cells indefinitely, under right conditions. More important, they ignore the Word of the Author of life, which shows that man is about to enter on a glorious eternity of deathlessness and happy living. The great Creator of the universe, the Supplier of the energy that keeps it running, the Provider of the nuclear fuel that has kept our sun burning for billions of years—yes, the Maker of man himself has promised that He will provide the “fuel” to perpetuate human lives forever on this earth. It is His divine will to do so!

—Isa. 45:18; Rev. 7:9, 10, 16, 17.

1. (a) Why do some people say they do not want to live forever? (b) Why is everlasting life for mankind both reasonable and certain?

"The joy of Jehovah
is your stronghold."
—Neh. 8:10.

² Never think for one moment that the everlasting life spoken of in God's Word, the Bible, will be patterned after the miserable life standards of the present degraded world. Rather, it will be an abundant life. (Prov. 10:22)

It will be in such sharp contrast to the humdrum existence of most people today that it can truly be said that “modern” man has not even started to live. In fact, from God's standpoint, sin-cursed man is as good as dead. (Matt. 8:22) In promising everlasting life to those who love him, Jehovah has in mind the very fullness of happy living—life that overflows with rich meaning and joyful purpose. In the same way that the heirs of God's heavenly kingdom enter into “glorious riches” of service to God, so the others of his sheep will enjoy a resplendent life in the earthly realm of that kingdom. —Eph. 1:18; Matt. 25:34.

³ Picture that realm in your mind's eye! Earth's abounding wealth will be used, not for “space age” armaments or the conquest of space, but for subduing the earth and enriching it as man's eternal home. Mankind will enjoy the fullness of mental and physical vigor, and he will make use of his powers to the praise of his Creator and for the upbuilding of his fellow man. Everyone will have an assigned field of endeavor and will be a master in that field, finding zest and enjoyment in the accom-

2. Of what will life in God's new world consist, and how will it contrast with life today?
3. How will new-world living bring praise and glory to Jehovah?

plishment of superlative workmanship. No sweat-house drudgery in Jehovah's new world! Talented workers will construct homes of exquisite loveliness. The monumental wonders of nature will be supplemented by human artistry, as godly man tills and plants, transforming the entire globe into one breath-taking, beauteous landscape. Treasure upon treasure of divine wisdom will be revealed, as perfect man's richly endowed mind pursues scientific studies for a peaceful purpose and to God's glory.—Ps. 104:24, 31.

To ⁴ If you can picture some of the blessedness of that glorious future, then you are touching at the fringe of wonders that Jehovah will unfold for humankind through all eternity. Rejoice in the knowledge of God's promises and hold fast your joy, for everlasting life! What a thrilling prospect! It should cause all mankind to exclaim with the psalmist: "O let people laud Jehovah for his loving-kindness and for his wonderful works to the sons of men." —Ps. 107:8.

STUDY TO FIND LIFE

All who love life and who desire the abundant life of God's new world must study to know and obey the Word of God. This means diligent study, first to gain accurate knowledge of Jehovah's purposes, and then to retain and build on that knowledge while one is advancing to Christian maturity. Let no one ever slow down on his theocratic studies! Even when the early Christians were "firmly set in the truth," Peter found it necessary to keep 'rousing them up by way of reminding them.' (2 Pet. 1:12-15) Review and further study is just as important today—even more important, as the Devil is now preparing his last-ditch attack against the New World

4. Why should we now hold fast our joy, and with what heart attitude?

5. Why is continued, diligent study a necessity for all in the New World society today?

society. Now, of all times, is the time to "pay more than the usual attention to the things heard by us, that we may never drift away." To the anointed Christians Paul says: "For we actually become partakers of the Christ only if we make fast our hold on the confidence we had at the beginning firm to the end." (Heb. 2:1; 3:14) The same principle applies to all men of good will who seek life in the paradise earth.

6 Keep drinking at the fountain of Bible truth! As Jesus promises: "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." The sayings of Jesus are 'spirit and life.' (John 4:14; 6:63) The entire Word of God "is alive and exerts power." "Read in it day and night," so that you may find treasures of wisdom and discernment, and hold them fast for everlasting life. "Happy is the man that has found wisdom, and the man that gets discernment, for the gaining of it is better than the gaining of silver and the produce of it even than gold. It is more precious than corals, and all other delights of yours cannot be made equal to it. Length of days is in its right hand; in its left hand there are riches and glory. Its ways are ways of pleasantness, and all its roadways are peace. It is a tree of life to those taking hold of it, and those keeping fast hold of it are to be called happy."—Heb. 4:12; Josh. 1:8; Prov. 3:13-18.

7 There is someone, however, who does not want mankind to be happy. That "someone" is "the original serpent, the one called Devil and Satan, who is misleading the entire inhabited earth." (Rev. 12:9) He it is who oversowed "weeds" of sectari-

6. What profit results from daily study?

7. (a) How does an enemy oppose the joyful growth of the Word? (b) How may one hold fast to his initial joy?

anism in the true religion of life. His subtle ways are further described by Jesus Christ in his parable recorded at Luke 8:4-15. As the Great Sower sows the "right seed," "the word of God," receptive hearts "receive the word with joy." However, the Devil tries to prevent the seed's taking root, or he tries to choke it off before it grows into "a tree of life." All who are desirous of holding fast to their initial joy must cultivate the good soil of their hearts by forming regular habits of study. They must resist the heat of old-world opposition that might dry up the tender plant of their newborn faith. In trial, and even in persecution, they must keep the vision of Jehovah's glorious promises shining brightly before their eyes, so that they may never, never stray from the radiant path that it lights before them. They must study to participate in the conquest of faith. "Everything that has been born from God conquers the world. And this is the conquest that has conquered the world, our faith."—1 John 5:4.

⁸ The Master speaks of other subtle pressures that the Devil brings to bear on our faith. He warns of "the ones that have heard, but, by being carried away by anxieties and wealth and pleasures of this life, they are completely choked and bring nothing to perfection." Anxieties? Yes, some become anxious about tomorrow. They think they must take in extra work at home to supplement the family budget, that they must enlarge a business, or seek promotion to a more lucrative but more time-consuming job. Some have all kinds of worries about what *might* happen in the future. They fail to heed Jesus' advice: "So, never be anxious about the next day, for the next day will have its own anxieties. Sufficient for each day is its own evil." If they would carefully plan to let God's new-world interests have first place

⁸. What "anxieties" are to be avoided, and why?

in their lives, their anxieties would vanish like the morning mist. (Matt. 6:33, 34) Jehovah will never forsake those who keep him first in their thoughts and lives. Out of a grateful heart, David could say: "A young man I used to be, I have also grown old, and yet I have not seen anyone righteous forsaken, nor his offspring looking for bread. All day long he is showing favor and lending, and so his offspring are in line for a blessing."—Ps. 37:25, 26.

⁹ Some are carried away by "wealth." How subtly can the choking desire to be rich, the grasping for more and more of the fine things that this world offers, crowd out the first joy and love for Jehovah and his Kingdom promises! Yet, sad to say, a multitude who have started on the way to life have later been drowned in the sea of materialism. As the apostle Paul explains, the real gain, the "great gain," is to be found in "godly devotion along with self-sufficiency." "So, having sustenance and covering, we shall be content with these things." How timely the admonition to all who have entered on the way of life, "to rest their hope, not on uncertain riches, but on God, who furnishes us all things richly for our enjoyment"! As this transitory old world finishes its course, Jehovah supplies satisfying riches of knowledge and service. Through this service let us now strive to attain to the still-greater treasures that will abound in the eternal new world. They are wise who heed the apostle's admonition, "to work at good, to be rich in right works, to be liberal, ready to share, safely treasuring up for themselves a right foundation for the future, in order that they may get a firm hold on the real life."—1 Tim. 6:6-19.

¹⁰ There are some who, after receiving

⁹. How can "wealth" become a danger, but what really is "great gain"?

¹⁰. (a) How may "pleasures of this life" make subtle intrusion? (b) How may they be prevented from taking root?

the word with joy and entering upon the real life, will even permit the "pleasures of this life" to crowd out the superior joys of study, service and association in Jehovah's New World society. After a hard day's work it is very easy to be self-pitying, and to think, "I'm too tired for study, too tired for meetings, too tired for service." So relaxation is sought elsewhere. A bad habit takes root and grows. In actual fact, spiritual refreshment is the best cure for all kinds of weariness. This refreshment is always to be found, with satisfying joy, in the study of God's Word and the association of his people. Avoid the lazy ways of the old world. On days set apart for God's service, be like the faithful Judeans under Jehoshaphat, who "proceeded to rise early in the morning and go out." (2 Chron. 20: 20-22) Never let pleasures crowd in on your life to the extent that they crowd out planned theocratic study, service and association. Remember that part of the sign of "the last days" is that men will be "lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God." (2 Tim. 3:1, 4) Be a lover of God.

¹¹ Times come in the experience of most of us when we are faced with personal problems, with pressures from the world, or with persecutions that seem almost too heavy to bear. At such times we must keep close to Jehovah in prayer, confident that he will sustain us through our trials. Keep up association in the New World society and, above all, *regular weekly* service to Jehovah. God's service is like strengthening food. As Jesus said: "My food is for me to do the will of him that sent me and to finish his work." (John 4:34) Be determined to finish Jehovah's work in integrity! In field service it often happens that Jehovah provides just the comfort and encouragement we need, through some thrilling experience, or other outstanding

blessing, and then with strengthened faith we can see the path to take. "Trust in Jehovah with all your heart and do not lean upon your own understanding. In all your ways take notice of him, and he himself will make your paths straight."—Prov. 3: 5, 6.

¹² There are some who are newly started on the way of life but who early meet up with trials that threaten their faith. At such time the overseer or other mature minister in the congregation must be quick to help the new "sheep" rekindle his first joy in the truth. At the very first sign of difficulty make a friendly call and help to set the problem straight Scripturally. Continue this help, lovingly and with tender affection, so that the one receiving help "may finally stand complete and with firm conviction in all the will of God." (Col. 4: 12; 1 Thess. 2:7, 8) Show determination to hold on to the sheep. Patiently tend the spiritually weak, for they will respond to loving shepherding. If they are sick physically, help them to take part in incidental witnessing, so that they may maintain a healthy disposition and be blessed by Jehovah. There are many who are strong and active today in Jehovah's work, some of them pioneer ministers, but who would have been lost to the New World society had not prompt help been given in time of trial. There is great "joy in heaven" whenever a straying sheep is brought back to the fold!—Luke 15:4-7.

¹³ Be diligent to sustain your own joy in God's service. "Rejoice in the hope ahead. Endure under tribulation. Persevere in prayer." If you do this, then the further words of the apostle will have fulfillment toward you: "May the God who gives hope fill you with all joy and peace by your believing, that you may abound in hope with

11. (a) Where may we find strength in time of trial?
 (b) How does Jehovah oftentimes reward those who "take notice of him"?

12. How may mature ministers assist new ones in rekindling joy in time of trial?

13. How may one retain the word in "a right and good heart"?

power of holy spirit." (Rom. 12:12; 15:13) The hope of the new world, with its eternal joy and peace, is now so near realization that you should strive with might and main to resist every encroachment from the Devil's world. So doing, you will be like the seed that fell upon the right soil, one of those who "after hearing the word with a right and good heart, retain it and bear fruit with endurance." How great the joy of all who *really* do bear fruit!—Matt. 13:23.

DEPENDING ON JEHOVAH

¹⁴ Let us always be conscious of our spiritual need! And what does this mean? It means that every day and every hour we must appreciate our dependence on Jehovah for the things of life. Without his love we would never have had life in the first place. Without his loving provision we would never have the opportunity for everlasting life. Without the spiritual sustenance he provides we would quickly be dragged back, to be swallowed up in the Devil's greedy world. We need Jehovah's help all the time. We will be happy if we humbly accept that help as he provides it through the study of his Word, by the enlightening and activating power of his spirit, and through his "faithful and discreet slave" serving in the New World society here on earth. "Happy are those who are conscious of their spiritual need, since the kingdom of the heavens belongs to them."

—Matt. 5:3; 24:45-47.

¹⁵ Out of his love and wisdom, Jehovah has provided abundantly for the spiritual and material needs of mankind. However, the majority of mankind ungratefully spurn his spiritual provision. At the same time they greedily use his material provision for selfish gain, boasting that they

14. According to Matthew 5:3, who are the happy ones today, and why so?

15. (a) How does mankind in general regard Jehovah's provision? (b) How does Jehovah regard ungrateful mankind?

have no need of God. Actually, it is Jehovah that has no need of man, and he could snuff out all human life in a moment of time. "All the nations are as something nonexistent in front of him; as nothing and an unreality they have been accounted to him." (Isa. 40:17) We should feel very humble before Jehovah. The following illustration may help us to realize how small man really is:

¹⁶ According to human standards a man is counted big if he weighs 200 pounds. Some men are counted "big" because of their skill in shooting satellites into space, where they orbit for a few weeks or months. Yet how small are man and his satellites when compared to this earth, which weighs six trillion billion (21 0's) tons and which has made unerring orbit around the sun, traveling 58 thousand million miles a year, during all the years of its existence! Jehovah put the earth in orbit! However, the earth is small, too, compared to the expanse of the solar system—yes, just a pin-point in a system that measures more than seven thousand million miles across. Jehovah created the solar system! But how small is the solar system itself! For the earth's sun is only one of the 200 thousand million stars that make up the galaxy called the "Milky Way." So vast is the "Milky Way" that it takes a flash of light 100,000 years to cross from one side to the other. Jehovah set the "Milky Way" in place! But the "Milky Way" is small too. It happens to be just one of a fathomless expanse of billions of galaxies, light from the nearest of which takes two thousand million years to reach man's telescopes on this earth. Jehovah created all those heavens!—Gen. 1:1.

¹⁷ Long before modern telescopes peered out into that immensity of space, the

16. How big is man?

17. (a) What may be said concerning the heavens of Jehovah's presence? (b) What marvelous privileges does Jehovah open up to obedient men?

psalmist declared: "O Jehovah our Lord, how majestic your name is in all the earth, you whose dignity is recounted above the heavens!" Far loftier and more glorious even than all the breath-taking expanse of the material heavens, is the spirit realm and heavens of Jehovah's own presence. What marvelous undeserved kindness has Jehovah displayed through his Son, in purchasing a few of mankind from the earth, to serve forever with his Son and King in the exalted "new heavens"—no, not in ugly space suits, but in the glorious, spiritual bodies of their resurrection, provided for exalted service in the brightness of the glory of Jehovah's presence. What marvelous love does Jehovah display, too, as he turns attention to this tiny speck, the earth, sweeping it clean of all sectarian religion and other wickedness, and establishing it as a sanctuary where men will live forever in peace and joy. Whether our destiny is incorruptibility in the "new heavens" or everlasting life with the "new earth," all of us can humbly exclaim before Jehovah: "What is mortal man that you keep him in mind, and the son of earthling man that you take care of him?"—Ps. 8:1, 4; 1 Cor. 15:42-45; Rev. 14:3.

¹⁸ Find your place in God's arrangement and stick by it! Stay close by his organization, the New World society, for there is nowhere else on earth that the joys of the real life can be found. In Jesus' day, when some became offended by the hard-hitting truths that he spoke and wandered back into the labyrinth of sectarianism, he said to his twelve apostles: "You do not want to go also, do you?" Peter answered: "Master, Whom shall we go away to? You have sayings of everlasting life, and we have believed and come to know that you are the

Holy One of God." (John 6:67-69) At that time there was only the one group that had the sayings of life, and today there is still only the one group. It is the New World society of Jehovah's witnesses, working in unity world-wide under the direction of the same Master, the now-reigning King, Christ Jesus. It is the only group on earth that has separated from the greedy, corrupt politics, religion, commerce and militarism of the Devil's world, and that has beaten 'swords into plowshares' so as to maintain a unity of love and brotherhood throughout the earth. (Isa. 2:4) It is the only organization that magnifies Jehovah's great name, and that advocates the religion of life, boldly proclaiming God's kingdom by Christ Jesus as the instrument for mankind's survival, as well as for administering the blessings of life in God's new world.—Ps. 34:3; John 17:3; Matt. 24:14.

¹⁹ Do you humbly acknowledge your entire dependence upon Jehovah for life and its blessings? Then you should also humbly acknowledge your dependence on his earthly organization today. There is no place of real safety outside God's New World society. All lovers of life must find their place, and hold their place, within that society, regularly attending the *Watchtower* study meeting, the service meeting and theocratic ministry school, listening attentively to the public Bible talks, and supporting the midweek congregation book study. Happy are all those that crowd all these meetings into a busy week, for in so doing they are crowding out the inconsequential things that the enemy would like to sow in their Christian lives. Happy, because they are conscious of their spiritual need! Happy, because they are pressing on to maturity with all of God's people throughout the wide world! Happy, because they are building up strength to

18. (a) Where only on earth can the real joy be found, and how did Peter indicate this? (b) Why can it be said that Jehovah's witnesses are the only group that hold to the religion of life today?

19. (a) How may lovers of life find the only real place of safety today? (b) Why are Jehovah's witnesses now so abundantly happy?

withstand the final assault from Satan's world, which even now heaps scorn and persecutions on their heads! "Happy are you when people reproach you and persecute you and lyingly say every kind of wicked thing against you for my [Jesus'] sake. Rejoice and leap for joy, since your reward is great in the heavens."—Matt. 5:11, 12.

²⁰ Even when persecutions come, keep up those associations with others of like precious faith, whether it be in private homes, in underground cellars, in concentration camps or in the open fields. Remember how our German brothers maintained their entity of organization while they were being compelled to flee from the Sachsenhausen concentration camp at the climax of World War II. Amid shootings, machine-gunnings, pillagings and death by exhaustion, our 230 brothers marched out in theocratic order, the one group in all that confusion of death and warfare that trusted in Jehovah God. Did Jehovah answer their united prayer for guidance? Did he lead and protect that small group of his worshipers? The report says: "From our troop of about 230 brothers and sisters none, not even the weakest, was lying on the road, despite the fact that we had some brothers from 65 to 72 years of age. They were all standing faithfully."^{*} During future trials, and through Armageddon's

* *Jehovah's Witnesses in the Divine Purpose*, p. 217.

20. (a) What association should be maintained under persecution? (b) How were our German brothers blessed in this? (c) What association must now be sought, with Armageddon in view?

What Country Can Be Called Christian?

Q "People are asking," says B. A. Tobin in the Victoria Times, "if we should call a country a 'Christian country' if only a small fraction of its inhabitants really believe the doctrines of that religion. H. L. Mencken once wrote that 'Christendom is that part of the world in which, if a man stand up and say he is a Christian, all his auditors will laugh.' That was thirty years ago. Today, they aren't even interested enough to laugh."

battle itself, the New World society of Jehovah's witnesses expects to keep standing faithfully, in the one united, theocratic order. Now is the time to seek that association, so that you also may find joy in saying: "In Jehovah I have trusted, that I may not wobble. My own foot will certainly stand on a level place; among the congregated throngs I shall bless Jehovah." —Ps. 26:1, 12.

²¹ "The joy of Jehovah is your stronghold." (Neh. 8:10) The joy of knowing Jehovah God, of understanding his glorious purposes of creation, of serving as his witnesses at the world's end—this all adds up to a superabundant joy! What a lot the people of the old world are missing! They are also missing the opportunity for everlasting life. Make sure that *you* take a firm hold on the real life. Having found that joy, never let it go! "Always be rejoicing. Pray incessantly. In connection with everything give thanks. For this is the will of God in union with Christ Jesus respecting you." (1 Thess. 5:16-18) Rejoice that you may have a part, if ever so small, in doing God's will at the time when he is creating "new heavens and a new earth." Forge an unbreakable link with his organization on earth. Serve humbly and with implicit trust in Jehovah, knowing that "the result of humility and the fear of Jehovah is riches and glory and life." —Prov. 22:4.

21. (a) How may we now take a firm hold on the real life? (b) What course will bring the reward of "riches and glory and life"?

EUTHANASIA

If you were suffering from an incurable disease,
what would you wish to have done?



"**U**ET Sought in Mercy Killing." So screamed front-page headlines of New York City afternoon newspapers on November 12, 1960. A certain war veteran, himself a paraplegic, that is, a person without the use of his lower limbs, had shot his wife in the back of the head, killing her instantly. Why? Because she apparently was the hopeless victim of multiple sclerosis, a disease of the central nervous system. The police sent out a twelve-state alarm for the veteran who, though paralyzed in his lower limbs, had been able to flee by means of his specially constructed automobile.

Incidents such as this one bring up the controversial subject of "mercy killing" or euthanasia. The advocates of euthanasia argue that here is another proof that a law legalizing euthanasia should be placed on the statute books. Others strongly oppose, arguing that there simply are no exceptions to God's law: "You shall not kill," and that euthanasia is murder. What does the Bible say? Are there situations in which euthanasia is justifiable?

—Ex. 20:13, RS.

VARIOUS KINDS

The word "euthanasia" comes from two Greek roots, *eu*, meaning "well," and *thanatos*, meaning "death." Euthanasia is therefore a death that is supposed to be a good one in that it brings to an end a life of pain. There are various ways of administering euthanasia, the above example be-

and

GOD'S LAW

ing an extreme one. Doctors at times use a lethal dose of narcotics and then again may merely stop the treatment upon which the life of the patient depends.

Those who advocate euthanasia fall into three general classes. The euthanasia societies advocate only voluntary euthanasia, for those over twenty-one years of age who are suffering great pain from an incurable disease. To prevent abuse, the patient and his physician would be required to make a written application for euthanasia, and a court-appointed commission, of two other physicians and a lawyer, would have to investigate and make a favorable report. At any stage of the procedure the patient would be permitted to change his mind.

Then there are those who favor euthanasia only for those early in life who are monstrosities or mental defectives, and who would be doomed to live useless lives. A form of this kind of euthanasia is practiced now in that doctors will not resuscitate at birth greatly deformed infants.

And thirdly, there are the extremists who would apply euthanasia also to the incurably insane, the paralytic and the helplessly crippled, all of whom would be a burden to the community as well as to themselves. Hitler and his Nazis advocated this form of euthanasia. Shortly after they came into power they enacted legislation authorizing such euthanasia; their goal being the extinction of 1,380,000 persons who

were useless to the state. Still the Nazi government did not dare put these laws into effect until after the war began in 1939. In doing so all those that were involved, the police, the judiciary and the medical profession, were sworn to secrecy. But the facts began to leak out and they created so much apprehension and indignation that, ruthless as the Nazis were, they deemed it inadvisable to continue with the project. By then, however, some 200,000 "useless eaters," as the Nazis called them, had been done away with.

OPPOSITION TO LEGALIZED EUTHANASIA

Although euthanasia was advocated as far back as in the time of ancient Greece, to date no nation has legalized voluntary euthanasia. Switzerland comes the closest to doing so. Under certain conditions it permits a physician to provide his patient with a lethal potion, which, however, the patient himself must take. Many Protestant leaders, as well as educators and the medical profession, by and large, especially in the United States and Great Britain, favor voluntary euthanasia.

In the forefront of the opposition to legalizing voluntary euthanasia is the Roman Catholic Church. *The Morality of Mercy Killing*, by priest J. V. Sullivan, presents the church's view. It argues that to justify "mercy killings" would permit an entering wedge against God's law, "You shall not kill," and which might gradually be widened. But what greater entering wedge against God's law forbidding the taking of human life could there be than modern warfare? Yet the religious organization that so opposes legalized voluntary euthanasia invariably supports war. The claim is also made that by suffering one can "win favors for the souls in purgatory, perhaps even relieve them from suffering." But that is an argument that would appeal

only to Catholics who believe there is such a place as purgatory. It counts for nothing with those who accept the plain Scriptural teaching that, "as for the dead, they are conscious of nothing at all."—Eccl. 9:5.

Actually, the position of the Roman Catholic Church is one of splitting hairs. Thus F. J. Connell, in *Morals in Politics and Professions*, states: "No doctor may ever deliberately and directly accelerate death in the case of a dying person . . . It would be murder to give him a drug with the direct intention of hastening his passage from this world." Yet Pope Pius XII is quoted as saying: "The removal of pain and consciousness by means of drugs, when medical reasons suggest it, is permitted by religion and morality to both doctor and patient even if the use of drugs will shorten life."

THE SCRIPTURAL VIEW

Not all forms of euthanasia run counter to Bible principles; however, the basic principle governing modern euthanasia societies does. They say: "When suffering of a living creature cannot be alleviated it is more ethical to end its life by killing it mercifully than it is to stand aloof."

Perhaps the only Scriptural reference to anything akin to euthanasia, and which certainly reveals God's will on the matter, is in connection with King Saul's death. When he was severely wounded he asked his armor-bearer to kill him lest he fall into the hands of the Philistines and suffer abuse. But his armor-bearer refused to do so. The Amalekite who sought David's favor by claiming to have complied with King Saul's request and to have ended Saul's misery was slain at David's command. Actually, unfaithful King Saul applied euthanasia to himself, committing suicide so as not to suffer further at the hands of the Philistines.—1 Sam. 31:3, 4; 2 Sam. 1:2-16.

Yes, God's Word plainly tells that human life is sacred and that he who takes a human life must forfeit his own: "Anyone shedding a man's blood, by man will his own blood be shed, for in God's image he made man." This law was repeatedly stated to the nation of Israel by Moses and others of the prophets, as well as to the followers of Jesus Christ by himself and his apostles.—Gen. 9:6; Ex. 20:13; Num. 35:30-32; Matt. 19:18; 1 John 3:15.

But does not God's Word show that Jehovah is merciful and compassionate, and does he not require the same qualities in us? All very true, yet he has seen fit to let suffering continue for some six thousand years now. Not only that, but he, the Almighty and the Most High, has suffered more than anyone else during all this time. His principle is that his laws come ahead of suffering, even as in blood transfusion God's law takes precedence over the life of a creature. Suffering in itself is not life's greatest evil and may not be used as an excuse for breaking God's law regarding the sanctity of life.

In particular does the vindication of God's name take precedence over suffering. If faithfully endured, suffering contributes to the vindication of Jehovah's name, proving that men will remain true to God in spite of what they must endure. Consider Job. He suffered greatly from a very loathsome disease as well as from many misfortunes. And of Jesus we read that "he learned obedience from the things he suffered."—Job 2:4-10; Heb. 5:8.

Appreciating these facts helps one to endure suffering. Then, too, Christians have the comfort of God's Word, the sustaining power of his spirit and the precious privilege of prayer. Nor can it be denied that

one of the biggest factors in suffering is one's mental attitude toward it. Rebellion may make the suffering unbearable, whereas submissiveness may enable one to rejoice in it, as did the apostles at being permitted to suffer for Christ's sake.—Acts 5:40, 41.

There are also other, though lesser, considerations. At times a condition that seems hopeless takes a turn for the better for apparently no reason whatever. And, too, who knows what diseases that are considered incurable today may become curable tomorrow? Certainly more is constantly being done to relieve suffering.

All this, however, does not mean that where a person is suffering greatly from a disease and death is only a matter of time the physician must continue to take extraordinary, complicated, distressing and costly measures to keep the patient alive. There is a great difference between extending the life of a patient and stretching out the dying process. In such cases it would not be violating God's law regarding the sanctity of life to mercifully let the dying process take its due course. The medical profession generally acts in harmony with this principle.

So we can see that in view of God's law regarding the sanctity of life and Scriptural precedent, life may not be taken or surrendered simply because of suffering, as recommended by many well-meaning persons. But at the same time, God's law does not require that extreme measures be taken that would merely make the ebbing away of life more drawn out and costly. Thus both God's just principles and his loving mercy are acknowledged; his law regarding the sanctity of life is upheld, and yet compassion is shown.

Instruct me, O Jehovah, in the way of your regulations, that I may observe it down to the last.—Ps. 119:33.

Wiser than Her Teachers

THIS happened in a school in Communist Yugoslavia. The evolution theory was being taught, and the girls, twelve years of age, were told to write a composition "proving that there is no God." One of the girls, whose mother is a witness of Jehovah, stood up and asked the schoolmistress to excuse her from that duty. "I cannot write such a composition," she said, "because I believe in the living God." The schoolmistress thereupon told her to write a composition proving that God exists. In one hour the class had to hand in the papers, and this young girl had written:

● "Oftentimes we observe the beauty of nature, and every intelligent person asks himself, How did all this come into existence? The evolution theory teaches us that there is no God and everything came into existence by itself; that man descended from the monkey and that life developed from a little worm, through the strength of the sun and physical laws until man appeared. But this calls for some questions:

● "Why does this evolution not go on, since there are still so many monkeys? Why did only one monkey develop in that way and not all? The evolutionists tell us, according to what we have been taught, that only one female monkey gave birth to the original man. But even if it had been so, one monkey would have had to bear the male and another monkey would have had to bear the female man in order to guarantee procreation.

● "But let us also look at the vegetation. A plant does everything to satisfy the insects, which fly from flower to flower to pollinate them; and so they serve the flowers, and in return get food from them. What wonderful harmony! And how did this all come about? Did ever the plants hold a conference with the insects and make some agreement and now stick to this agreement, even better than men stick to their agreements, these men who pretend to be so intelligent? It is only logical that all this is governed by a higher power! Let men, who think they are so wise, produce one such plant without a grain of seed and let them prove this way that these plants can come into existence from nothing.

● "But what about the stars and the unexplored universe? In what wonderful order the sun, the moon and the stars move for thousands of years without going wrong. Our

greatest scientists have launched satellites around the earth that hardly remain for one year. Therefore I could ask: The famous scientists of today, are they not even as clever as that which they call nature? No! I simply cannot accept that these wonderful laws in nature came into existence by themselves and function by themselves. I believe that every intelligent man has to admit that someone had to establish these laws and has to control them, and this is God!

● "It is written in the Bible that the first human pair was created by God and there was a uniform climate throughout the whole earth, as we learned it in the book *The New Geology*, where it is written: 'Fossils of plants and animals show, that in those times there existed a mild spring climate throughout the earth.' This corresponds with the Bible record about conditions before the Flood. Yes, we are told that the Flood is merely a legend, but we have learned in school from scientists who write that in Greenland and Spitzbergen fossils of plants, such as oak and cinnamon trees and others, have been found that grow in India and China. This all proves that there was a flood. The churches have presented God as a tyrant, but the Bible teaches that he is perfect love, that in Hebrew his name is JHVH, and commonly this name is pronounced Jehovah. It is in this God that I do believe, because he promised everlasting life on a paradise earth to obedient men. It is reasonable and good to believe this."

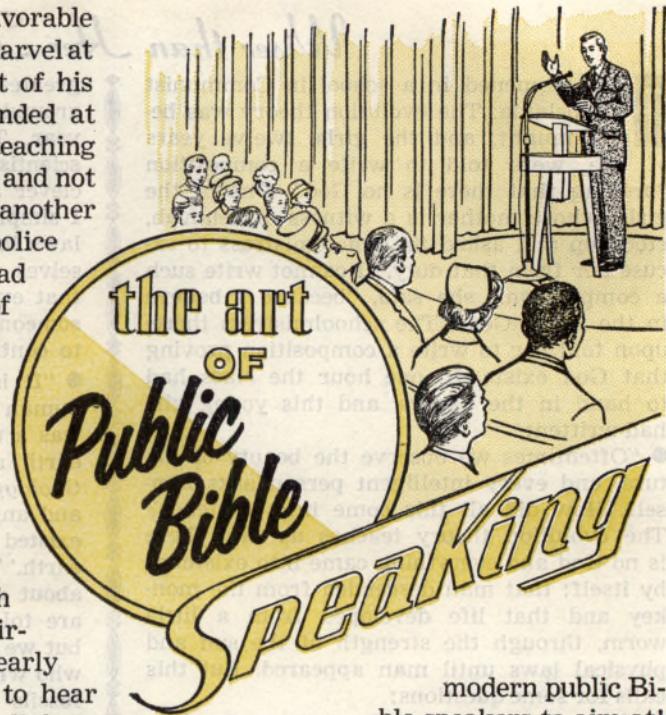
● After a few days the papers were returned. This girl did not get hers, however, and the schoolmistress said that her composition was not a good one. To show this to the whole class, she said that she would read it to them, which she did. When she finished reading it, the whole class applauded and some girls called out: "This is the nicest one!" The schoolmistress was puzzled over this and gave the composition to the director of the school. It got before the school board, where it was also read. The girl had to appear before the school board. There she was able to give a witness about the Kingdom hope, whereupon her teachers told her that she was too young to judge these matters. True it is of those trained in God's Word: "Wiser than my enemies your commandment makes me."

—Ps. 119:98.

"THEY all began to give favorable witness about him and to marvel at the winsome words proceeding out of his mouth." "The crowds were astounded at his way of teaching; for he was teaching them as a person having authority, and not as their scribes." And, "never has another man spoken like this," said the police officers whom the Jewish clergy had sent to arrest him. Thus three of the Gospel writers, two of whom were eyewitnesses, reported on the greatest public Bible speaker this earth ever saw and heard, Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God.—Luke 4:22; Matt. 7:28, 29; John 7:46.

No wonder Jesus' public Bible speaking campaign created so much interest! Entirely apart from his miracles, "all the people would come early in the day to him in the temple to hear him," and "the people one and all kept hanging onto him to hear him."—Luke 21:37, 38; 19:48.

Without doubt the people flocked to hear Jesus both because of what he said and how he said it. He wisely considered his audience, tempering his remarks and tone of voice according to whether it consisted of the spiritually sick, the religious hypocrites or his own apostles. The information he gave was 100-percent accurate, not only because he was perfect, but also because he was perfectly careful that everything he said was the truth. In presenting his message he kept proper perspective and maintained good balance, featuring the Scriptures and putting the emphasis on the positive elements of his talk. He showed himself to be a consummate artist in his imaginative and sympathetic use of illustrations. And, finally, he clothed all his thoughts in the beautiful music of eloquent sincerity and earnestness, warmth and feeling. What a standard he set for



modern public Bible speakers to aim at!

CONSIDER THE AUDIENCE

Even as Jesus always considered his audience, so must the public Bible speaker today. This is especially important because a public Bible speaker almost always has a mixed audience. That is, it most likely consists of both fellow ministers and strangers; it may even consist of 95 percent fellow ministers and 5 percent strangers. Then what shall he do? Address the 95 percent and ignore the 5 percent? or ignore the 95 percent and address the 5 percent?

Neither. The public Bible speaker of today must keep both groups in mind. On the one hand, since he is giving a public talk, all his remarks will be such that a total stranger can understand them. He will therefore carefully avoid what would be assertions to the stranger, also any expressions that might make the stranger feel like an outsider as well as any that have a semantic sense or meaning for Je-

hovah's witnesses. That is, he will give proofs for statements not generally accepted; he will not generally speak of "the service year" or "our service meetings," or refer to a text "with which all of you are familiar because of having used it in your house-to-house sermons"; and he will not use such expressions as "sheep and goats," "God's organization," or "theocratic," without adding some qualifying or explanatory phrase so that the stranger will understand. Otherwise he will lose the stranger's attention, since the stranger will be wondering: "What is the meaning of such a term? What am I missing?" In other words, the speaker must give a bona fide public talk.

Yet, on the other hand, he may not ignore the fact that 95 percent of his audience may be fellow ministers, or they will become restive or fall asleep, for they may have heard this subject discussed time and again. He must therefore work hard to give his material added interest by its seeming freshness. This he can do by using other than the most common proof texts, by finding new quotations from the public press and secular authorities, as well as by strengthening his logic, improving his coherence and making his relevance more outstanding. He can also impart freshness and interest to his remarks by speaking with earnestness, conviction and enthusiasm, by really putting his heart into his talk.

By thus making his presentation powerful in every way his fellow ministers in the audience will hang onto his every word, for he will cause them to appreciate as never before how strong the case for Jehovah, his Word and his witnesses really is in regard to this particular subject. As a result their faith will be strengthened and they will be provided effective points to use in their own field ministry.

BE 100-PERCENT ACCURATE!

Secondly, Jesus was 100-percent accurate; so should those imitating him today endeavor to be. Accuracy is a factor that is easy to slight. If your public Bible talks were recorded and played back, or taken down in shorthand and then published, would your face be red due to misstatements? If dates are given, Biblical or secular, they should be absolutely correct; if names are given, they should be the right ones. More than that, a public speaker should always be able to give the authority for his statements if challenged.

In particular should facts from the Scriptures be accurately stated; they should be checked beforehand—how many people were involved when Abram pleaded with Jehovah regarding the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah?—and so forth. The same applies to Scripture citations; take care not to confuse the figures. Put yourself in the position of a fellow minister who has brought a stranger to hear your talk. Imagine his embarrassment at failing to find a certain text at First Peter because you should have said Second Peter! So take care to be accurate!

KEEP PROPER PERSPECTIVE AND EMPHASIS

A third factor for which Jesus set us the right example is that of keeping proper perspective and emphasis. While Jesus at times denounced hypocrisy and exposed false teaching, the stress and greater portion of his ministry was on the constructive things. Like Jeremiah, the modern public Bible speaker must both tear down and build, but the latter is by far the more important.—Jer. 1:10.

So we may not speak at such great length on the negative aspects of our subject as to neglect or slight its positive aspects. Generally one fourth or one third of the talk is sufficient to show what is wrong and why; then build up by showing

what is right and why. Otherwise the stranger may get a wrong impression as to the purpose of our Bible speaking and may even go away impoverished, having had his false beliefs demolished but not adequately replaced by true teaching.

Proper perspective and emphasis also require that we give God's Word its due. Certainly Jesus did. He continually appealed to the authority of his Father's Word. While reason, logic, secular facts and suchlike have their place in a public Bible talk, they must not be used to bear the brunt or lion's share of the burden of proof or weight of argumentation. At best they are only secondary. And that even goes for establishing the authenticity of the Bible; certainly fulfillment of Bible prophecy is far stronger proof of its inspiration than the testimony of archaeology, which can testify only to the Bible's accuracy as history. Give the Bible the first place and your remarks will be not only more effective and convincing, but also more edifying, more upbuilding.

Of course, Bible citations in themselves mean nothing as to proving a point. Their contents must at least be referred to, and, likewise, Bible quotations without the citations carry little if any weight. But for real force, the text must be read from the Bible—"There it is!" And either before, or during or after reading a scripture the speaker should explain its meaning; show why it is being read and what it proves. Otherwise the audience may believe but still not understand. The same effective teaching method used in doorstep sermons must be used on the platform. If just quoting a scripture were sufficient, then there would be no need to explain what people are praying for when they repeat: "Let your name be sanctified. Let your kingdom come. Let your will come to pass, as in heaven, also upon earth." Yes, like eloquent Apollos, we must be able to 'dem-

onstrate publicly by the Scriptures' the truthfulness of what we say.—Matt. 6:9, 10; Acts 18:28.

USE ILLUSTRATIONS—EFFECTIVELY

Coming to our fourth point—no public speaker ever used illustrations to better effect than did Jesus. How well we remember his teachings by reason of his apt, imaginative and forceful illustrations! The sheep and goats, the rich man and Lazarus, the vine and the branches, the straw in our neighbor's eye and the rafter in our own, the prodigal son, the lost sheep, the good Samaritan, the Pharisee and the tax collector, to mention but a few. Jesus' apostles and early disciples imitated him in this, as their writings show.

The letter of James is especially noteworthy in this regard. Short as it is, it contains many illustrations: wave of the sea, flower of the vegetation, mirror, bridle of a horse, rudder of a ship, fig tree, olives, vines, salt and sweet water, the farmer—all taken from the common things of life. So the public Bible speaker of today should draw on illustrations that are familiar to all, simple and apt, remembering that an illustration that may drive home a point with farmers may be lost on city folk and vice versa.

Illustrations help to hold the interest, and to elucidate and simplify and drive home points. Certainly Jesus' illustration of the house built on sand drove home his point as to the need of acting upon what he told his listeners. Particularly effective is the use of a striking illustration in the introduction and then following through, which helps to make public Bible speaking not only more interesting and easier to follow, but also aids in coherence—provided the illustration is well chosen.

Do not overlook the fact that when it comes to illustrations, none are more apt and forceful than those found in the Bible.

Jesus made frequent use of these; so should his modern imitators. Thus also the disciple James in his letter illustrated the points he was making by references to Abraham, Rahab, Job and Elijah. Yes, all "these things went on befalling them as examples and they were written for a warning to us upon whom the accomplished ends of the systems of things have arrived."—1 Cor. 10:11.

SPEAK WITH ELOQUENCE—FROM THE HEART!

Without doubt Jesus was the most eloquent speaker that men ever heard upon this earth. No wonder those police officers sent to arrest Jesus came back without him! This, our final aspect of public Bible speaking to be considered here, requires the utmost in earnestness and sincerity. It makes no allowance for telling jokes or silly stories or otherwise injecting humor merely to get a laugh. The purpose of public Bible speaking is to instruct and build up. As has well been said, Paul 'did not stoop to conquer with jocular exploit those whom truth and soberness assailed in vain,' and neither should any of those who would imitate him even as he imitated Christ.—1 Cor. 11:1.

b Earnestness, conviction, confidence, warmth, feeling and enthusiasm are the very heart of all good Bible speaking. Apollos "was aglow with the spirit," with enthusiasm. He spoke "with intensity," and therefore was well described as "an eloquent man." In fact, all Christians should "be aglow with the spirit," but especially the public Bible speaker.—Acts 18:24, 25, 28; Rom. 12:11.

Call to mind how you were stirred at a recent district assembly or at one of the great international assemblies. Why do we

like to have tape recordings of those talks and listen to them time and again? Not only because of what was said and who said it, but because of the fire, the enthusiasm, the eloquence manifested. What the speakers had clearly imbedded in their minds they gave out of hearts full of love and appreciation. They felt—and so should we—like Elihu: "I shall declare my knowledge, . . . for I have become full of words . . . Let me speak that it may be a relief to me. I shall open my lips that I may answer."—Job 32:17-20.

Surely if anyone has reason for speaking with a full heart, for speaking with earnestness, conviction, confidence, warmth, feeling and enthusiasm, it is the Christian public Bible speaker, who speaks out of love for God and his neighbor and who has such an important and urgent message to give in this evil day. If any work deserves to be done "with sincerity of heart," and "whole-souled as to Jehovah," it is public Bible speaking.—Col. 3:22, 23.

No question about it, public Bible speaking involves much, and in all its facets Jesus Christ set the perfect example. The speaker must hold the interest of the stranger as well as of the fellow Christian; he must be accurate and give the Bible the chief place; he must keep the negative aspects subordinated to the positive while exercising care not to crowd his talk with too much material. He should make generous yet judicious use of illustrations and, above all, speak from a heart full of love, for Jehovah, for his audience and for his subject. Doing so, he will surely bring honor to Jehovah's name and build up his listeners as well as himself. And recognizing the high standard Jesus set for him, he will ever keep modest and humble.

As apples of gold in silver carvings is a word spoken at the right time for it.—Prov. 25:11.

Pursuing my Purpose in Life

As told by a Greek girl

I WAS born in Ramallah, Palestine (now Jordan), but I grew up in Athens, Greece, my family being Greek Orthodox. Soon after my family got established there, my older brother came in contact with the truth, and he became one of Jehovah's witnesses. My mother showed interest in the truth, but she died two years later. My father, however, was very much opposed and obliged my brother to leave the house. My father always used to take me with him to church. So even after his death, one year before I finished high school, I was a regular churchgoer.

My attendance at church did not help me to find what I was looking for: more knowledge about God and his requirements. Never did I hear in the Greek Orthodox Church the admonition to read the Bible, and I had never read it myself. I was always feeling as if there was something empty in me. During all the years I went to church, only once do I remember the priest's giving a sermon about the Gospel. The comportment of the priests, as a whole, was not inspiring either.

I decided to discontinue going to church, but I prayed to God for help to find his true worship. Although the answer was right there in our home through the numerous Watch Tower publications, which my brother sent to us, it was only after

the beginning of World War II that, together with my sister, I started reading and studying them, as well as the Bible.

The progressive increase of the knowledge of the truth came to fill this empty feeling in me with the most satisfying and heart-cheering revelations of God's will and purposes. What a wonderful protection from all the snares of Satan did it prove to be, snares so numerous in Greece in those dark days of World War II!

Dedication and baptism in 1943 were my next big steps. There was no pioneer service in Greece at that time. I was working at the Ministry of Finance and, like the other publishers, I tried to do my best in witnessing to people distressed by war conditions. Then in 1945, with the end of the war, my sister and I went to Cyprus, to stay with our brother there.

Conditions in Cyprus were completely different. The island had felt the effects of the war very little, and there were peace and great freedom for the work. We had very fine opportunities to serve from door to door, in the cities and in various villages. There I saw for the first time brothers and sisters in the pioneer service, even among my own relatives. While I considered this service good for others, the idea did not enter my mind that I also could be a pioneer. Then at the service meeting a letter from the Society was read. It presented the privilege and responsibility of all dedicated persons to engage in the pioneer service, if they could arrange to do so. That letter impressed me very much, and the desire to become a pioneer sprang up immediately in my heart, becoming all the stronger as the days passed.

HAPPINESS OF PIONEERING

Due to certain family obligations, I felt that if I started pioneering immediately I would not be able to continue for a long time. My desire was to make full-time

preaching service my life's career. So I presented the matter to Jehovah in prayer and waited confidently for his help. It was not really long before the mountainlike obstacles disappeared. I resigned from the bank in which I was working and returned to Greece to start pioneer service. Since Cyprus had a number of pioneers, I thought my service would be more profitable in Greece. I did not have any financial preparation or any stock in clothes, but I did not worry. I knew Jehovah is faithful to his promises and that he is inviting us to put him to the test.

When I returned to Greece, I was offered three different jobs in Athens with very attractive salaries, but I did not think even for a moment of postponing my decision to enter the full-time pioneer service. So on November 1, 1947, I started my pioneer service in Athens, pursuing thus my purpose in life.

The work in Greece was in its most difficult days then. The Orthodox Church had started a very hot persecution through the arm of the police. The work had to be done almost completely underground. But all this did not diminish the joys of the service. All the opposite! More than once Jehovah gave me as a territory in which to preach various police stations, courtrooms and prisons. Can you imagine my joy when, once in a police station, I found myself surrounded by more than ten policemen who were eagerly listening to the hope that is within me? Or when I had the opportunity to preach to women in prison and to show them the opportunity for repentance and the bright hope of the new world? Hard though these experiences might have been from the physical point of view, they are among the deepest and most cherished memories of my life.

I had many happy experiences during my pioneer service in Athens. Jehovah blessed my efforts, and quite a few of the

people I had studies with took their stand with the New World society; and they are still zealously participating in the Kingdom service.

HAPPINESS OF BETHEL AND GILEAD

One day I was called to the Society's branch office in Athens. I was asked to fill out the preliminary application for the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead for missionaries. Gilead was something I had kept very, very high in my mind, and I did not dare to think whether Jehovah would ever invite me to attend it or not. So I felt a sacred joy indeed when I later filled out the final application.

I was invited to attend the sixteenth class of Gilead, beginning after the Theocracy's Increase Assembly in 1950. But since I was in New York from the beginning of April that same year, another privilege opened up to me before going through school: serving in the Brooklyn Bethel home for five months.

I find words inadequate to describe the blessings I received during the time I stayed there; and I think I can say, like Paul, that time would fail me to enumerate them all in this brief account. The friendly and clean faces of all, the unselfish and kind love of the sisters who did everything to help me feel at home, the humility and meekness of the older and responsible brothers, the zeal of everyone for the work he was assigned and the intensity with which everyone was working, together with the upbuilding and stimulating discussions on the daily texts and other Scriptural questions at the table—these are but a few of the blessings that left with me a very deep impression and helped me to appreciate Jehovah's visible theocratic organization. To be a member of the Brooklyn Bethel family is a unique privilege indeed, and most blessed is the lot of all ministers serving Jehovah there!

The Theocracy's Increase Assembly was a thrilling experience for me, especially since it was also the first large assembly I had ever attended. Gilead School started about a month later. I still remember the words of Brother Knorr in his introductory talk: 'Did you ever desire to be somewhere where it is quiet and be without any worries and use your time just for the study of Jehovah's Word? Well, this opportunity is here before you. Profit from it.' These thoughts spoke to my heart, because that was the very thing I had been longing for ever since I learned the truth. The theocratic organization, like a tender mother, offered me that opportunity.

Every day was full of practical instruction and detailed study of different subjects that enabled me to see the truth brighter and brighter. This advanced theocratic training presented to us Jehovah's organization with all its awe-inspiring order and beauty and helped me appreciate more than ever before the privilege of serving Jehovah in the full-time service. To leave Gilead after graduation was hard for us.

HAPPINESS OF SERVING WHERE NEEDED

Yet more happiness was in store as we graduates spread out into thirty-eight different countries. To be in a country where you have never lived before, where the greater part of the population speak a language you do not yet know and where the general way of living is sometimes difficult to understand, was a thing not so easy to cope with at the beginning. But how insignificant are these difficulties when you are in a place Jehovah wants you to be. If you look at it this way, believe me, soon this place becomes the most beautiful place in the world! The privilege and joy we felt while hunting for and feeding the many sheeplike people in a large and ancient city of more than a million in-

habitants, coming from various religions and languages, made my companion and me soon feel at home, and that is the way I have always felt since.

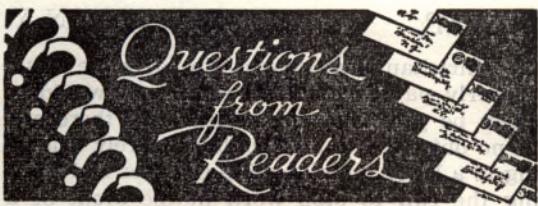
Ten years full of hard and intensive work have passed. By Jehovah's undeserved kindness and help, I am still in the same place. This makes me feel especially thankful to Him. So many blessings I never would have enjoyed had I always remained only a good publisher in Cyprus or Greece.

It has been heart-warming for me to watch, through these years, Jehovah's blessing upon the sowing and watering work and to see a small group of forty increase to well over three hundred proclaimers of God's kingdom!

Jehovah has been a wonderful Provider for my spiritual needs. Through his help I have not missed any of the big assemblies held since 1950. Thus in 1953 I had the privilege to attend the New World Society Assembly in New York, then three of the Triumphant Kingdom Assemblies in Europe in 1955 and, the most thrilling of all, the unforgettable Divine Will International Assembly in New York in 1958! The spiritual strength Jehovah provided for his servants through these assemblies has been a great stimulation for me to continue pursuing faithfully my purpose in life.

My trust in Jehovah for my material needs did not fail either. All these years, through loving relatives and brothers, He has provided so bountifully.

To know the truth of God's Word and to serve Jehovah makes one happy, but to serve Jehovah full time as a pioneer makes one even happier. I can say this from my own experience, because the change the pioneer service made in my life is as big and blessed as the change made by the knowledge of the truth itself.



- How are we to understand the meaning of the word "compel" as used at Luke 14:23, which reads: "Go out into the roads and the fenced-in places, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled"?—P.F., U.S.A.

The meaning of the word "compel" in Luke 14:23 can best be appreciated against the background of the parable of the "grand evening meal" of which this text is part. This parable is comparable to the parable of the wedding feast set forth in Matthew 22:1-14. There it is made clear that the "certain man" who made the grand evening meal and invited many was a king who had prepared a marriage feast for his son. He sent out invitations, but when the invitations to the marriage feast were turned down with varying excuses by the invitees, then the king turned to other means to have the feast well attended. Since he was king and all the people of the realm were his subjects, he had a right to send out his servants and now, instead of just asking indiscriminate individuals in the streets and lanes of the city, including the poor, crippled, lame and blind, to come to the feast, he as their sovereign lord compelled them to come. He doubtless compelled them because, being just ordinary people of the street, they would be wary of accepting an invitation, thinking themselves to be unworthy of attending such a great event, to which originally the elite of the land had been invited. This means that a lot of persuading had to be done.

This is what has taken place in the fulfillment of the picture. While each one is left to his own free will, there has had to be much persuading to be done and that with great vigor and expenditure of energy and effort on the part of those carrying the good news of the kingdom and inviting people with hearing ears to come to the great spiritual feast that Jehovah has arranged for in his kingdom. This urgent action toward these responsive people compares with the action of the angels who visited Lot in Sodom and who on the day of the destruction of the city had to take Lot and his lingering family by the hand and bring them out of the city and station them outside of it

and then urge them to escape to the mountains in order that they might not be swept away into destruction.—Gen. 19:15-17.

Today the great King, Jesus Christ, is having a like urgent message given by the anointed remnant to the other sheep class, who in turn join in giving this message to still others. Realizing what is involved—the vindication of Jehovah's name and the everlasting life of their hearers—those bringing this message make it as strong as they can, urging, constraining, obligating, compelling, as it were, their hearers to act and take their stand for Jehovah and his kingdom. Of course, while thus stressing the urgency and importance of their message, they do not override the free choice of such people whom they approach with the message of salvation. In this regard a comparison might be made with Lydia's hospitality toward Paul and his companions and concerning which Luke wrote: "She just made us come." She could not have coerced Paul and his companions had they in fact been determined not to accept her hospitality. So Christians in witnessing by not being easily discouraged do "compel" or "make" people come to the waters of life.—Acts 16:15; Rev. 22:17.

- Why did Jehovah allow the Israelites to suffer defeat twice before the tribe of Benjamin before he allowed them to mete out due punishment to this tribe for its crime at Gibeah? (Judges 20)—P. G., Scotland.

Judges, chapter 19, tells of certain scoundrels of Gibeah ravaging a woman all night so that by morning she was dead. The people of Gibeah then committed the atrocious crime of condoning this sin of the inhabitants of their city. The tribe of Benjamin was also guilty in this respect; it refused to hear the demands of the rest of the tribes that the scoundrels should be put to death. This immoral condition challenged the faithfulness of the rest of the tribes of God's chosen people.

The slaughtering of so many of them in the beginning imposed a great test upon the faithful tribes, especially with regard to the rightness of their cause. By letting the faithful tribes suffer such losses, forty thousand men in two days, Jehovah was testing them to see whether they would be persistent in this determined effort to uproot this gross evil in Israel when it brought such great losses to themselves.

The thousands of faithful ones who died because of the punitive campaign died in a right-

eous cause. The survivors who gained the victory vindicated themselves before Jehovah God and before all the readers of his Word. This vindication was worth the cost, and the nation of Israel was purged of a very degrading moral evil.

- How should a dedicated Christian Scripturally view labor unions and participation in their activities?—S. B., U.S.A.

The Scriptures counsel Christians to "provide the right things in the sight of all men." "Certainly if anyone does not provide for those who are his own, and especially for those who are members of his household, he has disowned the faith and is worse than a person without faith." These texts have a bearing on labor unionism, because to obey them it may be necessary to join a labor union. An analogy might be drawn between one's duties as a member of a labor union and those he has as a citizen of a country. For benefits received from the government

the Christian pays taxes; similarly, he could properly pay union dues, since such would in effect be job insurance. There can, therefore, be no objection to a Christian's merely belonging to a labor union, paying the dues and heeding the call to stop work in the event of a strike.—Rom. 12:17; 1 Tim. 5:8.

However, a Christian should not get involved in union activity to the extent of holding an official position in the union. Nor, in the event of a strike, should he take part in picketing or in other ways agitate for the cause of the strike. Above all, he should not engage in violence in labor disputes, for "a slave of the Lord does not need to fight." "If possible, as far as it depends upon you, be peaceable with all men." Just as a Christian is neutral regarding politics and wars of his country, so the union member who is a Christian does not get involved in the governing activities and economic warfare of the union but must remain neutral.

—2 Tim. 2:24; Rom. 12:18.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FIELD MINISTRY

To safeguard our thinking ability for effective service of God is of great importance. Study of the Bible is necessary to do this. During February Jehovah's witnesses will call on people everywhere with a Bible-study aid of real worth, *The Watchtower*, offering a year's subscription and three booklets on a contribution of \$1.

DO YOU BELIEVE THE LORD'S PRAYER?

When you say the Lord's Prayer do you consider what its fulfillment will mean? "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." If that were to be accomplished suddenly, say tomorrow, what drastic changes would it mean for this world's affairs? What would you have to do to share in its blessings? That day will come in our generation. Would you like Bible proof? Send for and read "*Your Will Be Done on Earth*." It is only 50c.

1961 ASSEMBLY NOTICE

All of Jehovah's witnesses and many persons of good will are talking about the 1961 assemblies, and many are beginning to make

their plans to attend. The list of assembly cities was published in the February 1 issue of *The Watchtower*. However, we are glad to say that the arrangements for an assembly in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, for August 22 to 27, are now definite; also, an assembly is scheduled for Omaha, Nebraska, August 15 to 20. Spanish programs are being arranged for the assemblies in New York city, San Francisco, California; Houston, Texas, and Paris, France.

Further information on rooming accommodations, both in America and for the European assemblies, will be provided through the congregations in ample time. In the past those who have taken accommodations in private homes have found that they were able to do much more to help persons in the assembly city to benefit from the convention. When it comes time to request rooms this year, no doubt the majority of assembly delegates will want to ask for such accommodations.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

March 26: Finding Joy for Everlasting Life.
Page 101.
April 2: Hold Fast Your Joy! Page 109.