

The WATCHTOWER

FEBRUARY 1, 1951
Semimonthly

WHY JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES
ARE NOT PACIFISTS

PACIFISM AND CONSCIENTIOUS OBJEC-
TION—IS THERE A DIFFERENCE?

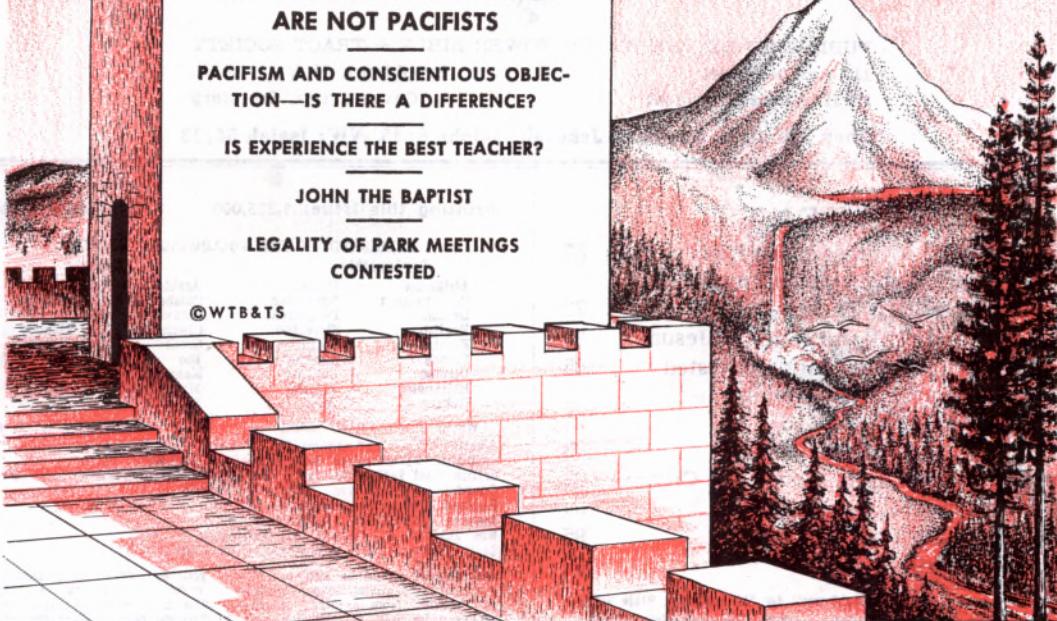
IS EXPERIENCE THE BEST TEACHER?

JOHN THE BAPTIST

LEGALITY OF PARK MEETINGS
CONTESTED

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Announcing
**JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM**



"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, NW; Isaiah 54:13

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AS — American Standard Version	LXX — The Septuagint Version
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D — J. N. Darby's version	NW — New World Translation
ED — Catholic Douay version	Eo — J. B. Rotherham's version
EE — The Emphatic Diaglott	RS — Revised Standard Version
Le — Isaac Leeser's version	Yg — Robert Young's version

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

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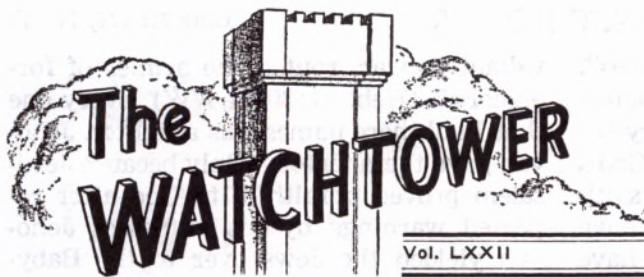
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WHY JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES ARE NOT PACIFISTS

"Jehovah is a man of war: Jehovah is his name."—Ex. 15:3, AS; Yg.

“JEHOVAH'S witnesses! Just a bunch of pacifists!” So a great many people will exclaim with scorn. And so they have been led to think by the charges hurled at these by their enemies. But are the witnesses pacifists, seeking refuge under the cover of “conscientious objection” because they are afraid to fight? Let us here honestly search for the right and fair answer to this hot question. What have they to say for themselves?

At the 1950 international assembly of Jehovah's witnesses in Yankee Stadium, New York city, 10,000 foreign delegates were there from more than sixty other lands. Most of these had been subjected to great religious discrimination, embarrassment, hardship and inconvenience because they were obliged to clear themselves of the false charge of “extreme pacifism”. An indignation meeting was held Friday afternoon, August 4, at the assembly, at which the 70,000 American delegates in the presence of these foreign brothers unanimously passed a “Regret and Protest”, and at the close of the afternoon's session a million copies of this were distributed. This 4-page paper vigorously called attention to the “Discrimination on False Charge of Pacifism” and said: “The smearing of us

as extreme pacifists is without foundation and is a deliberate lie to provoke prejudice against us and this international assembly. They have done as the Scriptures prophesied, ‘framed mischief by law.’—Psalm 94:20. Extreme pacifism is not our preaching. We are not pacifists. . . . To charge that we are extreme pacifists is a lie.”

³ As defined by Webster's *New International Dictionary* (2d edition, unabridged, of 1943) *pacifism* means: “Opposition to war or to the use of military force for any purpose; especially, an attitude of mind opposing all war, emphasizing the defects of military training and cost of war, and advocating settlement of international disputes entirely by arbitration.” Such pacifism not even the Bible itself can be charged with teaching, and neither can Jehovah's witnesses, who stick most scrupulously to the Bible.

⁴ When expressing a judgment upon Jehovah's witnesses people are inclined to think of them as a religious body less than a century old. True, this unique name came into the limelight in 1931, when, by public acclamation, these faithful Christians all over the earth adopted resolutions rejecting the contemptuous names the enemies had tagged onto them and accepting

1. To what question on Jehovah's witnesses do we here search for the answer?

2. What statement did they make on this at Yankee Stadium? Why?

3. How is *pacifism* defined? Can the witnesses be charged with it?

4. How long is their history? Does it show them accusable of pacifism?

the Scriptural name "Jehovah's witnesses". But their history is much longer than a century. Already in the eighth century before Christ the prophecy declared to God's chosen people: "Ye are my witnesses, saith Jehovah, and my servant whom I have chosen; . . . I have declared, and I have saved, and I have showed; and there was no strange god among you: therefore ye are my witnesses, saith Jehovah, and I am God." (Isa. 43:10-12, AS) In fact, the history of Jehovah's witnesses runs all the way back to Adam's son Abel, whom his brother Cain killed because Abel had received favorable witness from Jehovah God. The apostle Paul, in chapters 11 and 12 of his letter to the Hebrews, shows that fact. In all that history of almost six thousand years the record fails to show Jehovah's witnesses accusable of "opposition to war or to the use of military force for any purpose", which is the definition of pacifism.

⁵ We could go through the list of Jehovah's witnesses from Abraham onward to show they were not pacifists. The apostle Paul tells us about Abraham "returning from the slaughter of the kings" and receiving the blessing of King Melchizedek. (Heb. 7:1-4; Gen. 14:14-21) He tells of Moses who led the Israelites to the borders of the Promised Land. Then he mentions one high light in Joshua's war to purge the Promised Land of the immoral pagan inhabitants, and adds: "And what more shall I say? For the time will fail me if I go on to relate about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David as well as Samuel and the other prophets, who through faith defeated kingdoms in conflict, effected righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, stayed the force of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from a weak state were made powerful, became

valiant in war, routed the armies of foreigners." (Heb. 11:30-34, NW) Every one that Paul there names was a fighter. Jehovah gave them victory. Only because Jerusalem proved unfaithful to God after repeated warnings by his witnesses Jehovah yielded the Jews over to the Babylonian armies and did not fight for them. He had forewarned them of punishment for disobedience, and so he let that come upon them in vindication of his word.—Deut. 28:36-67.

NEHEMIAH, MORDECAI AND ESTHER FIGHTERS

⁶ Seventy years the Jews or Israelites were exiles in Babylonian provinces. Did they join the armies of Babylon and fight for its world domination? No; although some Jews, like Daniel and his three Hebrew companions, were taken into the governmental service in spite of their conscientious worship of Jehovah God. Government servants of high rank those three Hebrews might be, yet they refused to violate their conscience and bend to Emperor Nebuchadnezzar's decree and commit idolatry, saluting the image of the political state, the golden image which the dictatorial ruler had set up for united worship by all elements of his empire. (Dan. 3:1-30) When Babylon was overthrown, the captive Israelites were not mixed in with Babylon's armies fighting against its overthrow. They knew Jehovah's prophecies had foretold its overthrow, and so why fight against fulfillment of divine prophecy, and for an oppressive world power at that?

⁷ Under the new rule of the victorious Medes and Persians the aged Daniel was taken into the government service of King Darius the Mede. He became the leading president of all the king's satraps. When

5. How does Paul show they were fighters? Who gave them victory?

6. Did the exiled Jews fight in Babylon's armies or not? Why?

7. How did Daniel act toward state interference with God's worship?

the jealous enemies could find no occasion against Daniel except in his faithful obedience to the law of his God Jehovah, then they framed mischief against him by law. Though faced with being thrown into the lions' den, and with his governmental office at stake, Daniel refused to violate his conscience. He did not bow to the imperial law which was against praying to Jehovah and required everybody to look to the political state for everything. Daniel rendered to the emperor only what belonged to him, but to God the worship and obedience that belonged to him. God shut the lions' mouths for him, but those who framed mischief against him by crafty law were themselves thrown to the lions.

—Dan. 6:1-28.

⁸ Cyrus the Persian succeeded Darius as ruler. In his first year the captive Jews were let return to the site of Jerusalem and rebuild Jehovah's temple. They did not have to fight for their liberation by force of military arms, but Almighty God restored them for his name's sake and because they repented and devoted themselves to his worship. But even after this restoration to their homeland the Jews did not become pacifists.

⁹ This fact is noteworthy in the case of Nehemiah. He was a Jew in governmental service as cupbearer and close consultant of the Persian king Ahasuerus. He was made governor of the Jewish province in Palestine and was sent to build good walls for the restored city of Jerusalem. The pagan enemies accused Nehemiah of trying to secede from the empire. "And they conspired all of them together to come and fight against Jerusalem, and to cause confusion therein." What action did Nehemiah take? He did not leave God out of consideration, because he knew that "except Jehovah keep the city, the watchman

waketh but in vain". (Ps. 127:1, AS) So the record informs us: "But we made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night, because of them. . . . And I looked, and rose up, and said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, Be not ye afraid of them: remember the Lord, who is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses." From then on the builders carried on construction of the wall armed with spears, shields, bows, coats of mail, and swords girded at their side. The conspiracy was thus foiled. (Neh. 4:8-23, AS) God's cause was involved and the liberty of his people to worship him freely. That was why those Israelites had chosen to fight. It was not for the glory and power of the Persian empire that they fought. They fought for their brothers who belonged to God's organization and who worshipped him.

¹⁰ In other provinces of the Persian empire there was also no pacifism on the part of the Jews. Over sixty years after the restoration of a Jewish remnant to Jerusalem the Jews throughout the empire were accused by a religious enemy in high governmental position. They were different from all other people; besides the law of the empire they had Jehovah's laws governing their worship of God. So the wicked enemy Haman said: "Their laws are diverse from those of every people; neither keep they the king's laws: therefore it is not for the king's profit to suffer them." And he requested and got a law passed to have them destroyed before ever another passover rolled around.—Esther 3:8-15, AS.

¹¹ Under the counsel of Mordecai the Jew, Queen Esther carried a legal fight to the highest judicial figure of the empire,

8, 9. After restoration from exile in Babylon did the Jews become pacifists? How does Nehemiah throw light on this question?

10, 11. How was this also shown in the case of Mordecai and Esther?

King Ahasuerus himself. At the risk of her own life she pleaded for relief for her people, at the same time exposing the mischievous designs of their religious enemy Haman. This wicked persecutor was hanged on gallows he had built for Mordecai, and Mordecai was advanced to higher office in the Persian government. By authority of the emperor he wrote a law into the government statutes, providing for the Jews on the fixed day of assault by their foes "to gather themselves together, and to stand for their life, to destroy, to slay, and to cause to perish, all the power of the people and province that would assault them, their little ones and women". Did the Jews pacifistically refuse to act upon this law for their self-defense by force of arms? No! On the 13th and 14th days of their last month Adar, they fought valiantly for the defense of their own lives and those of their brothers. Jehovah God was with them in this and handed them the victory and fulfilled his own prophetic command to have the Amalekites wiped out to a man. The Jews, his witnesses, he used as his executioners.—Esther 8:10 to 9:16; Ex. 17:13-16, AS.

**NO SHIFT TO PACIFISM
AT THE WORLD'S END**

¹² Many of our readers or public officials may ask: If Jehovah's witnesses of today are linked up in one unbroken chain with those witnesses of ancient times with such a history, why is it that they do not carry out this tradition of military combat? Why are they not found in the ranks of the armies of Christendom? Why do they seek exemption from military service? Why do they go so far as even to refuse to enter the Public Service camps maintained for or by pacifists and conscientious objectors, or take any part in the defense

12. Why do witnesses today not keep up this tradition of military combat, since they claim not to be pacifists?

or war effort? Ask Jehovah's witnesses why, and they will tell you it is not because they have turned pacifist. It is because they have conscientious objection to taking part in such war and defense efforts of Christendom and the rest of the world, their objection being based on God's Word, the Bible. But, you ask, how can they be conscientious objectors and not at the same time pacifists? They are not against war between the nations, and they do not interfere with the war efforts of the nations nor with anyone who can conscientiously join in such efforts. They fight only when God commands them to do so, because then it is theocratic warfare.

¹³ Were Jehovah's witnesses today to claim to be pacifists, it would mean for them to denounce all the pre-Christian witnesses of Jehovah who took up arms to uphold Jehovah's universal sovereignty and his theocratic nation of Israel. But this denunciation we cannot make. Jesus Christ never did so, and he is Jehovah's greatest witness, who has earned the title "The faithful and true witness". (Rev. 3:14) Jehovah himself is no pacifist. Neither are his witnesses such, although they are conscientious objectors. Jesus was no pacifist, although there is no record that he ever took up carnal weapons in self-defense. Ah, you say, but did not Jesus make a whip of cords to drive all the commercial venders from the temple at Jerusalem? Yes, but the record does not say he used this whip on the men who were doing the selling but he used it upon their sheep and cattle which they had brought into that sacred place, "making the house of my Father a house of merchandise." —John 2:13-16, NW.

¹⁴ Again you object, Did not Jesus, after

13. If we claimed to be pacifists, what would we consistently have to do toward pre-Christian witnesses? Why can we not do this?

14. When Jesus told his apostles to sell a garment and get a sword, did he mean we should take up the sword? What did his conduct show?

setting up the Memorial with his disciples, tell them before going out to Gethsemane, "Let the one having no sword sell his outer garment and buy one"? And when his disciples said, "Master, look! here are two swords," he said to them, "It is enough." (Luke 22:36-38, NW) Yes; but by this Jesus indicated to them that he was to be seized by an armed band, under circumstances which could provoke armed resistance. The facts that developed showed Jesus did not resort to a sword when his illegal arrest came. Why, then, did he suggest getting a sword and let at least one sword be taken along to Gethsemane? He did it to show that he chose not to resort to armed resistance but would give himself up voluntarily in harmony with his Father's will. Peter tried to put up armed resistance, used the sword and struck off a man's ear. Then Jesus said to Peter: "Return your sword to its place, for all those who take the sword will perish by the sword. Or do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father to supply me at this moment more than twelve legions of angels? In that case, how would the Scriptures be fulfilled that it must take place this way?" (Matt. 26:52-54, NW) According to John's account Jesus added: "The cup that the Father has given me, should I not by all means drink it?" (John 18:11, NW) So we see why Jesus acted in a way that to some seems like pacifism. He was, however, not going before his Father's court or before the courts of the land on a charge of armed resistance. He did not expose himself to being killed under armed resistance; he must die willingly, sacrificially, like a lamb led to slaughter.

CONSISTENT WITH PROPHECY AND THEIR MESSAGE

¹⁵ Jehovah's witnesses copy Jesus and

15. In view of Jesus' prophecy, why could we not be pacifists?

obey his instructions. That is why they have not joined worldly armies and taken part in the war efforts of the nations in any way. This does not mean they are pacifists opposed to war and resisting it and interfering with worldly governments in prosecuting wars of aggression or of defense. They could not be war-resisters, for they submit to the fulfillment of Jesus' words concerning the consummation of this system of things. Asked by his disciples, "Tell us, When will these things be, and what will be the sign of your presence and of the consummation of the system of things?" he told them: "You are going to hear of wars and reports of wars; see that you are not terrified. For these things must take place, but the accomplished end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be food shortages and earthquakes in one place after another. All these things are a beginning of pangs of distress." (Matt. 24:3, 6-8, NW) So how could the Christian witnesses of Jehovah oppose worldly wars or try to prevent them since Jesus prophesied that they were certain to be fought? Jesus did not tell them they would be in the fighting. They would merely hear the wars being fought within their earshot or else hear the reports about the wars fought elsewhere.

¹⁶ Were Jehovah's witnesses today to be pacifists, then, to be consistent, they would have to oppose Jehovah's war against the Devil's entire world at the battle front of Armageddon. They have seen the nations of this world assault God's visible organization of his people, prophetically spoken of as "Jerusalem", during the world war of 1914-1918, as foretold by Zechariah. Now they look for the rest of his prophecy to be carried out shortly, namely: "Then

16-18. (a) If pacifists, what action soon of Jehovah would they have to oppose? (b) What unpacifistic proclamation does he have them make?

shall Jehovah go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. . . . Jehovah my God shall come, and all the holy ones with thee. . . . And Jehovah shall be King over all the earth: in that day shall Jehovah be one, and his name one." (Zech. 14:1-3, 5-9, AS) There will be a great slaughter then, foreshadowed by the slaughter of God's united enemies who were marching to the attack on Jerusalem in the days of King Jehoshaphat. Hence he calls the field of slaughter "the valley of Jehoshaphat" and invites all the nations of this world to come down into it. (2 Chron. 20:1-25) He issues the command:

¹⁷ "Proclaim ye this among the nations; prepare war; stir up the mighty men; let all the men of war draw near, let them come up. Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning-hooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong. Haste ye, and come, all ye nations round about, and gather yourselves together: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Jehovah. Let the nations bestir themselves, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there will I sit to judge all the nations round about. Put ye in the sickle; for the harvest is ripe: come, tread ye; for the winepress is full, the vats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! for the day of Jehovah is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon are darkened, and the stars withdraw their shining. And Jehovah will roar from Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but Jehovah will be a refuge unto his people." —Joel 3:9-16, AS.

¹⁸ Jehovah's witnesses of today are the ones commanded to make this proclamation to the nations, and this they are doing. So how could they do this and at the same time be pacifists?

¹⁹ By his acts since A.D. 1914 Jesus Christ could never be accused of being a pacifist. Why not? Because since that date Satan the Devil and his demons have been cast out of heaven and he has come down to our earth with great wrath, knowing that now he has a short time. The unspeakable woes today smiting earth and sea, coupled with all the other fulfillments of prophecy, prove this fact. How was Satan hurled down here? Revelation 12:1-12 answers that after the birth of God's kingdom and the enthronement of his Son Jesus Christ "war broke out in heaven". No pacifist, it was this King Jesus Christ who battled against Satan and his demons and hurled them down to his footstool, the earth. Now the humiliated Satan is using his demons to drive all the nations to Armageddon for the "war of the great day of God the Almighty". (Rev. 16:14-16, NW) But who are Jehovah's "mighty ones" whom Jehovah brings down to the "valley of decision" in order to settle forever the paramount issue of world domination? They are the "Lamb of God" and the angels who fought under him in the "war in heaven" against Satan. On earth this lamblike One looked like a pacifist, but now he is the "Lion of the tribe of Juda". (Rev. 5:5, 6) To this fearless warrior Psalm 110:4-6 (AS) says: "The Lord* at thy right hand will strike through kings in the day of his wrath. He will judge among the nations, he will fill the places with dead bodies; he will strike through the head in many countries." Read the graphic description of this royal warrior of Jehovah God, at Revelation 19:11-16. Let all the militarized nations know that they will all meet lasting defeat in that universal war of Armageddon and the

* One of the 134 places where the Hebrew *sopherim* changed the word *Jehovah* in the Hebrew text to *Adonai*, meaning "The Lord". See *Cath. Conf. Psalms*.

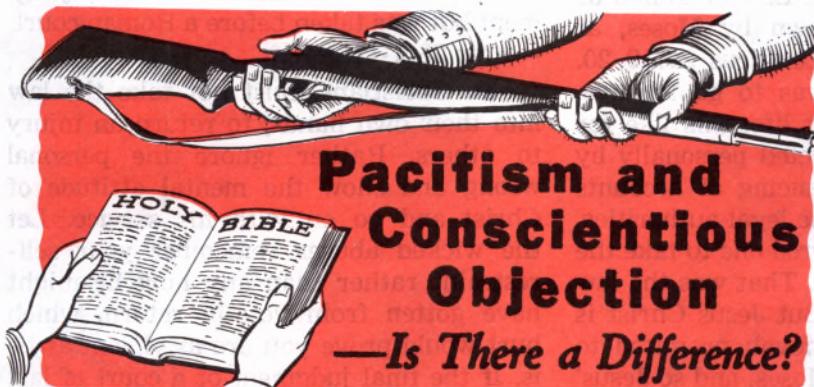
19. How since 1914 is Jesus proved to be now no pacifist?

armaments race will be at last halted for all time.

²⁰ After Armageddon those who have survived on the winner's side, Jehovah's

20. After what will guaranteed peace come? What will survivors do?

side, will enjoy a perfectly guaranteed peace. Then they will "beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more".—Isa. 2:4.



HAVING a good conscience toward God does not make a person a weakling or a coward. Jehovah's witnesses show courage to follow their conscience in these martial times. It is only due to conscience that they have personally and legally objected before draft boards to participating in the armed conflicts and defense programs of worldly nations. In this course their consciences are not warped, but are instructed in what is right, for they are instructed in the Scriptures, God's Word. With the apostle Paul they say: "I am exercising myself continually to have a consciousness of committing no offense against God and men." (Acts 24:16, NW) So their consciences are clear, no matter how the militaristic minds of this world may criticize them.

² Well, then, if not pacifists, what Scriptural reasons have they given for refusing all part in international war? Repeating

edly President Truman of the United States has said he believes in the "sermon on the mount" and that he wants the world to know that Americans believe in the sermon on the mount. Jehovah's witnesses trust that the American president and

his colleagues mean the entire sermon. Why? Because it includes not only the so-called "Golden Rule" but also Jesus' words: "You heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye and tooth for tooth.' However, I say to you: Do not resist him that is wicked; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other also to him. And if a person wants to go to court with you and get possession of your undergarment, let your outer garment also go to him; and if someone under authority impresses you into service for a mile, go with him two miles. Give to the one asking you, and do not turn away from one that wants to borrow from you without interest. You heard that it was said: 'You must love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' However, I say to you: Continue to love your enemies and to pray for those persecuting you; that you may prove yourselves sons of your Father who is in the heavens, since he makes his sun rise upon wicked people and good and makes it rain

1. How do we show courage of conscience? Why do we, and like whom?

2. In what sermon do officials claim to believe? What does it contain?

upon righteous people and unrighteous." —Matt. 5:1, 2, 38-45, NW.

³ Was Jesus there teaching pacifism? No; but thus he disclosed that his followers must not be disposed to injure anyone else, even under provocation, where merely personal matters are concerned. They should not resort to the Law of Talion or Retaliation, handed down by Moses, at Exodus 21:23-25 and Leviticus 24:19, 20. But even where eye was to go for eye, tooth for tooth, life for life, this like for like was not to be exacted personally by the one hurt. The balancing of accounts was to be laid before the legal authorities, rather than for the injured one to take the law into his own hands. That was the law given through Moses. But Jesus Christ is the Prophet whom Jehovah promised to raise up greater than Moses, and so Jesus' law is superior and supersedes the Mosaic law. (Deut. 18:15-19; Acts 3:20-23) Hence we must heed what he says in the sermon on the mount if we are faithful as his followers.

⁴ A real keeper of the sermon on the mount will not resist a wicked person, taking advantage of the law of retaliation to give like for like, injury for injury, where it is purely a personal affair and where fulfillment of his commission to serve God is not directly involved. The Lord Jesus was struck on the cheek in the Jewish Supreme Court, but did not turn the other cheek, except in a figurative way. He merely said to the officer that slapped his face: "If I spoke wrongly, bear witness concerning the wrong; but if rightly, why do you hit me?" (John 18:19-23, NW) Later in the same court Paul was struck in the mouth for saying: "I have behaved before God with a perfectly clear conscience down to this day." For this legal

outrage Paul said to the high priest presiding: "God is going to strike you, you whitewashed wall. Do you at one and the same time sit to judge me in accord with the Law and, transgressing the Law, command me to be struck?" By skillful argument Paul divided the court against itself, so that he was not affected by their judgment but was taken before a Roman court. —Acts 23:1-11, NW.

⁵ So Christians must not take the law into their own hands, to return an injury to others. Rather ignore the personal wrong and show the mental attitude of Christ and go on with his service. Let the wicked abuser remember your self-restraint rather than any hurt he might have gotten from you in return, which hurt would prove you are as violent as he is. If the final judgment of a court of last instance goes unfairly against you and it awards more than the personal effects that the person who has taken you to law wanted, let him have, as it were, your upper garment as well as undergarment. It is a personal case, not forcing you to go contrary to God's law. And so you can show you do not set your affections on perishable material things but have the strength to take personal injuries just as your Leader Jesus did. If some peaceful officer of the government in the discharge of his duties comes upon you and calls on you to render an aid that any other citizen could be called on to render, such as accompanying him as guide for a mile, then be generous. Go with him two miles if it will be to the public's good through his government service. As you accompany him, show him what a witness of Jehovah is in word and practice. Show proper respect for orderly government, even if it is human. Uphold the legal processes of the land and the laws that are not against

3. Was Jesus there teaching pacifism? How was the Law of Retaliation which he mentioned to be executed?

4. How did Jesus in court not resist the wicked? How did Paul not?

5. How, then, do we carry out what was quoted from Jesus' sermon?

righteousness and God's law. By loving acts and by prayer show yourself willing to help even your enemies and persecutors to find the way to salvation. Do not let their unjust acts provoke hatred that seeks only for hurt and destruction to befall your personal enemies.

⁶ Exodus 22:2, 3 has been referred to to show that there may be cases where Jehovah's witnesses may show they are not pacifists by killing. According to the *American Standard Version* these verses read: "If the thief be found breaking in, and be smitten so that he dieth, there shall be no bloodguiltiness for him. If the sun be risen upon him, there shall be bloodguiltiness for him." But Moffatt's translation (with which *An American Translation* agrees) reads even more clearly: "If a thief is caught breaking into a house and struck so that he dies, the householder is not guilty; but if it was after dawn, the householder is guilty."

⁷ In the darkness of night the burglar could not be identified if he escaped, and so he might be struck to halt him. If the blow was fatal and the breaker-in died, then the person protecting his property was guiltless. But if he broke in during daylight and was struck a fatal blow, then the striker was guilty of killing the thief. It was daylight and he could identify the thief and report him to the Law and have the Law apprehend him and compel him to make restitution and suffer a fine too. But in killing the thief the protector of property was going too far. Certainly all the property that a daylight thief could break in and steal is not equal to the value of his life. In having reparation made for what he stole the Law could not require the thief's life. "What will a man give in exchange for his soul [or, life]?" (Matt. 16:26, NW, margin) If the daylight thief

6, 7. For what argument has Exodus 22:2, 3 been quoted? How does it apply?

got away, or if the invading aggressors got away, and the Law never was able or failed to bring them to justice, then though we have suffered the loss of material goods we have not brought bloodguiltiness upon ourselves. So respect for the Law is good.

⁸ What is said above in reference to turning the other cheek and submitting to public officials in private or personal matters does not mean that Jehovah's witnesses do not defend the Kingdom interests, their preaching, their meetings, their persons, their brothers and sisters and their property against attack. They defend those when they are attacked and are forced to protect such interests, and Scripturally so. They do not arm themselves or carry carnal weapons in anticipation of or in preparation for trouble or to meet threats. They try to ward off blows and attacks in defense only. They do not strike in retaliation. They do not strike in offense, but strike only in defense. They do not use weapons of warfare in defense of themselves or the Kingdom interests. (2 Cor. 10:4) While they do not retreat when attacked in their homes or at their meeting places, they will retreat on public or other property and 'shake the dust off their feet', so 'not giving what is holy to dogs' and 'not throwing their pearls before swine'. (Matt. 10:14; 7:6) So they retreat when they can do so and avoid a fight or trouble. They have a right to appeal and do appeal to officers of the law to come to their help in defense against attack or mob violence.

HOW THOSE UNDER VOWS PAY BACK WHAT IS DUE

⁹ Boards, agencies and officials of the government are told that obedience to instructions in the sermon on the mount does not

8. However, how about their protecting and defending the various Kingdom interests?

9. What legal provisions for deferment do witnesses in America avail themselves of rightly?

fit in at all with Jehovah's witnesses' rendering everything to Caesar, thus making such ministers of God obliged to render unquestioning obedience to commanders who do not follow the law of God. But the above instructions from the sermon are only part of the compelling reason why Jehovah's witnesses raise conscientious objections to subjecting themselves to military service and why they take advantage of the provisions allowing exemptions. In the United States of America the Selective Service Act of 1948, which controls the decisions of draft boards and public officials, provides for the deferment of conscientious objectors and also for the exemption of those under vows to God. Section 6 (j) provides for deferment of "any person" whose "training and belief . . . in a relation to a Supreme Being involving duties superior to those arising from any human relation" prevent such person from turning aside from those SUPERIOR DUTIES which he owes to the Supreme Being.

¹⁰ A person cannot become a Christian witness of Jehovah unless he takes a vow by which he fully devotes himself to God through Jesus Christ and so assumes superior duties. He acknowledges God as the Supreme Being and Fountain of life and the Provider of the way to eternal life. (Ps. 3:8; 36:9) He approaches God through Jesus Christ. He acknowledges Jesus as the Son of God who laid down his human life for him, thus providing a purchase price for him. No political state, no "Caesar" or emperor or dictator, can do these things for the dying sinner. And so he does not attribute his debt of life to any political system, but attributes his life to God and seeks to render it to him through Christ. He acknowledges that these Scriptures apply to him: "Ye are not your own. For ye are bought with a price: therefore

10. How are they under a vow? So what obligations must they fulfill?

glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." "Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men." (1 Cor. 6:19, 20; 7:23) So their lives and their implicit obedience and superior duties they render to God as belonging to him; and they surrender their lives in God's service and not in that of any men.

¹¹ But Jesus told the Jews, who were in a covenant with God and under vow to him: "Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's; and unto God the things that are God's." (Matt. 22:21) What, then, are we to render to Caesar? Certainly not our lives, for we never did owe these to Caesar and they do not belong to him. Why, what life Caesar himself possesses he owes to God, not to himself as an immortal god. For this reason authentic history shows that Christians of the first century did not expose their lives to the risks of carnal warfare by joining Caesar's imperial armies, but took the penalty that Caesar imposed for their refusing to be inducted into his armies. In this course those early Christians had Jesus as their example, Leader and Instructor. Jesus lived within Caesar's realm, because by military aggressions imperial Rome had conquered Palestine. After laying down the law for his followers, "Pay back . . . Caesar's things to Caesar" (NW), Jesus himself did not enlist in Caesar's armies. He knew that God and Caesar are not friends. That is why Caesar through his governor Pilate put the Son of God to death and thereafter violently persecuted Jesus' followers. Jesus' sermon on the mount says we cannot serve two masters, especially when both masters are foes to each other. Jehovah's witnesses have "taken solemn vows to dedicate their lives to the service of God" and they are con-

11. Why according to Matthew 22:21 did Jesus not join Caesar's army? How about where what belongs to God clashes with what Caesar demands?

trolled by a "belief . . . in a relation to a Supreme Being involving duties superior to those arising from any human relation", including any earthly relation to Caesar. So when there arises any conflict between God and Caesar, they yield to these superior duties, just as Peter the apostle said to the Law court: "We must obey God as ruler rather than men. . . . and we are witnesses."—Acts 5:29-32, NW.

¹² Furthermore, when Jesus told his Jewish questioners, "Pay back Caesar's things to Caesar," the matter under discussion was not Caesar's military draft or voluntary enlistment in his army. Hence Jesus' answer did not apply to that. What they asked him was this, "Is it lawful to pay tribute to Caesar or not?" and that was why Jesus asked them to show him a "tribute coin" and they showed him a denarius with Caesar's image and inscription on it. So Jesus declared it was lawful according to God's law through Moses to pay tax to Caesar even though Caesar had extended his empire by force of carnal weapons and had taken away the independence and liberty of Jehovah's chosen people. Even a man who conscientiously objected to serving in Caesar's armies of aggression and of subjugation should pay him taxes as a conqueror. Even if Caesar applied a large part of it to his military program, yet what he did with the money he collected by tax was not the responsibility of the conscientious objector. By Caesar's taking over the control of the country and the running of the government all the subjugated people were receiving some material benefits, and for this they were to pay back to Caesar the tax as due him. Consequently the conscientious objector who is in a covenant with God to be His witness, as the Jews were, is not authorized to engage in any subversiveness or to pro-

mote a pacifism that would lead to civil disobedience à la Mahatma Gandhi.

¹³ Because they are wholly dedicated to God by their vows to him through Christ, Jehovah's witnesses are according to God's Word no part of this world which is governed by the political systems. For this important Bible reason they tell officials of the government that they conscientiously object to serving in any military establishment or any civilian arrangement that substitutes for military service. Jesus told Caesar's representative Pilate: "My kingdom is no part of this world. If my kingdom were part of this world, my attendants would have fought that I should not be delivered up to the Jews. But, as it is, my kingdom is not from this source." Then Jesus told Pilate why he had not engaged in any military effort to liberate the Jews from Caesar's domination, saying: "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." He came to be Jehovah's witness and to take followers out from this world, and make them Jehovah's witnesses like himself. So he told his apostles: "Because you are no part of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, on this account the world hates you." And when he prayed to God for them he said: "They are no part of the world just as I am no part of the world." (John 18:36, 37; 15:19; 17:14, 16, NW) Concerning Jehovah's witnesses whom the world hated and mistreated Hebrews 11:38 (NW) says: "The world was not worthy of them." So because they are no part of this world, they are forbidden to meddle and take part in its affairs and controversies. Spiritual Israelites are just as much separated from the nations and their armies as the natural Israelites were.

¹⁴ If their form of worship is to be "clean

12. What was not there under discussion? So how does Matthew 22:21 apply?

13, 14. For what big reason besides Jesus' sermon do they not meddle in the world's controversies? How do they keep their worship clean?

and undefiled from the standpoint of our God and Father", then they must each one endeavor to "keep oneself without spot from the world". (Jas. 1:27, NW) They tell the officials that they are absolutely neutral toward the political disputes and the international controversies and combats of this world. They take no active or violent part for either side, but pay their vows to God and always advocate his kingdom and way of salvation.

¹⁵ Like the priests and Levites of Israel who were specially dedicated to Jehovah's service at his temple, they have no inheritance in this world. So they do not fight for territories; and if they suffer loss of property through persecutions by their home government or through invasion of the land by armed aggressors, they trust in God to provide them with life's necessities. As Paul in prison wrote to his fellow witnesses: "You both expressed sympathy for those in prison and joyfully took the plundering of your belongings, knowing you yourselves have a better and an abiding possession." (Heb. 10:34, NW) Rather than be killed in the violent endeavor to protect material properties of this world, they preferred to live in a despoiled condition that they might keep on witnessing for God's kingdom and "preach the word" and "be at it urgently in favorable season, in troublesome season". No matter what political or governmental changes may take place over their heads, they in their neutral position are obliged to submit to them and to carry on with God's work the best they can under the altered conditions. They know that God's kingdom, which the sermon on the mount teaches them to pray for and which they preach, will take full charge of all the earth after Armageddon.

—2 Tim. 4:2, NW.

15. Why do they not fight for territories or resist political changes?

GOSPEL MINISTERS AND AMBASSADORS EXEMPT

¹⁶ The consecrated priests and Levites were exempted from conscription for military service in Israel. (Num. 1:45-54; 2:32, 33) Since Jehovah's witnesses are consecrated to God as followers of Jesus Christ, they should likewise be exempted from military duties with carnal weapons. God now exempts them, not requiring them to fight as did Joshua, Gideon, Samson, Jephthah, Barak and David of ancient times. Jehovah God has made these Christian witnesses his ministers of the Kingdom gospel. In the United States of America the Selective Service Act of 1948 exempts ordained and regular ministers of the gospel from military obligations. But the officers charged with applying that Act allow the exemption only to those who are full-time ministers, and not to all the rest. But each one of Jehovah's witnesses has as his vocation the ministry and is a minister of the gospel, whether able to render full time or only part time. Not merely the full-time servants among them, but each and every one of Jehovah's witnesses is under a vow of dedication, which involves "duties superior to those arising from any human relation". God's Word therefore appoints each and every one of them a minister of God and preacher of the Kingdom gospel; and officers of the law of the land, while having a legal right to do so, have no Scriptural right to discriminate and limit military exemption only to some, while excluding others. In doing so they must take responsibility before God for 'framing mischief by law'.

¹⁷ Being such ministers and preachers, they have not abandoned their neutrality as conscientious objectors and turned aside to engage in military support of this or

16. From what does God now exempt them? So what should officials do?

17. Why, according to Jesus' prophecy on the consummation of this system of things, may they not abandon their neutrality?

that side of any worldly conflict. Jesus predicted their neutrality and their preaching activities at this militant time. When he prophesied, "Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom," he did not say his true followers would engage in such armed rising. Instead, he foretold they would be roughly treated and be "hated by all the nations", not just enemy nations, but all. Then giving Jehovah's witnesses a commission for this day as well as foretelling what type of work they would do, he said: "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for the purpose of a witness to all the nations, and then the accomplished end will come." (Matt. 24:14, NW) So now each and every witness who is under vow to Jehovah God through Christ must obey that prophetic command and fulfill his commission as an ordained minister of the good news of the Kingdom. There is no exemption to any consecrated minister. Those taking the lead among them must set the example, and the others must imitate them. (1 Pet. 5:1-3) These leading ministers do not engage in carnal warfare, but preach. The rank and file of Jehovah's witnesses, being also ministers of God, copy their faithful example and peacefully preach.

¹⁸ To these Christian witnesses the apostle Paul wrote: "He committed the message of the reconciliation to us. We are therefore ambassadors substituting for Christ, as though God were making entreaty through us. As substitutes for Christ we beg: 'Become reconciled to God.' " (2 Cor. 5:19, 20, NW) As "ambassadors substituting for Christ" Jehovah's witnesses have conscientious objection to serving in the military and related establishments of the nations.

18, 19. How as God's ambassadors do they have conscientious objection?

¹⁹ Ambassadors are exempt from military service in the nation to which their government sends them, especially in a hostile nation. Remember, in Bible times ambassadors were sent, not to friendly nations, but to nations at war or threatening war. God's ambassadors substituting for Christ are not sent to friendly nations, but to hostile nations. All nations of this world of Satan are hostile to God. The message given these ambassadors to deliver is, "Become reconciled to God." This shows that the nations are not friendly. How, then, could these ambassadors Scripturally serve in the military forces of such nations or Scripturally consent to do so when required by national law? To desert the ranks of His ministers and thus quit preaching would mean to fight against God, who sent his ambassadors that they might call on the nations to become reconciled to God, not fight him. Jehovah's witnesses are God's ambassadors sent to ALL the nations, with the same message for all. Consequently they have not enlisted in the fighting forces of any of the nations. They maintain strict neutrality toward such nations in their mortal combats. They keep true to the divine government, which sends them as ambassadors, even though this neutrality and this Kingdom-preaching cause them to be "hated by all the nations". They have not fought for the unreconciled systems which God will destroy at Armageddon. Hence their conscientious objection!

²⁰ Concerning these ambassadors the apostle says in this same letter: "Though we walk in the flesh, we do not wage warfare according to what we are in the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly, but powerful by God for overturning strongly entrenched things. For we are overturning reasonings and every lofty

20. What terms applied to them in their conflict show they are no pacifists?

thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are bringing every thought into captivity to make it obedient to the Christ." (2 Cor. 10:3-5, NW) For this spiritual warfare you are ordered: "Take up the complete suit of armor from God"; and such spiritual armor you must take up "that you may be able to stand firm against the machinations of the Devil; because we have a fight, not against blood and flesh, but against the [spiritual] governments, against the authorities, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the wicked spirit forces in the heavenly places." Satan the Devil is the "ruler of this world" and the "god of this system of things". (Eph. 6:11-13 and John 12:31 and 2 Cor. 4:4, NW) The very application of such military terms in a spiritual way to God's ambassadors shows they are not pacifists.

²¹ Their warfare is not against blood and flesh. Their real foes cannot be touched by carnal weapons, and hence they take up God's spiritual armor. They turn their fighting qualities and energies into the spiritual warfare in order to liberate people from the bondage of the wicked spirit forces dominating this world. They are in God's spiritual army under Jesus Christ. For them to desert it and join this world in its fights would be disloyalty to God and Christ. It would deserve to be punished with destruction without hope of any life in the righteous new world. They must keep their agreement with God and pay their vow to him, for those who are "false to agreements" are by God's law "deserving of death". (Rom. 1:31, 32, NW) So Jehovah's witnesses keep neutral toward worldly conflicts and obey these strict orders from on high: "As a right kind of soldier of Christ Jesus take your part in suffering evil. No man serving as a soldier

involves himself in the commercial businesses of life, in order that he may meet the approval of the one who enrolled him as a soldier." (2 Tim. 2:3, 4, NW) By this neutral stand toward worldly conflicts and by loyal endurance in the spiritual warfare these soldiers enrolled by Christ meet his approval.

AN EARTH-WIDE BROTHERHOOD

²² Since God's ambassadors are sent to all nations with the one message of reconciliation, then all those who become reconciled to him become one earth-wide association of brothers. In just that way Jehovah's witnesses are an international congregation of Christian brothers. God's Word forbids them to split up over selfish interests and start fighting one another; it commands them to keep united and preserve peace among themselves. To emphasize this, the question was asked: "Does Christ exist divided? . . . For whereas there are jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly and are you not walking as men do?" (1 Cor. 1:13; 3:3, NW) On this account they have not abandoned their neutrality toward this world and joined the armies of this divided world under their enemy Satan the Devil. To do so would have meant to become pitted against their spiritual brothers, the children of God, just as in war Protestant becomes pitted against Protestant, Catholic against Catholic, Jew against Jew. This would have resulted in fratricidal warfare for which they would be held strictly accountable by their heavenly Father. Contrary to taking or seeking to take the life of their brothers, the sons of God, they are exhorted to lay down their lives for their brothers, in imitation of Jesus Christ and not of Cain who slaughtered his brother Abel. Hence the apostle John writes:

21. In what warfare and in whose army are they? So why keep neutral?

22, 23. Because of being what kind of association may they not engage in international strife? Under what instructions are they?

²³ "Do not marvel, brothers, that the world hates you. We know we have passed over from death to life, because we love the brothers. He who does not love remains in death. Everyone who hates his brother is a manslayer, and you know that no manslayer has everlasting life remaining in him. By this we have come to know love, because that one surrendered his soul [or, life] for us; and we are under obligation to surrender our souls [or, lives] for our brothers."—1 John 3:11-16, NW, margin.

²⁴ The spirit of Jehovah God is upon his witnesses for them to "preach good tidings unto the meek" and to "bind up the brokenhearted", rather than to break hearts by carnal combat. Now when the river of life-saving truth is flowing forth from the throne of God's established kingdom, his witnesses must be like trees whose leaves are "for the healing of the nations" and "for medicine", rather than wounding the nations. (Isa. 61:1; Luke 4:18; Rev. 22:2; Ezek. 47:12) This is the

"surpassing way" of love, the love of God with all that a person has and the love of one's neighbor as oneself.—1 Cor. 12:31-13:7, NW.

²⁵ All the foregoing is only a partial statement of the case of Jehovah's witnesses, which they have made to boards, officials and courts having the responsibility under the law of the land to determine whether they shall be granted the rights given to conscientious objectors and ministers. But enough has been said to prove to such boards and officials and all others that Jehovah's witnesses are consistent in their claim. They are not pacifists, but are ministers and conscientious objectors on Scriptural grounds. In taking this stand the boards have been enabled to see that Jehovah's witnesses stay neutral toward this world and that they remain God's ministers and ordained preachers of the good news of his kingdom under Christ, with Scriptural and conscientious objection to their participation in worldly war in any form.

24. Instead of breaking hearts and wounding, what must they now do?

25. In what respects, then, are Jehovah's witnesses proved consistent?

John the Baptist, Forerunner of Jesus

THE accurate Foreteller of events, Almighty God, declared over four hundred years before the birth of John the Baptist: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of Jehovah come." (Mal. 4:5, AS; Luke 1:17) And before that, more than 700 years prior to John's birth, Jehovah announced that this Elijahlike one would be

as "the voice of one that crieth, Prepare ye in the wilderness the way of Jehovah; make level in the desert a highway for our God". (Isa. 40:3, AS; Matt. 3:3)

It was therefore no mere accident, or according to natural processes, that John the Baptist was born some six months prior to Jesus. In fact, John's birth was as miraculous as that of the promised child Isaac, for both his parents, Zechariah and Elizabeth, were past the normal age of producing children.—Luke 1:18.

Even before his conception John's commission and work and mode of living were ordained and appointed by the angel Gabriel at God's command. He was to do great things in Jehovah's service, he was to attack his work in the spirit and power of Elijah, and he was to turn back disobedient ones from the way of death and prepare them to accept Christ the Messiah. He was to be a Nazarite, wholly devoted to God, and hence was to touch no wine or strong drink. Even his name *John*, meaning "Jah is gracious", was chosen by the Lord. (Luke 1:13-17; Num. 6:2, 3) Like Samuel, from his childhood he was consecrated to the glorious service of the Most High God.—1 Sam. 1:11, 24-28.

Because of such divine appointments, when the child was circumcised on the eighth day, his priestly father under inspiration revealed: "As for you, young child, you will be called a prophet of the Most High, for you will pioneer before Jehovah to make his ways ready, to give knowledge of salvation to his people by forgiveness of their sins, because of the tender compassion of our God." (Luke 1:76-78, NW) This public ministry was to be of great importance; all other things in his life were of little consequence. Hence the Scriptures cover the first thirty years of John's life in a single verse: "And the young child went on growing and getting strong in spirit, and he continued in the deserts until the day of showing himself openly to Israel."—Luke 1:80, NW.

"VOICE" IN WILDERNESS BEGINS TO SOUND

In the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar's reign, when Pontius Pilate was the governor of Judea and Herod Antipas was ruler over the district of Galilee, John the baptizer turned up in the wilderness with a startling message: "Repent, for the kingdom of the heavens has drawn near." (Luke 3:1, 2; Mark 1:4; Matt. 3:2, NW)

The populace of the whole countryside was awakened and stirred. It was a strange message indeed, but the sincerity, conviction and force with which this preacher John spoke convinced vast multitudes of honest and sincere people that he was a man sent from God, and was moved by God's holy spirit to sound a warning of utmost importance. As a prophet of the Lord he was easily recognized by his dress and devotion.—Matt. 3:4; Mark 1:6.

The fame of this man spread like a prairie fire, until even the priests and Levites journeyed down from the capital at Jerusalem to find out what it was all about. Repent? Why, and of what? Who was this man? they wanted to know. John explained:

"I am not the Christ." "And they asked him: 'What, then? Are you Elijah?' And he said: 'I am not.' 'Are you The Prophet?' And he answered: 'No!' Therefore they said to him: 'Who are you? That we may give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?' He said: 'I am a voice of a man crying aloud in the wilderness, "Make the way of Jehovah straight," just as Isaiah the prophet said.' Now those sent forth were from the Pharisees. So they questioned him and said to him: 'Why, then, do you baptize if you yourself are not the Christ or Elijah or The Prophet?' "—John 1:20-25, NW.

On this latter matter of repentance and baptism this witness of God in the wilderness said in substance: 'I baptize repentant sinners with water, but after me someone stronger than I is coming who will baptize them with holy spirit and with fire. Why, I am not even fit to stoop down and untie this greater One's sandals! And beware! he carries a threshing instrument in his hand and will separate and gather the wheat for his storehouse, but will burn up and destroy the chaff.'—Matt. 3:11, 12; Mark 1:7, 8; Luke 3:15-17; Acts 1:5; 11:16.

"PEOPLE OF ALL KINDS" WARNED

There were many wheatlike ones that openly confessed their sins of unfaithfulness to the Law covenant, and publicly demonstrated their sincerity by allowing John to baptize them in the Jordan river. (Matt. 3:5, 6) They thus put themselves in the proper condition to receive the Messiah when he did appear. Wanting to learn more of the Lord God's righteous commandments, John gladly instructed them as disciples, teaching them how to properly fast and pray.—Matt. 9:14; Luke 5:33; 3:18; 11:1.

Instead of exalting himself, John constantly called attention to the fact that he was only the one running ahead of Christ, crying out and warning all people of good will in order that they might be prepared to receive and accept the Messiah when he did appear. Concerning this forerunner the apostle John writes: "This man [John] came for the purpose of a witness, in order to bear witness about the light, that people of all kinds might believe through him. He was not that light, but he was meant to bear witness about that light. The true light which gives light to every kind of man was about to come into the world. (John bore witness about him, yes, he actually cried out—this one was the speaker—saying: 'The one coming behind me has advanced in front of me, because he existed before me.')"—John 1:7-9, 15, NW.

In order that "people of all kinds" and "every kind of man" might have an opportunity to accept the benefits of life that are extended through Christ, John "preached publicly to all the people of Israel the baptism of those repenting". (Acts 13:24, NW) Tax collectors he cautioned against resorting to extortion. Soldiers he warned against using violence or plunder. And even when the Pharisees and Sadducees, those pious, hypocritical clergy-

men, came out John spoke to them only in the plainest language, telling them that visible, tangible evidence of repentance was necessary, and not just a reliance on the carnal fact that they were natural descendants of Abraham. "When he caught sight of many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to the baptism," the account reads, "he said to them: 'You offspring of vipers, who has shown you how to flee from the coming wrath? So then produce fruit that befits repentance; and do not presume to say to yourselves, "As a father we have Abraham." For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones.'"—Matt. 3:7-9; Luke 3:7-14, NW.

As a class, however, the clergy and principal ones of their flock did not receive and benefit by John's warning. They refused to believe that John's work was God-ordained and they falsely charged him with being demonized. They refused the way of righteousness that leads to life eternal in God's glorious kingdom. On the other hand, the sinful tax collectors and harlots who believed John's testimony repented and were baptized, and in due time accepted Christ and his provision for life. —Luke 7:31-33; Matt. 21:25-32.

THE KING INTRODUCED BY JOHN

God's faithful witness John had done a marvelous work in the land in the short six months from the spring to the fall of A.D. 29. The work of preparing the nation of Israel for Messiah was about completed. The time was ripe for the King to put in his appearance. But when he did, to the amazement of even John, Jesus came down to those same Jordan waters and asked to be baptized. Not understanding the new meaning water immersion there took on, John protested that he was the one needing to be baptized by Jesus. The Master then explained that water baptism is a

necessity upon Christians too in order to carry out all of God's righteous purposes, so John complied and God's holy spirit of approval descended upon Jesus.—Matt. 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11.

From now on it was to be John's privilege to introduce his disciples to this Anointed One, and he lost no time in doing it as soon as Jesus' forty-day stay in the wilderness ended. "See, the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world!" John called out. "This is the one about whom I said, Behind me there comes a man who has advanced in front of me, because he existed before me. Even I did not know him, but the reason why I came baptizing in water was that he might be made manifest to Israel."—John 1:29-37, NW.

John's work did not cease immediately with the introduction of Jesus' ministry, but continued along parallel with it for about six months. And while the working of the two side by side in the field caused some misunderstanding among the uninformed, yet there was no disagreement or confusion between John and Jesus. They understood perfectly the work the other was doing. John explained that he was the friend of the bridegroom Christ, and that his joy was to see the bridegroom increase while he and his work decreased.—John 3:22-30.

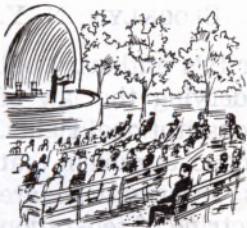
Likewise Jesus identified John as his forerunner pictured by Elijah. "Let him that has ears listen." (Matt. 11:12-15; 17:12, NW) "The Law and the Prophets

were until John. From then on the kingdom of God is being declared as good news, and every kind of person is pressing forward toward it." (Luke 16:16, NW) Hence, after John was cast into the fortress prison at Machærus Jesus expanded the work begun by John, saying: "The appointed time has been fulfilled and the kingdom of God has drawn near. Be repentant and have faith in the good news."—Mark 1:14, 15; Matt. 4:12, NW.

And why was John arrested and imprisoned? Because he boldly declared the truth to all men, the low and the high alike. John did not shirk his responsibility to tell even Herod that he was living in adultery and sin with his brother's wife Herodias in violation of God's law, and John did so that the man might repent, obtain God's mercy, receive Christ the Redeemer and live.

What an example John was of faith and love! Faithfulness to God as his witness. Love to fellow men even at the cost of personal freedom and life. Yes, in the end John lost his life, for after a year's imprisonment he was beheaded through a fiendish scheme inspired by the Devil and engineered by that wicked woman Herodias. But what is all-important is that the forerunner of Christ, Jehovah's faithful witness John, maintained his integrity even unto death, and shortly now will be raised from the dead to enjoy blessed living in God's new world of righteousness.—Matt. 14:3-12; Mark 6:16-19.





LEGALITY OF PARK MEETINGS *Contested*



"TO CONDUCT a religious ceremony in the open is in keeping with Christian tradition. The Founder of Christianity and His disciples gave their lessons in the open. It has become traditional with many religious groups to assemble at some public place and conduct divine worship. No one will quarrel with the practice." So editorialized the Pawtucket *Times* recently of the time-honored and universal practice of preaching publicly in the manner practiced by Christ Jesus. It did not occur to the newsman in Rhode Island, home of Roger Williams and cradle of freedom of worship in America, that anyone would question the right of a preacher to address an assembled audience in a public place.

What some had forgotten about the respected right to hold such meetings was sharply recalled. More than thirty-four years previously the City of Pawtucket had written into its ordinances a provision to ban preaching by Christ Jesus should he come to spread the gospel of the Kingdom as he did in ancient Palestine: "No person shall address any political, or religious meetings in any public park." When the controversy arose about the validity of the law a candidate for the office of city councilman quickly pointed out, however, that the city administration had allowed the 1950 Easter sunrise service in a local park sponsored by the Salvation Army and six other Pawtucket, Providence and Lincoln churches.

But when Jehovah's witnesses applied for a permit to hold meetings in the park during the summer of 1950 they were ar-

bitrarily denied permission on authority of the 1916 ordinance. They insisted that they should be permitted to hold such meetings and cited decisions by the Supreme Court of the United States and other courts sustaining such right. Police officers reluctantly consented to the holding of one meeting on August 20 but warned that they would require a permit from the park commissioner for any further meetings. The commissioner again refused a permit.

A second outdoor public meeting was scheduled for August 27 at the same site. When the speaker had addressed his audience for only about one minute he was suddenly surrounded by a raiding party led by the chief inspector, about twenty uniformed police and several detectives in plain clothes. They took two of Jehovah's witnesses to police headquarters, where, after being questioned for an hour and forty minutes, they were released.

MINISTER ARRESTED, GAMBLERS IGNORED

Again, the next Sunday, September 3, more than five hundred of Jehovah's witnesses and their guests assembled in the park. The speaker was introduced and proceeded to speak for several minutes on "The Pathway to Peace". As before, the chief inspector interrupted the discourse, took the minister into custody and drove him to the station, where he was charged with violating the law prohibiting religious meetings in any public park.

Commenting on the arrest of a minister for observing the ancient Christian prac-

tice of preaching to an open-air assembly the same editorial writer felt constrained to express himself upon the state of law enforcement in the city:

"Police insistence that the Witnesses obey the letter of the law, even to the point of arrest, points up a new approach to law enforcement in Pawtucket. There is evidence that the police do not insist upon obedience to all laws. . . . One has but to look around and see men without visible means of support transacting operations which the State Constitution bars. "One has but to recall the visits of the state police to Pawtucket and the bookie arrests made here to realize that law enforcement was nonexistent."

"Had the useless vice squad, the useless police chief and the useless safety commission been as alert to their duty in the matter of gambling as were the police in the matter of religious assembly in Slater Park the state police would not have had to come to Pawtucket to prove that law enforcement at the local level was a mockery."

Others spoke out in behalf of the position of Jehovah's witnesses. The pastor of Edgewood Congregational Church, Cranston, told his congregation "we must defend the Witnesses today or the Salvation Army will be ruled off the streets and Protestant and Roman Catholic churches closed tomorrow". A citizen of nearby Central Falls felt strongly that the energies of the police department were misplaced, and warned with sarcasm, "Beware, you scoundrels who preach the Word of God."

A NOVEL LEGAL DOCTRINE

Upon the trial the city solicitor accused Jehovah's witnesses of defying the law when they went ahead and held the meeting regardless of how the police felt about the matter. In rebuttal counsel for Jehovah's witnesses demonstrated that they

were not defying the city's authority but that the police were defying the law of the land by violating constitutional rights. The city advanced the novel argument that meetings by religious organizations are forbidden under the doctrine of separation of church and state. Moreover, it was contended, such use constitutes appropriation of public funds for a religious use in violation of the First Amendment.

Then if this be true, answered counsel, was the Supreme Court of the United States unaware of such doctrine when it ruled in behalf of the rights of Jehovah's witnesses in many cases upholding their right to preach on the streets and in the public parks? To forbid religious meetings while allowing all other kinds is discrimination and, besides, the incidental use of public property for preaching, along with other uses, is so slight and inconsequential as not to constitute appropriation of public funds. To so contend would be to stretch and distort the First Amendment out of the meaning given it by its framers and use it as a subtle weapon to abridge freedom.

Additionally, added counsel for Jehovah's witnesses, if the First Amendment can be relied upon to prevent delivery of public talks on the Bible in a public park, then it can also be used to prevent use of streets for public preaching or for use by ministers who visit from door to door, which the Supreme Court of the United States has held protected by the Constitution in many cases. If this insidious doctrine were permitted to control, not only could it be used to stop the public preaching of Jehovah's witnesses and others but, ultimately, it would forbid a preacher to use the streets to travel to his church on Sunday or his congregation from coming over the sidewalks to listen to him on the theory that it constituted use of public funds for a sectarian purpose.

Although the decision was against them in the district court Jehovah's witnesses will appeal the conviction as unconstitutional and contrary to a long line of decisions sustaining the right to hold such

meetings. They will insist on 'defending and legally establishing the good news' and contending for the right to preach the gospel in the manner which Christ Jesus set as their example.

Circuit Assembly Held Despite Legion Antagonism

PREPARING for their circuit assembly (semiannual convention for Bible study and instruction of ministers) Jehovah's witnesses of Oklahoma City and vicinity contracted for use of the facilities of Municipal Auditorium. The written agreement, entered into with the city council, provided for the use of the Hall of Mirrors September 29 and 30 and the main auditorium October 1. A down payment was made with arrangements for the balance to be paid at the conclusion.

On Friday, September 22, while final plans for the meeting were being pushed, the local American Legion Post 35 filed a scandalous resolution with the city officials demanding that the city council illegally break its contract and not permit Jehovah's witnesses to hold their assembly. It was claimed that they insist upon teaching and instilling doctrine "into the minds of the youths of this nation which violates and is in direct contradiction of the constitutional principles and traditions of our government".

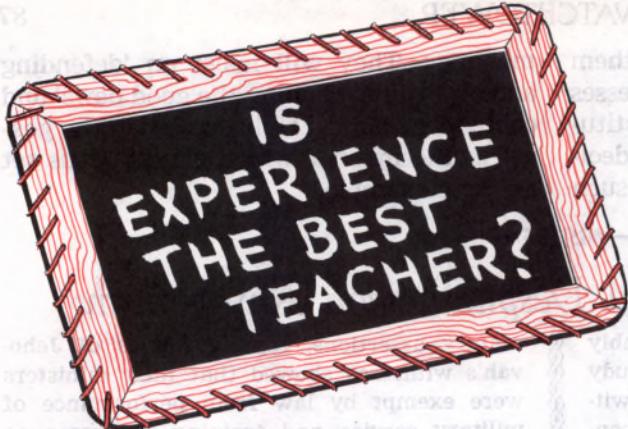
Not quick to deprive an unpopular minority of constitutional rights of freedom of assembly, speech and worship, the city officials took the matter under consideration and set it down for hearing at the next council meeting. In the meantime local newspaper reports aroused the interest of the public. Many citizens became concerned over the issue and protested the action of the American Legion.

When the city council was called to order on Tuesday, September 26, upward of 300 legionnaires helped to pack the council room. Represented by two lawyers, they resumed their vituperative denunciation of Jehovah's witnesses, shouting that they do "not honor the flag" and "discourage enlistments in our armed forces" which would hinder the war efforts. Rebutting these and other inflam-

matory assertions, representatives of Jehovah's witnesses showed that their ministers were exempt by law from performance of military service and training the same as clergymen of other organizations, that at no time do they advocate refusal to salute or fight and that they regard it as wrong for them to oppose the efforts of persons who do, but that they must live by God's laws. "If everybody in this country were Jehovah's witnesses there would be no country," it was alleged. "If everybody in the world were Jehovah's witnesses," came the answer, "there would be no war."

Jehovah's witnesses reminded the city council that denial of freedoms to Jehovah's witnesses would jeopardize these rights to all other Americans. Each member of the council was given a copy of the booklet *Defending and Legally Establishing the Good News*. Others manifested like concern for the preservation of the fundamental freedoms. During the discussion a letter from the Oklahoma City Council of Churches was read which stated that, although they did not concur with the beliefs of Jehovah's witnesses, yet they believed constitutional rights should be upheld and the use of the Municipal Auditorium permitted.

At the conclusion of the arguments the acting mayor sought advice as to whether the contract was legally binding, from the city attorney, who assured the council that it was. When the chairman then placed the matter before the council for determination and asked if any of the councilmen desired to break the contract all remained silent. So, commanding the city council for refusing to capitulate to pressure to deny constitutionally guaranteed assembly, we give all thanks and praise to Jehovah for the victory.



"**E**XPERIENCE is the best teacher," declares a popular slogan of the day. Because of their repetition and general acceptance, slogans such as this are often believed without being submitted to any careful scrutiny or examination. Everyone knows that experience is a teacher, and so the majority of persons allow that little but important word *best* to slide through unchallenged. However, it should not be allowed to pass, for it makes the slogan false.

Some have tried to argue for experience as a teacher by quoting Romans 5:3, 4: "We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope." More accurate modern translation removes the word *experience* from this text, rendering it: "Let us exult while in tribulations, since we know that tribulation produces endurance; endurance, in turn, an approved condition; the approved condition, in turn, hope."—NW.

Nor does Hebrews 5:8 establish experience as the best teacher when it says concerning Jesus: "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." Jesus was never disobedient; he did not suffer to learn to change from disobedience to obedience. He started out his ministry in obedience under test, and his devotion to obedience

was only strengthened by subsequent tests of integrity. This undefiled one never stooped to sinning to learn the sinfulness of sin.—Matt. 4:1-11; Heb. 7:26.

Hebrews 2:17, 18 has been quoted to argue that Jesus experienced fleshly weaknesses as a man in order that he might fully understand them and be merciful toward sinful men: "He was obliged to become like his 'brothers' in all respects, that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, in order to offer propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of the people. For in that he himself has suffered when being put to the test, he is able to come to the aid of those who are being put to the test." (NW) However, the test Jesus was put to was not one concerning fleshly weaknesses due to inherited sin, for he was perfect in the flesh and sinless. His was not a battle against inherited sin within his body. The test he experienced and successfully met was the test of integrity, the trial of enduring in the flesh the assaults against his flesh brought upon him by Satan and his representatives for the purpose of turning him away from God. He appreciates the difficulties of the test, and can aid his followers in their similar trials. The very fact that he succeeded in the flesh is itself an encouraging example that aids his followers to meet the test.

However, it cannot be said that such a test must be experienced to be understood. If so, then Jesus would be wiser in this regard than Jehovah God, for God did not experience it. Yet God understands flesh-and-blood creatures better than they understand themselves: "Like the compassion of a father for his children is the compassion of Yahweh for them who revere him; for he knoweth how we are formed, he is mindful that dust we are." (Ps.

103:13, 14, Ro) He understood this issue of integrity so well that at the very beginning of it when Satan raised the challenge Jehovah was able to infallibly say that some men would be able to pass the test. Not only Jehovah God, but also Christ understood man's abilities in this regard, for had he not been used to make man from the dust? (Col. 1:16) Had he not observed how Job and others successfully passed the test of integrity? This wise spirit creature did not need to be taught by experience on this matter. But his becoming flesh and enduring the test himself is the foremost example of integrity toward God, and is a model for his followers.

WHERE EXPERIENCE FAILED TO TEACH GOOD

A divine rule is, "Whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted." (Matt. 23:12) But Satan had to find this out by experience, seeking to exalt his throne above the stars of God, only to end up in a humiliating fall. (Isa. 14:12-15) Apparently, he learned nothing by experiencing a fall from heaven after 1914, for since then he continues and even steps up his warfare against Jehovah's theocratic organization, to his final doom.—Rev. 12:9, 13, 17; 20:1-3, 10.

After his initial rebellion, Satan by sly deception induced the first human pair to try to exalt themselves as gods, but the result they experienced was a fall into sin and death, and with them in their plunge into delinquency they took the entire human race. Yet none of the hard experiences they endured as a result of their disobedience, from the time of their ouster from Eden onward, taught them the need to repent and admit their wrong.

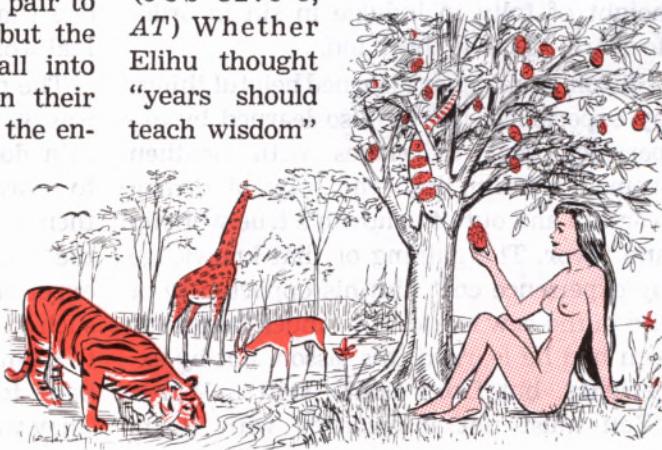
In the degradation that followed, human creatures did not

learn of their errors in humility, did not learn from the hard knocks of experience, but took more and more bruising falls in the wake of pride and self-exaltation. To this very twentieth century experiences of their own or of others have failed to teach them to avoid the snare of pride; on the contrary, the heady and high-minded among men increase in these last days. (2 Tim. 3:1, 4) Why, some arrogant few even match Satan's folly by exalting themselves above Jehovah, pretending that they daily order God from his heavenly throne down to earth to be sacrificed by them on a religious altar!

Men of years with all their accumulated experience are not necessarily the ones who are wise. The young and comparatively inexperienced Elihu waited in vain to hear wisdom from Job's three aged "friends", and finally in indignation spoke out bluntly against them: "I am of few days, while you are aged; therefore I feared and was afraid to show you my knowledge. I thought days should speak, and many years should teach wisdom. However, it is a spirit in man, and the breath of the Almighty, that makes them intelligent; it is not the old that are wise, nor the elders who understand justice."

(Job 32:6-9,

AT) Whether Elihu thought "years should teach wisdom"



because of the experience they made possible, or whether he thought passing years would mean wisdom because they would allow time for much study, is not made clear by the account. What is clear is that Elihu discerned the need more vital than either of these, when he said, "Yet surely there is a spirit in men, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding." (*Ro*) He realized that neither experience nor years of study would bring true wisdom, unless accompanied by Jehovah's spirit.

King Solomon was granted wisdom because of a request he made of Jehovah God for "an understanding heart to judge thy people". (1 Ki. 3:9) But Solomon also sought to broaden his wisdom by experience: "Said I to myself, 'Come, try pleasure and enjoy yourself.' But this too was in vain. Mirth is madness, I reflected, and what is the good of pleasure? I searched my mind how to pamper my body with wine (keeping control of myself wisely all the time), how to come by folly, till I could see how best the sons of men might fare under the sun during the few days of their life." (Eccl. 2:1-3, *Mo*) However, it is neither necessary nor wise to seek to experience all things so that you might determine their value. And certainly it is the height of folly to indulge in sin in order to learn about it firsthand.

Solomon may have learned helpful things by experience, but he also learned by experience that marriages with heathen women led him into the folly of demon worship and out of Jehovah's true worship and favor. The gaining of that knowledge by experience cost him his opportunity of life in the new world. How much better for him had he learned this lesson, not by experience, but from God's written Word: "You must not intermarry with them,

neither giving your daughters in marriage to their sons, nor receiving their daughters for your sons; for they would turn your sons from following me to serving alien gods, and then the anger of the LORD would blaze against you, and he would quickly destroy you."—Deut. 7:3, 4, *AT*; 1 Ki. 11:1-11.

LEARNING OF "THINGS NOT SEEN AS YET"

To Noah Jehovah God said: "I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth." (Gen. 7:4) Noah preached this message, but scoffers jeered at his warning of a global flood. What if someone today would tell you that it was going to rain up? You would think that person unbalanced. We know that it rains down, not up. Well, in Noah's day when he preached that it was going to rain down the people thought him crazy. They were used to moisture coming up from the ground and watering the vegetation, not to rain showering down from the sky. Of that preflood earth Genesis 2:5, 6 states: "The LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth . . . but there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground." Nevertheless, in God's due time it did rain down, and that original world was drowned in a watery grave.

The point of instruction in this is: Noah was willing to learn from God that it could rain down, but the scoffers were willing to learn only by experience. The people then were used to water going up from the ground, and because they had never experienced a downpour they concluded such a thing impossible. They conceitedly thought that they knew it all; they would have to be shown to believe differently. They were shown, at the cost of their lives.

In that instance, experience was the worst teacher.

We can learn from that original world's experience with the global flood, for Jesus warned, "Just as the days of Noah were, so the presence of the Son of man will be." (Matt. 24:37, NW) That populace of Noah's time were caught unawares, engrossed in their own selfish pursuits, indifferent or derisive toward a warning of something they thought impossible. Just as Noah was "warned of God of things not seen as yet", so Jehovah's witnesses today discern by Bible study God's warning of a "great tribulation such as has not occurred since the world's beginning until now, no, nor will occur again". (Heb. 11:7; Matt. 24:21, NW; Rev. 16:13-16) That means the tribulation of Armageddon will surpass the Flood in destructiveness, and will be a completely new experience for "this present evil world". (Gal. 1:4) Jehovah will fight Armageddon by miraculous means, as in days of old when he fought for Israel by casting huge chunks of ice on the enemy, when his death angel smote 185,000 in one night, when he caused the Red sea to swallow Egypt's armies. (Josh. 10:11; Isa. 37:36; Ex. 14:27, 28) Armageddon will dwarf such ancient displays of divine wrath.

But when attention is called to the approach and destructiveness of Armageddon, the majority of men scoff and ridicule and say it is impossible, just because they have never seen such miraculous works before. Like the scoffers in Noah's day, these moderns insist upon being taught about Armageddon by experience. However, a minority of persons of good will toward God wisely heed the divine warning concerning Armageddon, just as Noah and his family learned about the flood from God and acted upon His instructions. By choosing Jehovah instead of experience as their Teacher, they will pass the course of in-

struction Armageddon gives as to God's almighty power and supremacy.

JEHOVAH GOD THE BEST TEACHER

Jehovah God did not gain his limitless wisdom from experience. He knows "the end from the beginning", before any experience could accumulate. (Isa. 46:10) He does not recommend experience as the best teacher for Christians. "They will all be taught by Jehovah." (John 6:45, NW; Isa. 54:13) It is not knowledge gained by experience that leads to everlasting life, but "their taking in knowledge of you, the only true God, and of the one whom you sent forth, Jesus Christ". (John 17:3, NW) Nor is experience the need of the inexperienced; rather, inspired proverbs are given "that men may gain wisdom and instruction, may understand words of intelligence; that they may receive instruction in wise conduct, in rectitude, justice, and honesty; that sense may be imparted to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the inexperienced". (Prov. 1:1-4, AT) A wise reproof is more instructive than hard experience, and the wise person will learn more by it than a fool will absorb from trying experience: "A reproof entereth more into a wise man than an hundred stripes into a fool."

—Prov. 17:10.

Repeatedly Israel ignored divine reproof and foolishly exposed herself to the lashing assaults and oppressions of her enemies, all because she would not submit to teaching from God. "They forsook the LORD God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that were round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the LORD to anger. And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and he sold them into the hands of their enemies

round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies. And when the LORD raised them up judges, then the LORD was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge: for it repented the LORD because of their groanings by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them. And it came to pass, when the judge was dead, that they returned, and corrupted themselves more than their fathers, in following other gods to serve them, and to bow down unto them; they ceased not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way."—Judg. 2:12, 14, 18, 19.

Apparently the nation of Israel learned little from these hard experiences, for under both judges and kings she repeatedly committed the same blunders that brought such trying times upon her, and finally her stubborn way led to her overthrow as a typical theocratic nation. (Ezek. 21:24-27) Jehovah God did not bring these difficult experiences upon Israel. Israel brought them upon herself by disobeying God's commands. Jehovah God brought chastening reproof upon Israel to return her to the right way, but because of Israel's folly and stubbornness the good effects of such reproof did not last long. Christians today make mistakes, and thereby bring upon themselves unpleasant experiences, but if they are meek and wise they will profit by loving correction from Jehovah. "My son, do not belittle the discipline from Jehovah, neither give out when you are corrected by him; for whom Jehovah loves he disciplines." "To those who have been trained by it it yields peaceable fruit, namely, righteousness." (Heb. 12:5, 6, 11, NW) Not difficult experiences we bring upon ourselves, but Jehovah's discipline and correction teach us and train us toward righteousness.

This present world is like Israel of old. The world may boast that experience is

the best teacher, but if that is so then the world is a very dull student. Its inhabitants have not learned to avoid sin by experiencing it for the past thousands of years. Their experience in immorality and blasphemy has only made them more adept at it, more entrenched in the bad habits, till today it reaches the debased state foretold for the last days. Again and again this old world goes through cycle after cycle of bloody war and hateful crime, as her sordid history repeats itself upon each generation; but from all this experience she learns nothing, even this generation fighting two fruitless world wars and now girding herself for a third one. Like a sow returning to her wallow, like a dog going back to its vomit, the world learns nothing from experience, though it says experience is the best teacher. At Armageddon that "best teacher" will be the world's worst experience, her last experience, for then she will graduate from this school of hard knocks a dead thing that will never be resurrected.—2 Pet. 3:7.

However, persons of good will toward God do not believe they need to deliberately experience sin to appreciate morality, or suffer death to learn the value of life, or feel Jehovah's power against them at Armageddon to be convinced that he possesses it. They look to Jehovah God and Christ Jesus as the best Teachers. Under present conditions a man's life is short and his experience meager, whereas Satan has had thousands of years' experience in deceiving and trapping men. We cannot pit our short experience against his, and hope to win. We must combat Satan's long experience by drawing upon Jehovah's limitless wisdom. We need the best of teachers to instruct us in side-stepping Satan's snares. In God and Christ we have such Teachers. In the Bible we have their priceless instruction.—Prov. 2:1-12; 3:13-18.

Convention Results in New York City

EIGHT days, July 30 to August 6, 1950, Jehovah's witnesses from 67 nations gathered in convention at New York's famous Yankee Stadium. Opening day attendance was 79,247. On Sunday, August 6, 123,707 persons overflowed the stadium, adjoining streets and cafeteria tents and the trailer city nearby in New Jersey. Needless to say, a convention of this size would have an impact on any city, even a city as large as New York. The presence of the witnesses by the thousands created a generally favorable impression everywhere and, even though the convention is now history and the large throngs have gone, the city has not forgotten its largest convention.

¶ But there is another side to the convention picture that provides an interesting insight into what is achieved in a more or less incidental way by such a large gathering of Christians. This viewpoint commends the general conduct and deportment of the witnesses, and it gives evidence of the power of the truth when spoken in the homes of people who are disposed toward righteousness.

¶ Circumstances compelled Jehovah's witnesses to secure accommodations in thousands of private homes and apartments, for the hotels were unable to contain all the delegates. In these homes and apartments Jehovah's witnesses conducted themselves well, were friendly with their landlords and landladies, and did not fail to speak about God's Word to those who were their hosts. Many of these kindly people listened with genuine interest to their visitors from Colorado, Texas, Washington, California, England, Gold Coast of Africa, Sweden and other distant points; and some attended the last few days of the convention, being impressed by the orderliness and sincerity of the conventioners.

¶ Following the convention Jehovah's witnesses of New York city were determined to stimulate the interest manifested by such landladies and landlords. The results are most encouraging, as brought to light at the first circuit assembly held in the city (November 10 to 12) since the convention. Already at least 26 landladies and landlords have become Kingdom publishers and are associated with the 26 units in New York. Some of these new publishers were among the 202 persons who symbolized their conse-

cration by water immersion Sunday, November 12. More than 300 landladies and landlords who were host to Jehovah's witnesses now have Bible studies in their homes. More than 1,000 throughout the city are being called on regularly by Jehovah's witnesses, with the prospect of soon having studies in their homes.

¶ One of the outstanding new publishers is a man of Jewish birth, a former ordained holiness preacher. He had witnesses in his home. Now he is so happy in his newly found knowledge of the truth. Another couple who entertained a brother from England are now active publishers and attend meetings at the Bethel Kingdom Hall. Both were immersed at the circuit assembly, and she plans to enter pioneer service as soon as she is eligible. Then there is the young man who, despite opposition from his mother, persisted in studying with a faithful witness who called back. Now the young man is a publisher and his mother is attending the home Bible study. And think of the person who approached one of Jehovah's witnesses on the street and asked if she might help hold the magazines. She certainly could, and now she is a publisher.

¶ Kind consideration, too, bears its fruit. One group of Jehovah's witnesses from a distant point found it necessary to stay in a hotel instead of the private home to which they were assigned. They telephoned their landlady and explained the situation; and every evening thereafter by telephone they gave her a résumé of the day's convention events. This person invited them out to her home; and they, in turn, invited her to the public lecture at the stadium. By the time the Kingdom publisher called at her home after convention she had already placed several books and was talking to her neighbors. She wanted a home Bible study. She has it, and she attended the circuit assembly and related her experience with Jehovah's witnesses even though they never stayed at her home. She now attends meetings at the local Kingdom Hall.

¶ Undoubtedly many more wonderful experiences will be brought to light as Jehovah's witnesses in New York continue to visit the landladies and landlords who had convention delegates as guests in their private homes.

Make Known the Good News

IT IS a proverbial saying among earth's sad and troubled people: "No news is good news." From every side, every quarter, every front, the majority of reports are tragic tales of woe and calamity that bring increased distress and perplexity. The people grope in darkness, their hearts failing them for fear of what they see coming upon the earth. (Luke 21:25, 26) Consequently, most of the news they hear, to borrow a line from Shakespeare, befits the present nighttime—"black, fearful, comfortless and horrible." What, then, could be more important than letting the people hear about the theocratic kingdom that will cure all mankind's ills? Such a divine message is truly heart-cheering, joy-provoking, soul-satisfying to those who drink it in, even though it comes from afar, even from heaven.—Prov. 25:25.

In speaking of the time when this present system of things would reach its consummation, when all nations would be divided against one another, when there would be food shortages and great pangs of distress upon the people, Jesus declared that at such an appropriate and appointed time "this good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for the purpose of a witness to all the nations, and then the accomplished end will come". (Matt. 24:3-14, NW) The apostle John saw in vision its proclamation: "And I saw another angel flying in midheaven, and he had everlasting good news to declare as glad tidings to those who dwell on the earth, and to every nation and tribe and tongue and people."—Rev. 14:6, NW.

What a tremendous assignment that is! Globe-encircling! Penetrating all international barriers and iron curtains! Overcoming all language handicaps! Of a truth this colossal job which Jehovah's witness-

es have been given to do is being accomplished only because the Most High has also given them an abundance of his strength and wisdom. Paul the apostle in his day asked the congregation at Ephesus to keep awake and alert and constantly pray in behalf of all the Lord's people, including himself, that he might have the ability and freedom to speak and make known the good news of the Kingdom. (Eph. 6:18-20; Col. 4:2-4) As then, so now, Jehovah hears and answers the prayers of his holy ones.

"The god of this system of things," that is, the Devil, "has blinded the minds of the unbelievers" to the message of good news. (2 Cor. 4:4, NW) It is therefore no surprise that the proclaimers of the good news are bitterly hated and persecuted. Paul described himself as God's "ambassador in chains"; yet he continued to preach. To Timothy he wrote: "Do not become ashamed of the witness about our Lord, neither of me a prisoner for his sake, but take your part in suffering evil for the good news according to the power of God." (2 Tim. 1:8, NW) Jehovah's witnesses often collide with the dictators and rulers of this world, for "as we have been proved by God as fit to be entrusted with the good news, so we speak, as pleasing, not men, but God". As a result, some of them are killed. But no matter, they have Jesus' precious promise: "Whoever loses his soul for the sake of me and the good news will save it."—1 Thess. 2:4; Mark 8:35, NW.

So push on with the work, you faithful witnesses of the Lord! Spread this most excellent news. Let earth's sad and troubled people hear and be comforted. Jehovah's smile of approval and blessing is upon you. "How beautiful are the feet of those who declare good news of good things!"—Rom. 10:15, NW; Isa. 52:7.



Questions from Readers

- Concerning the eating of animal flesh after Armageddon, would not that be determined by the everlasting covenant Jehovah made with Noah after the Flood, rather than by the edict given to Adam in Eden?—C. N., Texas.

If man does eat flesh after Armageddon, the terms of the Noachian covenant will apply. Its regulations regarding the disposal of the blood of animals killed for food will last as long as the practice of eating such flesh lasts. In considering a related question in this section in its issue of October 15, 1950, *The Watchtower* said concerning animals in the new world: "It appears that men will not kill them for food." The statement is not dogmatic, but goes on to show that it is reasonable to expect Jehovah's original purpose relative to food supply, as given in Eden before man's fall, will be ultimately realized in the new world.—Gen. 1:29, 30, AT.

The covenant with Noah allowing animal food merely made provision for extra food, highly concentrated, for deteriorating mankind. This provision also made way for post-Flood sacrifices to be made of which the sacrificers could eat part of the flesh, such as the Passover lamb and other sacrifices in Israel. It also laid the foundation for Jesus to speak about his followers' eating his flesh and drinking his blood, to gain life in themselves. But such provisions were not originally made for the perfect man and woman, and there would appear no absolute need for mankind uplifted to perfection to include animal flesh in his diet. Just how soon after Armageddon any elimination of meat from man's diet might take place we cannot say.

- Why does the *Emphatic Diaglott* Bible version, in its footnote on 1 John 5:7, say that the words "For there are three who bear witness in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the holy Spirit, and these three are one" are not found in any Greek manuscript earlier than the fifth century, when the evidence is that these words did not appear in any Greek manuscript earlier than the fifteenth century?—J. L., Scotland.

The *Emphatic Diaglott* footnote on 1 John 5:7 slipped up on its quotation from Newcome's

translation (1808), in which the footnote reads: "This text concerning the heavenly witnesses is not contained in any Greek manuscript which was written earlier than the fifteenth century. . . . It is first cited by Vigilius Tapsensis, a Latin writer of no credit, in the latter end of the fifth century, and by him it is suspected to have been forged."

- In the new legal booklet *Defending and Legally Establishing the Good News* it is stated that there is no Scriptural objection to taking an oath to testify to the truth. What about Jesus' words at Matthew 5:33-37 and the disciple James' words at James 5:12 telling Christians to "swear not at all"?—E. H., England.

The scriptures at Matthew 5:33-37 and James 5:12 do not refer to going under oath in a law court. These admonitions against swearing were against the practice of that time of using an oath on inappropriate occasions to make one's speech emphatic so as to be more believed by the hearer and also to boast of one's own reliability; so they swore by one's beard, or by heaven, or by earth, and other things that really added no strength to what was said or averred.

But faithful servants of God are recorded as swearing on solemn occasions. Abraham lifted up his hand in swearing to a certain course. (Gen. 14:2-24) Did what he said on this occasion beyond yes and no "come of evil"? When the high priest said to Jesus before the Sanhedrin, "By the living God I put you under oath to tell us whether you are the Christ the Son of God!" Jesus responded. (Matt. 26:63, 64, NW) Also the apostle Paul does not speak derogatorily of oaths taken on proper occasions, as in court, but says: "For men swear by the one greater, and their oath is the end of every dispute, as it is a legal guarantee to them. In this manner God, when he purposed to demonstrate more abundantly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of his counsel, stepped in with an oath, in order that, through two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to the refuge may have strong encouragement to lay hold on the hope set before us." (Heb. 6:16-18, NW) Since God is always true and reliable, why did he act like men in court and give an oath in confirmation of what he had told Abraham? Certainly his oath did not "come of evil".

However, we leave it to each one's conscience as to whether to swear in court or be-

fore a notary or elsewhere or merely to affirm. In the booklet *Defending and Legally Establishing the Good News* we give our position

on this matter. It is based on the following statement of it and to have guides with us in our legal case and avoid of

the numbered toward legal way out of you as to make out the貫andem legal. Not of notarized instrument or a credit will be made and the court or witness of this may add and the 18-20-26 without is above that and O suffice. In a court to show him self signs and signs. If I'll be in for now" of such

consecrated has 18-20-26 without is according to it and as the above going of today ten of 18-26 without unless otherwise said. Since you can't do this to satisfy the witness of the court or otherwise straightforward no one has to come out of as be otherwise means above items to have to take the word and the before named items to have you as well as yourself two months into the time when you go to receive of the new law of migrants on their place and

between to

memorial and the consecration no answer as

such as to go forward at home and go before the high and holy law. (1 Cor. 11:26) seems to bring up the one thing that

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on the matter, so that any looking to us for advice may know we do not oppose such swearing in court.

unleavened bread and red wine, to copy our Lord's example. The cordial welcome is here extended to all persons of good will, whether consecrated or not, to attend this significant and blessed event. What are the privileges to be gained by attending? Who participate? Must I? The answers to these questions and others will be satisfactorily answered at these gatherings. All in attendance will gain peace of mind and the unity of Jehovah's people will increase world-wide as they acquire a full understanding and appreciation of this occasion. Last year over a half million persons attended. Why not be one of these this year and accept the invitation that is being extended to many more in *The Watchtower* through the medium of 35 languages? After the Memorial appropriate service announcements for those assembled may be made, a closing song sung, and the meeting dismissed with prayer. A report should be made to the Society of the entire number attending each gathering, and the number of those partaking of the emblems.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES

Week of March 11: Why Jehovah's Witnesses Are Not Pacifists, ¶ 1-20; and Pacifism and Conscientious Objection—Is There a Difference? ¶ 1-5.

Week of March 18: Pacifism and Conscientious Objection—Is There a Difference? ¶ 6-25.