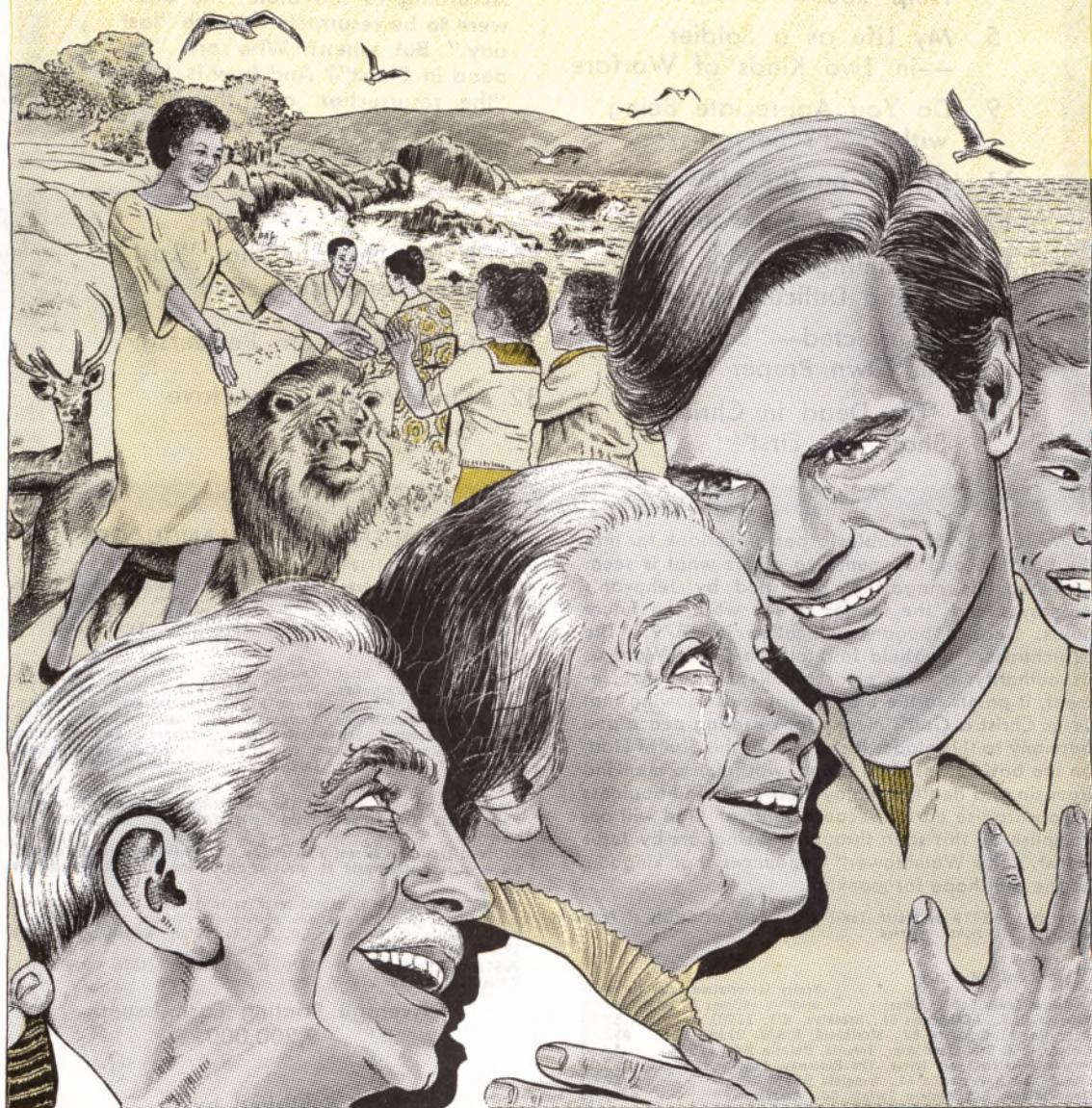


JUNE 15, 1979

THE WATCHTOWER

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom



RESURRECTED—“Each In His Own Proper Place”

IN THIS ISSUE

- 3 "Faithfulness"—Can It Help You?
- 5 My Life as a Soldier—in Two Kinds of Warfare
- 9 Do You Appreciate Being with God's Servants?
- 11 Insight on the News
- 12 "It Is Not My Fault!"
- 14 Remaining Firm in Faith During Difficult Times
- 16 Resurrected—"Each in His Own Proper Place"
- 22 "The Dead in Christ Shall Rise First"

According to the Bible, the dead were to be resurrected on the "last day." But when? Who are "the dead in Christ"? And how is Jesus "the resurrection and the life"? Learn the answers in the series of articles beginning on page 16

- 26 Living Now in That "Last Day" of Resurrection
- 31 Questions from Readers
- 32 Kind Words Can Have Good Effects

A WATCHTOWER enables a person to look far into the distance and announce to others what is seen. Likewise, this magazine, published by Jehovah's Witnesses, aids the reader to see what the future holds. Since it began publication in 1879, "The Watchtower" has held faithfully to God's Word as its authority. It stays clear of all political involvement. It points to the Bible prophecies showing that Jesus Christ is God's means for restoring peace and harmony to this globe. It shows that this Son of God, on the basis of his shed blood, will release mankind from sin and death to enjoy eternal life in happiness on a paradise earth. Because Jehovah God will accomplish all this soon through his kingdom by Jesus Christ, "The Watchtower" announces that kingdom as the real hope for mankind.

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“FAITHFULNESS”

—can it help you?

“**I**’M FED UP! I can’t take it any more!” How often have you heard someone make such an exclamation or been tempted to make it yourself? Huge increases in crime, violence, injustice and other oppressive conditions have brought many to the point of giving up on life.

But it is possible to maintain a cheerful disposition in spite of distressing circumstances. In this regard, the Scriptures highlight the importance of “faithfulness.” Showing how helpful this quality can be is an experience of the prophet Habakkuk.

Though he evidently lived during the seventh century B.C.E., Habakkuk faced circumstances very similar to those that masses of people face today. The prophet lamented the violence, pillaging and strife that were everywhere to be seen. (Hab. 1:1-3) “Therefore law grows numb, and justice never goes forth,” exclaimed Habakkuk, adding: “Because the wicked one is surrounding the righteous one, for that reason justice goes forth crooked.”—Hab. 1:4.

Like many today, God’s prophet wanted to know why the Most High tolerates such wickedness. (Hab. 1:13, 14) The Creator provided the following answer:

“Write down the vision, and set it out plainly upon tablets, in order that the one reading aloud from it may do so fluently. For the vision is yet for the appointed time, and it keeps panting on to the end, and it will not tell a lie. Even if it should delay, keep in expectation of it; for it will with-

out fail come true. It will not be late.”

—Hab. 2:2, 3.

The “vision” that appeared to be delaying as to fulfillment concerned the destruction of the wicked, both those among God’s people and those who did not claim to be worshipers of Jehovah. Though seemingly delayed, that vision was certain to be fulfilled.

But while waiting for it, how should God’s prophet conduct himself? This is where the Scriptures mention faithfulness.

Habakkuk was told: “Look! His soul has been swelled up; it has not been upright within him.

But as for the righteous one, by his faithfulness he will keep living.” (Hab. 2:4) How does “faithfulness” make it possible for a person to “keep living”? There is an important lesson in this even for people alive today.

Faithfulness in this context does not mean simply a mental acknowledgment that God exists. Rather, it means faith or firm confidence in God’s promise to bring an end to oppressive conditions. Repeatedly the Scriptures highlight the pleasure that God takes in those who confidently believe such promises, as well as his displeasure in persons who lack faith. This is well stated at Hebrews 11:6, where we read: “Moreover, without faith it is impossible to please him well, for he that approaches God must believe that he is and that he becomes the rewarder of those earnestly seeking him.”

“Even if it should delay, keep in expectation of it; for it will without fail come true.”—Hab. 2:3.

WHAT DID THE PROPHET HABAKKUK MEAN BY THAT?

How, then, will the faithful one "keep living"? This has reference both to the present and to the future.

According to the lexicon by William Gesenius, often the Hebrew word for "live" means "*to live well, prosperously, to prosper, to thrive.*" One with firm faith in God's promise to abolish evildoers from the earth will enjoy a much happier life in the meantime. The prophet Micah, who lived during times so treacherous that a person could not trust even his marriage mate ("her who is lying in your bosom"), displayed a fine attitude when he said: "But as for me, it is for Jehovah that I shall keep on the lookout. I will show a waiting attitude for the God of my salvation." (Mic. 7:5-7) Likewise, those who show "a waiting attitude" toward God today will find that widespread evildoing does not get the better of them.

Another benefit of faithfulness is the fact that God will 'preserve alive' the congregation of his faithful servants during calamitous situations, including even the threat of death. (Ps. 33:18, 19; 41:1, 2; 138:7) Examples of this are Jeremiah and Ebed-melech, who apparently were contemporaries of Habakkuk. Both survived the overthrow of Jerusalem by the Babylonians, which was part of the vision of God's judgments mentioned by Habakkuk.—Hab. 1:6-11; compare Jeremiah 39:11-18; 40:1-10.

The prediction that men of faithfulness will keep living is especially meaningful for Christians. The apostle Paul wrote: "For I am not ashamed of the good news; it is, in fact, God's power for salvation to everyone having faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek; for in it God's righteousness is being revealed by reason of faith

and toward faith, just as it is written: 'But the righteous one—by means of faith he will live.' "—Rom. 1:16, 17.

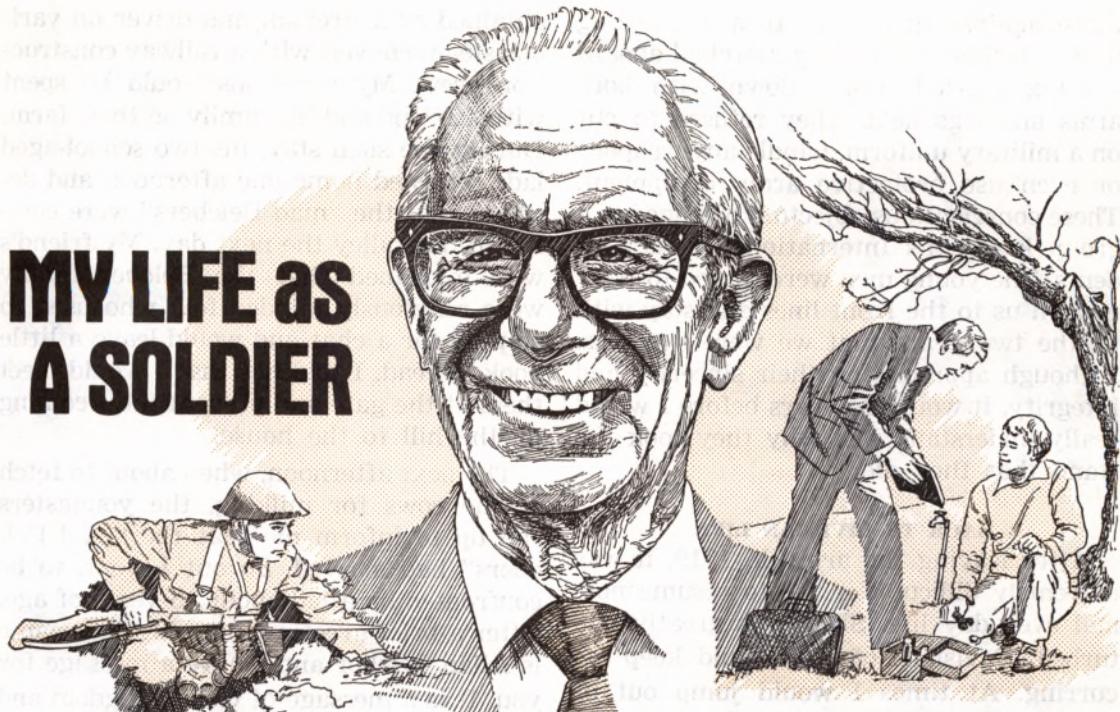
With these words Paul emphasized special benefits that come to persons who exercise faith in the sin-atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Such faith not only brings God's blessing on its possessors while they await the end of wickedness, but also leads to forgiveness of sins, a righteous standing with God and "salvation"—yes, the opportunity to "keep living" eternally in perfection.—Hab. 2:4; John 3:16; Acts 10:43; 26:18; Gal. 2:15, 16.

In view of these happy prospects, all lovers of God today will profit from this further Scriptural admonition concerning faith: "Do not, therefore, throw away your freeness of speech, which has a great reward to be paid it. For you have need of endurance, in order that, after you have done the will of God, you may receive the fulfillment of the promise. For yet 'a very little while,' and 'he who is coming will arrive and will not delay.' 'But my righteous one will live by reason of faith,' and, 'if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him.' Now we are not the sort that shrink back to destruction, but the sort that have faith to the preserving alive of the soul."—Heb. 10:35-39.

Indeed, faithfulness to God can help you. Faithful ones will "keep living" both by enjoying the blessings of a godly life now and by gaining eternal life in the new order of "new heavens and a new earth," foretold in Bible prophecy. (2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1-5) With this in view, all lovers of God will faithfully heed the inspired admonition: "Even if it should delay, keep in expectation of it; for it will without fail come true."—Hab. 2:3.

"A man of faithful acts will get many blessings, but he that is hastening to gain riches will not remain innocent."—Prov. 28:20.

MY LIFE as A SOLDIER



-in Two Kinds of WARFARE

As told by Charles A. Randall

THE 11th hour of the 11th day of November 1918 was the time scheduled for all hostilities of the Great War to cease. By then, as a private in a New Zealand battalion on the Western front near Mons, Belgium, I had seen enough of war to last a lifetime.

Many days had been spent in the trenches amidst the snow and rain. I had survived bullets, shells and poison gas. But many of my friends had not been so fortunate, and it had been painful personally to bury the bloodstained bodies of my comrades. Fear, death and destruction engraved memories that were to oppress me for years and that can easily be recalled today, even at 84 years of age.

Before that war started, the world had a general calmness about it. During that peaceful time, while journeying from my native England to New Zealand, some of

my best friends had been seafaring Germans. But the first world war made us enemies. How futile war seemed to me! Surely there must be another way to settle man's problems. Although having had a strict Protestant upbringing and never having lost respect for the Bible, I came to have little confidence in religion generally. Seeing our army padre march us to the front lines, revolver strapped to his side, and hearing him pray for God's blessing before sending us out to kill had seemed so hypocritical for a man supposedly representing the "Prince of Peace."

—isa. 5:6.

During 1917, however, I had come across a radically different approach. Along with 1,700 armed soldiers on our troop ship (the "Waimana") were seven unarmed young men in civilian clothes. They were

there against their will. It was startling to watch them being frog-marched aboard—being carried upside down with both arms and legs held. They refused to put on a military uniform, handle any weapons or even use protective army equipment. These conscientious objectors belonged to a group known as International Bible Students. The young men were forced to travel with us to the front lines and stay with us the two years that we were overseas. Although appreciating their sincerity and integrity, it would be years before I would really understand just why they took the stand that they did.

BACK TO CIVILIAN LIFE

After leaving the army in 1919, it was extremely difficult for me to resume normal everyday life. Sleep was greatly disturbed as visions of war would keep recurring. At times I would jump out of bed and start climbing through the window before realizing where I was. And there was the persistent question: "Why did I survive when so many others died? Surely there must be some purpose for me in life."

With my health deteriorating, it was not possible to keep up with my work on a soldier-settler farm. So employment was

obtained as a fireman and driver on various steam shovels with a railway construction crew. My vacations would be spent with a friend and his family on their farm. During one such stay, his two school-aged lads returned home one afternoon and declared that the "mad Belchers" were coming to the valley the next day. My friend's wife explained that the Belcher family were religiously minded folk who used to stop by for a chat and would leave a little book to read. I told her that I would meet them at the gate and prevent their coming up the hill to the house.

The next afternoon, when about to fetch in the cows for milking, the youngsters ran up to inform me that the "mad Belchers" had arrived. So out I went, to be confronted by a lad about 16 years of age. After a brief greeting, he said: "My name is Allan Belcher and I have a message for you. It is a message of God's kingdom and when you hear it, your heart will be glad." We had a short chat and he left me a booklet entitled "The Final War." That same evening, I picked up the booklet *War or Peace, Which?* that had been left at another homestead by the same family. Being interested in military matters, I read the booklet through that night and, on finishing it, exclaimed: "It is the truth!" Here was the message that the solution to man's problems did not depend on human wars but on intervention by God in a final war against wickedness.—Rev. 16: 14, 16.

Soon after this first contact in 1932, I began cycling the 11 miles (18 kilometers) to the Bible study meetings of Jehovah's Witnesses. Also, it was my pleasure to visit the neighboring farms and tell the people about the kingdom of God, the only government that would bring real peace to the earth.—Ps. 37:11; Dan. 2:44; Matt. 6:9, 10.

In Coming Issues

- **Keeping Watch for
100 Years**
- **China and Christianity**
- **Why Will Christendom
Not Survive?**

A DIFFERENT WAR BEGINS

It did not take me long to realize that being a witness of Jehovah involved warfare too. However, "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 thing raised up against the knowledge of God." (2 Cor. 10:4, 5) This is spiritual warfare, a fighting against false religious ideas and teachings. It is warfare that saves lives instead of destroying them.

However, one of the first battles was with myself. I was a heavy smoker. But it soon became clear that a person would not be acceptable to God in this unclean state. Commenting on this after a meeting, one young Christian said: "Don't think I'm a wowser [killjoy], but when you really get to know the truth, you'll give that away." I did significantly cut back, but would still occasionally smoke, especially when talking to groups of other young men, just to show them that I was not "a wowser." However, soon realizing that it was better to take a firm stand, with Jehovah's help I completely broke this filthy habit.—2 Cor. 7:1.

Just as I had enlisted in the army in 1916, it was my desire to get fully involved in this spiritual warfare. So I started in the full-time preaching work, leaving the home of my friends and heading for Auckland, New Zealand. They thought I, too, was "mad" because of leaving the security and comforts of home with no financial backing. Although there then was little response to any effort to explain to them my feelings about serving God, it was a thrill to discover years later that the wife and one of the sons did in time accept the truth.

I was baptized not long after moving to Auckland and "pioneered" there till 1934 when I boarded a ship for Sydney, Australia, on the way to missionary work

in the New Hebrides. When the boat that we were to use in visiting these islands was wrecked, the invitation was extended for me to work in the Bethel home in Sydney, the location from which the Kingdom-preaching work in Australia was being directed. Soon after arriving there, I discovered an interesting fact. Those conscientious objectors on my troop ship had been Jehovah's Witnesses, although that particular name was not used at that time.

WORLD WAR AGAIN

In 1939, it was back to farming once more when I was invited to oversee a property known as Kingdom Farm. It provided food for the full-time workers at the Bethel home. What a contrast to my previous farming efforts! The knowledge of God's purposes had made a dramatic change in my physical and emotional well-being. It had been the best "tonic," and I felt settled in life with a fine work to accomplish.

Soon afterward, World War II broke out. The first world war was to have been the war to end all wars. What a false hope that had proved to be!

This time my position was different. Already being a soldier in an army, I was not going to desert to join some other force. (2 Tim. 2:3) My determination was to stay strictly neutral, remaining "no part of the world" and its military conflicts.—John 15:19; Isa. 2:4.

Before long, Jehovah's Witnesses were placed under ban in Australia for their neutral stand. Unbeknown to me, soon a warrant was out for my arrest. Although the authorities knew that I was on Kingdom Farm, they never followed through, even though we often were visited by security forces. Finally, however, reason prevailed over religious prejudice and war hysteria, and the ban was lifted in 1943.

I continued at Kingdom Farm until 1950, when an allergic reaction to a local weed

put me in a hospital. My skin had turned almost black, and I was covered with an incredibly itchy rash that I later learned had even driven one man to suicide. On recovery, it was back again to the Bethel home, where my service has continued.

METHODS OF WARFARE

Man has continually improved his weapons of war until he now has nuclear armaments that are a threat to the very continuance of life on earth. In our spiritual warfare, there have also been constant improvements through the years.

The use of *sound cars*—vehicles fitted with amplifying equipment—was an exciting avenue of service in the 1930's. To attract attention, we played a musical record, and then a recorded message. Later, we used *portable gramophones*, lugging the heavy machines from door to door and inviting the householder to listen to a short recorded Bible talk. Or we made an appointment to discuss the Bible further and play longer lectures.

Sometimes a group of us would march down the street holding placards bearing such slogans as "Religion Is a Snare and a Racket" and "Serve God and Christ the King." Also, there were *radio broadcasts* that brought the message into many homes. All these methods divided the people. Some were opposed, others interested.

Personally studying the Bible with individuals and families and seeing them join me in spiritual warfare has brought great satisfaction. Sometimes, in earlier years, a group of us would travel into rural areas for the weekend, bedding down on some ferns in the bush at night and declaring the "good news" or studying the Bible with the local residents during the day. We

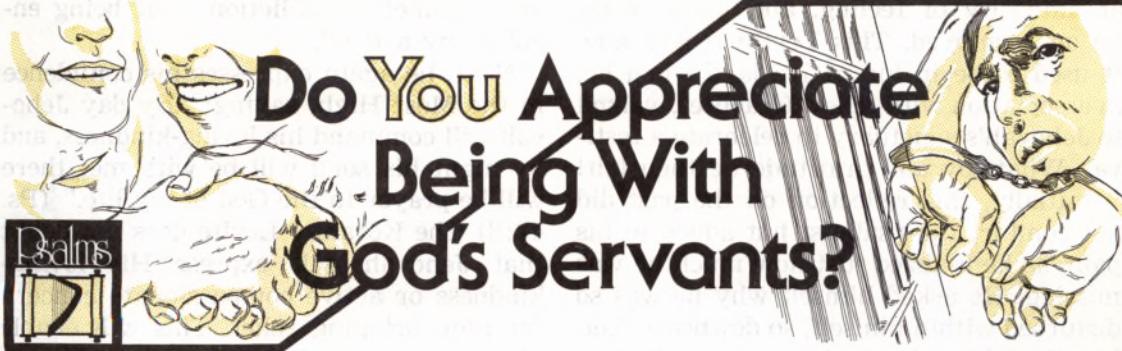
would exchange literature for food to sustain us till we returned home. Today, in those same areas there are many congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses.

The availability of many fine Christian publications and excellent training in handling "the sword of the spirit," God's Word, has continually improved the quality of our spiritual warfare. (Eph. 6:17) Results have been exciting too, with growth from a band of 41,000 preachers world wide in 1934 to well over two million today. What a thrill it was to attend the 1958 convention in New York city where over 250,000 of them gathered together!

LIVING AS A SPIRITUAL SOLDIER

The apostle Paul wrote: "No man serving as a soldier involves himself in the commercial businesses of life, in order that he may gain the approval of the one who enrolled him as a soldier." (2 Tim. 2:4) Personally, a simple life, uncluttered by this world's materialism, has enabled me to concentrate on the study of God's Word and service to him. In turn, that has brought great contentment. It has always made me sad to see some others slow down in Jehovah's service or even give up in their spiritual fight.—2 Tim. 4:10.

What is involved in being a good soldier? Self-discipline, willingness to fight valiantly and to put up with hardships at times, as well as steadfastness in sticking to an assigned duty, no matter how small it may be. (Luke 16:10) Many men have done this for human commanders. But I deem it a wonderful privilege to "fight the fine fight of the faith," serving the King of kings, Jesus Christ, and his God and Father, Jehovah.—Isa. 55:4; 1 Tim. 6:12; John 20:17; Rev. 19:16.



IF YOU were prevented from being with your spiritual brothers, how would you feel? Would you have an intense longing to share with them in worship?

Psalm 42 depicts for us the situation of a Levite, one of the descendants of Korah, who found himself in exile. His inspired words can be very helpful to us in maintaining high appreciation for association with fellow believers and for enduring under unfavorable circumstances.

The psalmist declared: "As the hind that longs for the water streams, so my very soul longs for you, O God. My soul indeed thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?" (Ps. 42:1, 2) A hind, or female deer, cannot survive for long without water. This creature will search out the life-sustaining liquid and drink, even though this may subject her to possible attack from beasts of prey. Just as the hind longs for water because of necessity, the psalmist longed for Jehovah.

In a dry country, where the vegetation withers quickly during the rainless season, water is very precious and is not readily available. That is why the psalmist speaks of himself as 'thirsting for the Almighty.' Because of being deprived of the privilege of going to the sanctuary, he asks when he might again "appear before God."

When confinement on account of persecution prevents a person from being with his fellow believers, this can be very de-

pressing. Verse 3 of Psalm 42 indicates that the Levite's exile did affect him emotionally. We read: "To me my tears have become food day and night, while they say to me all day long: 'Where is your God?'" Because of the unfavorable situation in which he found himself, the psalmist was so sorrowful that he lost his appetite. Thus his tears proved to be as food to him. Day and night, tears would stream down his cheeks and over his mouth. Taunters would say: "Where is your God?" In other words, they asked: "Why does not the God in whom you trust help you?" This ridicule added to the psalmist's affliction.

How did he try to encourage himself so that he might not be overwhelmed by his grief? He continues: "These things I will remember, and I will pour out my soul within me. For I used to pass along with the throng, I used to walk slowly before them to the house of God, with the voice of a joyful cry and thanksgiving, of a crowd celebrating a festival. Why are you in despair, O my soul, and why are you boisterous within me? Wait for God, for I shall yet laud him as the grand salvation of my person. O my God, within me my very soul is in despair. That is why I remember you, from the land of Jordan and the peaks of Hermon, from the little mountain."—Ps. 42:4-6.

Note that the psalmist reflected on the past, on a time when he was not in exile. He pours out his soul, his very being, with

an intensity of feeling, and voices what he once enjoyed. This Levite recalls how it used to be in his native land when he, in association with fellow Israelites, walked to Jehovah's sanctuary to celebrate a festival. What joy and gratitude he then felt!

Initially, this reflection on the past did not comfort the psalmist but added to his pain, as he realized just how much he was missing. He asked himself why he was so disturbed within himself, so downcast. Yet, his thoughts about the past made him aware of his God. Therein lay his comfort. So he encouraged himself to wait patiently for Jehovah to act. The psalmist did not allow the unfavorable circumstance to dull his conviction that, in time, Jehovah would come to his aid, making it possible for him to praise the Most High for effecting a grand salvation or deliverance. Though far away from the sanctuary, apparently in the area of Mount Hermon with its peaks, the psalmist remembered Jehovah.

If you find yourself discouraged because of unfavorable circumstances, do what the psalmist did. Call to mind that Jehovah will not forsake his servants. He will come to your aid. Still, you may sense keenly the undesirable effects of your trials. This does not mean that you have lost faith. Though the psalmist was confident that Jehovah would come to his rescue, he still experienced grief. Why, the very surroundings in the area of his exile, though beautiful in themselves, reminded him of his sad plight! We read: "Watery deep to watery deep is calling at the sound of your (water) spouts. All your breakers and your waves—over me they have passed."—Ps. 42:7.

These words may be descriptive of what happens when the snows of Mount Hermon melt. Tremendous waterfalls are created and these pour into the Jordan, causing it to swell. One wave seems to speak to another wave. This impressive display of power reminded the psalmist of his being

overwhelmed by affliction as if being engulfed by a flood.

Next, he again expresses his confidence in the Most High, saying: "By day Jehovah will command his loving-kindness, and by night his song will be with me; there will be prayer to the God of my life." (Ps. 42:8) The Korahite Levite does not doubt that Jehovah will express His loving-kindness or active compassionate concern for him, bringing relief. This will enable him to praise Jehovah in song and to offer a prayer of thanksgiving.

Still, the psalmist cannot escape from thinking about the distressing situation of the present. He continues: "I will say to God my crag: 'Why have you forgotten me? Why do I walk sad because of the oppression of the enemy?' With murder against my bones those showing hostility to me have reproached me, while they say to me all day long: 'Where is your God?' Why are you in despair, O my soul, and why are you boisterous within me?"—Ps. 42:9-11a.

Though the psalmist viewed Jehovah as a mighty crag where one could find safety when pursued by the enemy, he does wonder why he was seemingly forsaken. Yes, the Most High had permitted him to continue being sad or dejected while the enemy exulted in triumph. The psalmist speaks of himself as being reproached in a hateful way. So vicious was the derision that it could be likened to 'murder against the psalmist's bones' or against his very frame. Hence, he again raised the question as to why he was so troubled. But he did not waver in faith, for he concluded: "Wait for God, for I shall yet laud him as the grand salvation of my person and as my God."—Ps. 42:11b.

Regardless of what may befall us, may we, like the psalmist, continue to look to Jehovah God for help. May we also highly appreciate whatever spiritual association we may now enjoy with others.

INSIGHT ON THE NEWS

● "Time" magazine recently considered the subject "In the Beginning: God and Science" for its regular "Time Essay." The "Essay" observes that the "hostile distinction between religion and science has softened in the last third of

"Before the Big Bang"? the 20th century" because of "what appears to be an agreement between religion and science about certain facts concerning the creation of the universe." "Time" notes that increasing evidence seeming to support the sudden beginning of the universe in a so-called "Big Bang" "sounds very much like the story that the Old Testament has been telling all along."

The "Essay" goes on to point out that some scientists are fighting this conclusion, and one astronomer contends: "It is accidental if some things agree in detail." However, the director of the U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Goddard Institute for Space Studies admits that this conclusion "bothers science because it clashes with scientific religion—the religion of cause and effect, the belief that every effect has a cause. Now we find that the biggest effect of all, the birth of the universe, violates this article of faith. . . . what came before the Big Bang is the most interesting question of all."

● Discussing recent earthquakes, the Italian journal "Il Piccolo" observed: "Our generation lives in a dangerous period of high seismic activity, as

Earthquake "Generation" statistics show. In fact, during a period of 1,059 years (from 856 to 1914) reliable sources list only 24 major earthquakes causing 1,973,000 deaths. However, if we compare this figure to the partially complete list of recent disasters, we find that 1,600,000 persons have died in only 63 years, as a result of 43 earthquakes which occurred from 1915 to 1978."

Of course, such an increase in seismic activity is no surprise to those familiar with Bible prophecy. Jesus Christ predicted that "earthquakes in one place after another" would be among events during the "generation" that marks "the conclusion of the system of things" on earth.—Matt. 24:3, 7, 32-35.

● Many scientists believe that human body cells have a so-called "genetic clock" that controls their life-span so that they will divide only a limited number of times before this process stops and they die out. However, Professor Eugene Bell and his associates at the Massachusetts

Institute of Technology disagree. "Our experiments indicate that there is no intrinsic genetic program for cell aging," he wrote. "I think that organisms age because of interactions with their environment." In fact, notes the report in "Medical Tribune," "Given proper conditions, [Prof. Bell] speculated, normal cells could live indefinitely outside the body."

The Bible reveals that such "proper conditions" will prevail in "a new earth," that is, among a new society of people on earth. The environment for body cells will then be such that "death will be no more."—Rev. 21:1-5.

● When the Argentine Supreme Court recently ruled that two schoolchildren expelled for not saluting the flag should be readmitted, the "Buenos Aires Herald" commented: "The argument of the Supreme Court Justices

is simply commonsense; . . . It is surprising that despite the official concern about Argentina's image abroad, one of the world's major religious groups, which enjoys freedom of worship in all truly civilized countries, has been subjected to so much harassment. One of the reasons, perhaps, is the failure to understand that Jehovah's Witnesses are still admirable citizens even though their religious convictions have thrown them into conflict with the authorities. Most countries manage to avoid any conflict with the Jehovah's Witnesses. . . . both Britain and the U.S., along with other pluralistic democracies, do not measure a person's patriotism on the basis of respect for formalities. A citizen's respect for his country must be matched by the state's respect for the rights of the individual for true patriotism to flower. Implanted nationalism is not the same thing at all."—Mar. 18, 1979.

How Long Can Cells Live?

"IT IS NOT MY FAULT!"

CAN you always make that statement? People are affected by the words and deeds of others. At times, they may justifiably become angry, or may sink into deep depression, because of the acts or remarks of their associates.

Perhaps you have had such experiences. However, are you certain that you have not been responsible for the anger, depression or suffering of others? Indeed, can you always say, "It is not my fault"?

CRUELTY AND WRONGDOING BRING OSTRACISM

Normally, individuals desire to have at least some pleasant association with fellow humans. In fact, persons often become quite distressed if others ignore them. They may even think that those seemingly avoiding them are thoughtless or unloving.

Yet the blame may not rest totally with the acquaintances of the "ignored" individual. An inspired proverb states: "A man of loving-kindness is dealing rewardingly with his own soul, but the cruel person is bringing ostracism upon his own organism." (Prov. 11:17) Yes, we may be hard on ourselves when we are unkind and cruel to others. Eventually, those we treat harshly may not desire our association, even if they "ignore" us simply because they no longer want to be hurt as a result of our cruelty.

We can also be ostracized because of our wrong conduct. In ancient Israel, household heads who did not comply with God's commandments could bring ostracism upon their own houses. For example, Achan robbed God by improperly appro-

priating to himself a certain garment from Shinar, 200 shekels of silver and a gold bar. But when Achan's wrongdoing was uncovered, 'Jehovah brought ostracism upon him,' and both he and members of his family were stoned to death. (Josh. chap. 7) Today, the head of a Christian household and others in his family may get involved in wrongdoing that results in their being disfellowshiped from the Christian congregation. Actually, such a man who personally violates God's Word and tolerates serious wrongdoing within his family 'brings ostracism upon his own house.' (Prov. 11:29) He, and perhaps others in his family, are justly ostracized by faithful Christians, being excluded from their association as unrepentant wrongdoers. (1 Cor. 5:11-13) Faced with this result of wrongdoing, such a man can hardly say, "It is not my fault!"

WHEN SUITABLE HELP IS NOT RENDERED

Christian elders should, of course, endeavor to aid fellow believers who unwittingly take a false step. The apostle Paul put matters this way: "Brothers, even though a man takes some false step before he is aware of it, you who have spiritual qualifications try to readjust such a man in a spirit of mildness, as you each keep an eye on yourself, for fear you also may be tempted." (Gal. 6:1) Yet, if the appointed congregational elders fail to render spiritual aid when appropriate, are they totally free of responsibility if the erring person finally succumbs to temptation?

On the other hand, much depends on how aid is rendered. Paul said that those

having spiritual qualifications should readjust the erring man "in a spirit of mildness." But suppose an elder does not offer counsel in mildness, and, as a result, the individual being counseled becomes very depressed, angry or otherwise upset. Because of receiving harsh treatment, the erring person may not be 'readjusted,' and may even persist in a wrong course. Under such circumstances, can the unkind elder really say, "It is not my fault"?—Compare Luke 17:1, 2; 2 Corinthians 6:3.

WHEN THERE IS OPPRESSION

Then, too, what if a person having authority over others proves to be oppressive? Because of his harsh dealings with them, some may find it nearly impossible to have peace of mind and may, in fact, have to make supreme efforts to control their spirit. This is not surprising, for we are told in Scripture: "Mere oppression may make a wise one act crazy."—Eccl. 7:7.

Indeed, prolonged oppression may cause even a wise individual to act rashly. For instance, he may lose self-control and do something wrong. If he does so, can the oppressor shrug off all responsibility and say, "It is not my fault"?

On the other hand, Ecclesiastes 7:7 may relate to oppression that the wise one himself engages in, acting contrary to human decency and blinding himself to the plight of the oppressed. He may act crazy by letting an oppressive spirit dominate him and may envision himself as some great benefactor having the right to crush anyone who dares to criticize his methods. (Compare 2 Chronicles 16:10.) But the oppressor's mistaken concept certainly does not make him blameless.

THE NEED FOR LOVE AND TRUST

Naturally, the question of blameworthiness relates to many aspects of life. For

example, consider the marital union. Love, tenderness and mutual concern are essential to happiness in wedlock. But what if a marriage mate fails to display these qualities? And what if he or she should deliberately and consistently refuse to render the marital due?

Under the pressure of such denial, and in the absence of love, tenderness and true concern, the rejected mate may succumb to temptation and commit adultery. If that should happen, can the unloving marriage partner disclaim all responsibility by saying, "It is not my fault"? Hardly!

It was to prevent such developments that the apostle Paul wrote: "Do not be depriving each other of [the marital due], except by mutual consent for an appointed time, that you may devote time to prayer and may come together again, that Satan may not keep tempting you for your lack of self-regulation."—1 Cor. 7:1-5.

Whether a Christian is dealing with a member of his family or with someone outside the household, he should act in a way that inspires trust. A person bent on accomplishing his purposes regardless of the welfare of others may be tempted to resort to devious schemes, assuming that the desired end justifies the means used to achieve it. But what often happens when others find that an associate 'has in his mouth a tricky tongue'? (Mic. 6:12) They are not likely to trust the devious person in the future and may keep their distance from him. He probably will find this upsetting. But if he brings it on himself, can he say, "It is not my fault"?

A SERIOUS MATTER

Those victimized by a person having a tricky tongue may not always realize what he has done. But there is One who always knows, and he places blame where it belongs. We are assured in the Scriptures:

"The devious person is a detestable thing to Jehovah, but His intimacy is with the upright ones." (Prov. 3:32) True, the individual devious in words and actions may delude himself, even thinking that he is justified in using his tricky tongue slyly and resorting to questionable methods. For that matter, fellow humans may not have sufficient evidence to "give him a rebuke." (Luke 17:3) But if such a person never corrects his ways, before God his position is hopeless. Jehovah considers the devious individual detestable, and only the

upright can enjoy intimacy with God.

In the final analysis, then, all must answer to the Most High. (Rom. 14:10-12) This emphasizes the importance of yielding to the direction of God's spirit and inspired Word, while constantly praying for aid in personally shunning cruelty, wrong-doing, irresponsibility, oppressive methods, loveless dealings and untrustworthiness. Yes, in many circumstances, a person may not necessarily be able to brush aside responsibility merely by saying, "It is not my fault!"

REMAINING FIRM IN FAITH DURING DIFFICULT TIMES

IN MANY parts of the earth, persecution rages against true Christians, even as it did in the first century. Just as Christians then remained firm in the faith, so they are doing today. Toward the end of 1978, a letter from a traveling overseer of Jehovah's Witnesses to the branch office of the country in which he is serving told of vicious persecution being waged against the Witnesses in a certain area. Their steadfastness shines as yet another marvelous example of Christian integrity.

According to the traveling overseer's report, the troublemakers told a group of Witnesses: "We do not want to hear about your preaching of Jesus anymore." But they replied: "We do not see anything wrong with what Jesus did. So there is nothing wrong with our preaching about him."

This enraged the men. So they made the Witnesses—three brothers and two sisters—bring all their books to a place about five kilometers (3 miles) away.

There they burned the books. Then, after taking the brothers a short distance away, they started beating one of the sisters—just a young girl—while the brothers watched. Returning to the brothers, they said: "The girl has said you forced her to be a Witness." However, the young sister who had just been beaten overheard this, and shouted: "That is a lie!"

Then the hands of one of the brothers were tied behind his back. He was beaten until he was unconscious. After shouting "Down with Jesus," the tormentors beat another brother and cut off one of his ears. The third brother also was viciously beaten, which almost destroyed the sight in one of his eyes. But none of the brothers denied their faith in spite of this brutal treatment.

Finally, they took the brothers to the river, with the intention of drowning them. On the way the brothers prayed very earnestly. Then the tormentors changed their minds and led them back to their

homes. There they were told not to go back to the town where the Kingdom Hall was for another three months. Yet the following Sunday one of the brothers went to the meeting in town.

Later, the same five Witnesses were accosted by another group of men. "Through whom do you approach God?" they were asked. One of the brothers answered, "Through Jesus." But he was interrupted with the words: "We approach God through ancestral spirits." And another inquisitor added: "So you do not worship your ancestors." The Witnesses remained silent.

Then one of the group took a huge rod and began beating the brothers. Others joined him, beating them with their fists and kicking them with their boots. In time, one of the brothers was separated from the others and taken away by another group for interrogation. He was told to repeat the slogan "On with the war." Because he refused, he was beaten again. One of the tormentors said: "Give us the other cheek because Jesus said that when one hits you on one cheek you should give him the other."

The brother obeyed, and smiled as the others made a joke of him. However, the one who had asked him to turn the other cheek did not hit him again, but said scornfully: "You are like a mad person. Go now!" Others, though, began to beat him with the butts of their guns and with

their fists, while still others kicked him with their heavy boots. By then he was in very bad shape.

After failing to make him compromise, they returned the brother to the original group of tormentors. These continued trying to persuade him to compromise and to say the slogan "On with the war." "It is just a little thing to do," they said. But the brother stood firm, refusing to compromise on this matter in spite of further beatings.

About this time the brother's wife arrived on the scene. When it was learned who she was, the men tried to persuade her to get her husband to repeat their slogan. But the sister remained silent. By then it was after midnight—the brother having endured all during the daylight hours—and the persecutors gave up and left.

The next day, the brothers decided to slip away quietly, leaving behind their property and belongings so as to avoid undue attention. They found some Witnesses, and these have taken care of their brothers who had endured so much.

What is the attitude of these persecuted Witnesses? 'We are determined, if need be, to die for Jehovah's name,' they say. And that is exactly what they told their persecutors to their faces. What has been the result of such integrity-keeping? For one thing, some who saw them endure under this brutal treatment were later heard to remark: "Jehovah is the true God."

"Happy are you when people reproach you and persecute you and lyingly say every sort of wicked thing against you for my sake. Rejoice and leap for joy, since your reward is great in the heavens; for in that way they persecuted the prophets prior to you."—Matt. 5:11, 12.

RESURRECTED

—“Each In His Own Proper Place”

“In Christ all will be brought to life; but each in his own proper place.”

—1 Cor. 15:22, 23, *The New English Bible.*

IT WAS a mournful winter day at Bethany when the stone was rolled before the entrance of the memorial tomb of the well-known Lazarus. His surviving sisters, Martha and Mary, and friends of the family thought that this would be the last that they would see of Lazarus during this system of things. Apparently too late, his beloved friend Jesus Christ arrived on the fourth day of Lazarus' death. Martha went out to meet Jesus and said to him: “Lord, if you had been here my brother would not have died.”

² Jesus said to Martha: “Your brother will rise.” Disclosing her faith in the resurrection, Martha said to Jesus: “I know he will rise in the resurrection on the last day.”—John 11:1-24.

³ Martha was thinking of a resurrection of all the human dead back to life here on earth under the kingdom of God by means of his Messiah, or Christ. She believed this Messiah to be Jesus himself, who had raised other persons to life just as the prophets Elijah and Elisha had done centuries previously. (John 11:27) Her faith in the resurrection was like that of

her forefather Abraham, who had come to be called “Jehovah's friend.” (Jas. 2:21-23) Martha's brother Lazarus was already dead and buried, but in Abraham's case his son Isaac was yet alive, about to be offered up as a human sacrifice. Isaac was as good as dead, for Abraham was determined to obey Jehovah's command to sacrifice him. Concerning Abraham's faith on this trialsome occasion, Paul, a descendant of Abraham, writes:

⁴ “By faith Abraham, when he was tested, as good as offered up Isaac, and the man that had gladly received the promises attempted to offer up his only-begotten son, although it had been said to him: ‘What will be called “your seed” will be through Isaac.’ But he reckoned that God was able to raise him up even from the dead; and from there he did receive him also in an illustrative way.”—Heb. 11:17-19; Gen. 22:1-18; Isa. 41:8; 2 Chron. 20:7.

⁵ So Abraham had faith in the coming resurrection of the human dead under the kingdom of the Christ. Jesus Christ, whose own resurrection was foreshadowed by the figurative resurrection of Isaac, once said

1. How did Martha show that she had faith that Jesus could have cured her brother Lazarus of his fatal sickness?

2, 3. (a) Martha expected the resurrection of her entombed brother to occur on what day? (b) As regards the resurrection, Martha displayed the faith of what ancestor of hers?

4. How did Abraham receive his son Isaac back from the dead “in an illustrative way”?

5, 6. (a) Abraham expected the resurrection of the human dead at what time? (b) Did the death of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob without their having received the things promised ruin their faith in God's Messianic government?

to Jewish descendants of Abraham: "Abraham your father rejoiced greatly in the prospect of seeing my day, and he saw it and rejoiced." (John 8:56) In harmony with Jesus' words about Abraham, the father of Isaac and the grandfather of Jacob, we read:

⁶ "In faith all these died, although they did not get the fulfillment of the promises, but they saw them afar off and welcomed them and publicly declared that they were strangers and temporary residents in the land. For those who say such things give evidence that they are earnestly seeking



Imagine the joy of welcoming back from the dead faithful men of old, and the happiness of mothers receiving back their young ones killed by Herod!

a place of their own. . . . But now they are reaching out for a better place, that is, one belonging to heaven [the kingdom of the heavens with Christ enthroned in it]. Hence God is not ashamed of them, to be called upon as their God, for he has made a city ready for them.”—Heb. 11:13-16.

⁷ Since God has made preparations for the long-dead Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, those ancient men of faith are sure to have a resurrection from the dead under the “city,” or government, in which the glorified Messiah, or Christ, rules. Jesus Christ himself pointed out that fact in a discussion with Jewish Sadducees, who did not believe in a resurrection for Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He said: “In the resurrection neither do men marry nor are women given in marriage, but are as angels [not: *are* angels] in heaven. As regards the resurrection of the dead, did you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying, ‘I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob’? He is the God, not of the dead, but of the living.”—Matt. 22:30-32.

⁸ Jehovah used to be the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob before they died. He can be a God of a living Abraham, of a living Isaac, of a living Jacob, only by resurrecting them from the dead. They will be persons living on earth under the “city,” or heavenly government, that Jehovah their God has prepared for them. It will then be in fulfillment of Psalm 45:16 for the glorified Messiah, Jesus, as ruler in that “city,” to appoint them as “princes in all the earth.” The heavenly Messiah will fulfill toward them each one of his titles as foretold in Isaiah 9:6, even Eternal Father.

7, 8. (a) How did Jesus' words to the Sadducees regarding Abraham, Isaac and Jacob prove them to be certain of a resurrection? (b) In harmony with Psalm 45:16, what will the Messianic Ruler in the heavenly government do for Abraham, Isaac and Jacob?

⁹ Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and other ancient people of faith will be raised on that “last day” about which Martha spoke to Jesus just before he raised her brother Lazarus back to earthly life. (John 11:24-44) The humans who are to be resurrected were redeemed by the ransom sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and with respect to these the prophet Isaiah was inspired to write, saying: “In that day this song will be sung in the land of Judah: ‘. . . Your dead ones will live. A corpse of mine—they will rise up. Awake and cry out joyfully, you residents of the dust! For your dew is as the dew of mallows [in contrast to the dryness of corpses], and the earth itself will let even those impotent in death drop in birth.’” (Isa. 26:1, 19) Thus there will be a rebirth, a regeneration of the earthly dead. This will take place after Jehovah expresses his denunciation upon the bloodguilty world for all the innocent people that it brought down prematurely into Sheol, gravedom. That means after “the war of the great day of God the Almighty” at the world situation that the Bible calls Har-Magedon.—Rev. 16:14, 16; 19:11-21.

¹⁰ So that “last day” of which Martha spoke will see the human dead raised to life again instead of lying covered over in the bosom of the earth. (Isa. 26:20, 21) What a bedewed freshness of renewed human life that “last day” will bestow upon the redeemed dead of mankind! Earth will no longer be a global cemetery.

¹¹ Even the dead infants and irresponsible young children will be favored with a return to new opportunities for growing up to eternal youth on a paradise earth. In that way the death-dealing work of King Herod the Great will be reversed. He

9. What did the prophet Isaiah write concerning the resurrection of the human dead, and after God's “denunciation” upon what?

10. So, on that “last day,” why will the earth no longer be a global cemetery?

11, 12. How did King Herod the Great fail in his cruel efforts to kill the recently born “king of the Jews”?

sent the inquiring astrologers from the East to Bethlehem, to locate for him the recently born "king of the Jews." He schemed to kill Jesus, the son of the Jewish virgin Mary. After being foiled in his crafty efforts to learn the whereabouts of the prospective "king of the Jews," Herod sent and had his soldiers kill off all the young children two years old and younger. The mourning of the bereaved mothers in and around Bethlehem was foretold in Bible prophecy, along with words of comfort about the resurrection.

¹² The Gospel writer Matthew tells us: "Then that was fulfilled which was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet, saying: 'A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and much wailing; it was Rachel weeping for her children, and she was unwilling to take comfort, because they are no more.'" (Matt. 2:1-18) But Mary was not among the mothers weeping and wailing, as she had escaped with the boy Jesus and had gone down to Egypt to stay there till Herod died.

¹³ However, for those bereaved mothers the case was not altogether hopeless. The prophecy of Jeremiah from which Matthew made his quotation went on to say: "This is what Jehovah has said: 'Hold back your voice from weeping, and your eyes from tears, for there exists a reward for your activity,' is the utterance of Jehovah, 'and they will certainly return from the land of the enemy.'" (Jer. 31:15, 16) According to the way in which Jeremiah's prophecy was applied by Matthew under inspiration, the "land of the enemy" would not be ancient Babylon of Jeremiah's day. It would be the land to which the enemy, Herod the Great, had prematurely consigned his innocent victims, the land of death. Death also is spoken of as an "enemy," for 1 Corinthians

15:26 says: "As the last enemy, death is to be brought to nothing."

¹⁴ The land of pre-Christian Babylonia proved to be the land where the deported Jews were "appointed to death" by their captors. Many of such deportees did die there as aliens. (Ps. 79:11; 102:20; Isa. 14:17) During and after 537 B.C.E. thousands of Jewish "prisoners" did "return" from the land of the enemy Babylon. The return of the innocent babes of Bethlehem is yet future. It will be by a resurrection on "the last day" mentioned by Martha of Bethany, which "last day" begins after "the war of the great day of God the Almighty" at Har-Magedon and after the binding and abyssing of Satan the Devil and his demon angels.—Rev. 20:1-3, 11-15.

A DAY OF JUDGMENT

¹⁵ That same "last day" will be a day of judgment for resurrected mankind, including those humans who disregarded Jesus and did not receive his sayings. Jesus indicated that when he said: "He that disregards me and does not receive my sayings has one to judge him. The word that I have spoken is what will judge him in the last day." (John 12:48) Jesus associated the time of judging of the world of mankind with the resurrection when he said: "[God] has given him authority to do judging, because Son of man he is. Do not marvel at this, because the hour is coming in which all those in the memorial tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who did good things to a resurrection of life, those who practiced vile things to a resurrection of judgment." (John 5:27-29; see *The Watchtower* of September 1, 1978, under the title "A Resurrection of Life and One of Judgment," pp. 20-24.) Of course, that "last day" will not be

13. According to Matthew's application of Jeremiah's prophecy, what was the "land of the enemy" from which the slaughtered innocent young children will return?

14. (a) How did the land of Babylon prove to be a place of death for Israelites in Jeremiah's day? (b) How will the innocent babes of Bethlehem "return," and on what day?

15. How did Jesus indicate that the "last day" will be one of judgment of the resurrected human dead?

a day of twenty-four hours. It will be a time period of 1,000 years in length. It will coincide with the 1,000 years of Christ's reign.—2 Pet. 3:8; Rev. 20:4, 6.

¹⁶ That "day" will be a glorious one, for it will be marked by the wiping out of all the effects of the death that we all inherited from Adam and Eve because of the sentence of death that was pronounced upon them. So the 1,000-year reign of Christ is something to which we should all look forward, because in 1 Corinthians 15:25, 26 it is written: "For he must rule as king until God has put all enemies under his feet. As the last enemy, death [inherited by us from Adam] is to be brought to nothing."

¹⁷ The giving of the death-stroke to the Adamic death that we inherited is pictured for us by what Jesus used the apostle John to write down. Describing the "last day" for mankind's resurrection, Revelation 20:13, 14 says: "And the sea gave up those dead in it, and death and Ha'des gave up those dead in them, and they were judged individually according to their deeds. And death and Ha'des were hurled into the lake of fire. This means the second death, the lake of fire." So anyone on earth dying after that will not die because of having inherited death from Adam. He dies for willfully violating God's law and committing sin. His death then will be "the second death," from which he will never rise up.

¹⁸ Jesus Christ releases mankind only from the Adamic death and our common grave, Ha'des. He assured us of this when he said: "I am the First and the Last, and the living one; . . . and I have the keys of death and of Ha'des." (Rev. 1:17, 18) So, with good reason, Jesus said to Mar-

tha: "I am the resurrection and the life."—John 11:25.

¹⁹ Among those for whom the reigning King Jesus Christ will use the key of Ha'des (or, Sheol, in Hebrew) is a man famous for his patience. This is Job of the land of Uz in the ancient Middle East. Because of the woes mounting upon us today, some of us may get to feeling like Job and wishing that we were dead and buried in Ha'des, or Sheol. But we should have what Job had, faith in the resurrection. He knew that when this occurred on the "last day," he would be free from all the present troubles of mankind. If he fell asleep in death and was buried, he would rest till the "heaven" or superhuman forces now controlling mankind had passed. Their passing will allow for the start of a wonderful transformation of earthly conditions here below. Hence, Job prayed to Jehovah God:

²⁰ "Man also has to lie down and does not get up. . . . they will not wake up, nor will they be aroused from their sleep. O that in Sheol you would conceal me, that you would keep me secret until your anger turns back, that you would set a time limit for me and remember me! If an able-bodied man dies can he live again? All the days of my compulsory service [because of God's permission of wickedness] I shall wait, until my relief comes. You will call, and I myself shall answer you. For the work of your hands you will have a yearning."—Job 14:12-15.

²¹ During the time of Job's affliction, he did not see God's face as being favorable to him. Do we today sometimes feel that, because of the trouble God lets come upon us, he is looking with disapproval upon us, and we should like to see a change of

16. For what reason, as indicated in 1 Corinthians 15:25, 26, will that coming "day" of judgment be a glorious one?

17. If anyone dies after that "day" of judgment, why will this occur, and what kind of death will it be?

18. From what death and effects does Jesus Christ release humankind, and so he is what to them?

19. What man famous for his patience will be among those resurrected, and till when did he want to lie buried in Sheol?

20. According to Job 14:12-15, for what did Job pray to God?

21. What change of face did Job want to see, and what did he expect his "redeemer" to do in his behalf?

facial expression toward us? On the coming "last day" there will be a resurrection of the human dead from Sheol, or Ha'des, and this very fact will signify that Jehovah God looks upon redeemed mankind with favor. Job believed that there would be a resurrection for him and others of mankind because there was a "redeemer," someone who would provide the purchase price to buy him back from the "compulsory service" into which he had been sold.

²² Job had confidence in his personal integrity toward Jehovah in spite of the men who falsely accused him. Hence, he felt sure that there would be a "redeemer" for him. This "redeemer" would rise up after Job's death, but Job would leave behind a good record for his "redeemer" to consider. In the confidence that the coming "redeemer" would furnish the basis for a resurrection, Job exclaimed:

²³ "And I myself well know that my redeemer is alive, and that, coming after me, he will rise up over the dust. And after my skin, which they have skinned off,—this! Yet reduced in my flesh [due to the skinning] I shall behold God, whom even I shall behold for myself, and whom my very eyes will certainly see, but not some stranger. My kidneys have failed deep within me," because of the tremendousness of the expectation.—Job 19:25-27.

²⁴ So, then, let Satan the Devil keep on maligning mankind as being unfit for a resurrection because of an inability to produce men and women who would keep their integrity toward God. Resurrection of dead mankind will take place on the "last day" mentioned by Martha of Bethany. Why so? Because God, for whom nothing is impossible, has produced a "redeemer," his only-begotten Son who be-

22, 23. (a) Because of confidence in what did Job believe that there would be one to provide a basis for his resurrection? (b) When did Job expect this "redeemer" to come, and whose face of favor did Job expect to see? 24. How did the "redeemer" whom God provided become related to humankind, and what did this one give as "a ransom in exchange for many"?

came related to humankind by being born as a perfect man. He came temporarily to earth, not to be served, "but to minister and to give his [human] soul a ransom in exchange for many." (Matt. 20:28; Mark 10:45) This paved the way for God to sanction the resurrection of as many as were ransomed or redeemed by the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ.

²⁵ Consequently, the "last day" does not mean the final day for mankind to exist, inasmuch as the resurrection of redeemed mankind takes place on that "day" under Christ's millennial reign. This will be "the last day" after all the previous days during which God has let sin and death rule over mankind with countless millions going down into Sheol, or Ha'des. That will be the "day" for God to count redeemed mankind as acquitted of all past sins and to teach them his righteous requirements for them to gain everlasting life in a paradise restored to earth.—Isa. 26:9; Rom. 6:7.

²⁶ So there had to be the death and resurrection of the "redeemer" before there could be a resurrection of mankind that needed to be redeemed. Thus the resurrection of the Redeemer Jesus Christ proved to be of the first rank. He was resurrected "in his own proper place" as regards place of importance. Moreover, there will be a resurrection of others in order of rank or of place or of importance, before the resurrection of Job, the slaughtered babes of Bethlehem and others of dead mankind. This is called to our attention by the inspired words written in 1 Thessalonians 4:16, which read: "And the dead in Christ shall rise first." (*American Standard Version*) Who are those who shall share first in a resurrection, and when and how will this be?

25. Why will the "last day" not be the final one for mankind to exist, and, on that "day," what will God do in behalf of mankind?

26. (a) What was Christ's "own proper place" with regard to the resurrection? (b) How does 1 Thessalonians 4:16 show that there will be a resurrection of others in order of rank or of place or of importance?



"THE DEAD IN CHRIST SHALL RISE FIRST"

WHAT hope would there be for the dead of mankind were it not for the promised resurrection? The resurrection of the dead is an absolute necessity since the human soul is not immortal. Hence, at the body's death it could not enter into a fuller life on a higher plane in an invisible world. (Ezek. 18:4, 20; Isa. 53:12) For dead humankind to live again anywhere there needs to be a resurrection. That is why God has laid the basis for such a miracle to take place in his due time. When he raised his self-sacrificing Son from the dead on the third day, he opened the way for this worthy Son to ascend back to where he was before, to heaven. The Son took along with him the full redeeming value of his perfect human sacrifice. Never again will Jesus Christ die. He offered up one human sacrifice for mankind's sins forever. So, when he comes the second time, it does not mean his facing death.—Heb. 9:28; Rom. 6:9.

² Jehovah God follows a certain order with regard to the resurrection of the dead. This is called to our attention by the apostle Paul, who himself saw the glory of the resurrected Jesus and talked with him. About 18 years after that, Paul wrote to the Christian congregation in Corinth, Greece, and raised this question: "Now if

1. Why does there need to be a resurrection for dead mankind if ever they are to live again anywhere, and how did God lay the basis for the needed resurrection?
2. How does 1 Corinthians 15:22, 23 show that God observes order with respect to the resurrection?

Christ is being preached that he has been raised up from the dead, how is it some among you say there is no resurrection of the dead?" (1 Cor. 15:12) Following upon this question, Paul went on to develop the inspired answer. As he goes along, he says: "Just as in Adam all are dying, so also in the Christ all will be made alive. But each one in his own rank: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who belong to the Christ during his presence [Greek: *parousia*]." (1 Cor. 15:22, 23) God alone was responsible for Jesus' resurrection.

³ Jesus Christ was resurrected on Nisan 16, 33 C.E., the day when the Jewish high priest offered up the firstfruits of the barley harvest. This fits in accurately with Jesus' being the "firstfruits" in the resurrection of the human dead. (1 Cor. 15:20) This put Jesus Christ in the first "rank." Just as in the Jewish barley harvest there were afterfruits to be reaped, so too there must be afterfruits in the resurrection of the dead. But since Jesus Christ ranks first, Paul called him "the firstborn from the dead, that he might become the one who is first in all things."—Col. 1:18.

⁴ By his sacrificial death Jesus Christ bought back or redeemed all the human family who are dying "in Adam." Hence,

3. How did Jesus become "first" in the matter of resurrection?

4. The resurrecting of even the first ones of the human dead had to wait until what official event begins, and when did this begin?

they all "belong to the Christ." However, the resurrecting of even the first ones of the human dead must wait till after the "presence," or parousia, of Jesus Christ begins. This official presence begins with his second coming. According to the "sign" that Jesus foretold and also according to certain Bible time measurements, his invisible "presence," or parousia, began in autumn of 1914 C.E.—Matt. 24:3.*

⁵ Jehovah God will observe order and "rank" with regard to the resurrection of those who are dying "in Adam" and who are harvested as afterfruits of the resurrection. Especially to comfort first-century Christians who were bereaved of "those who have fallen asleep in death through Christ," the apostle Paul wrote:

⁶ "This is what we tell you by Jehovah's word, that we the living [spirit-begotten Christians] who survive to the presence of the Lord shall in no way precede those [spirit-begotten Christians] who have fallen asleep in death; because the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a commanding call [with a loud command, NIV],† with an archangel's voice and with God's trumpet, and those who are dead in union with Christ will rise first. Afterward we the living who are surviving will, together with them, be caught away in clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and thus we shall always be with the Lord." —1 Thess. 4:13-17.

⁷ Here the apostle Paul is speaking, not of the dead of mankind in general, but of "those who have fallen asleep in death" through Christ, "those who are dead in union with Christ." In the last book of the Bible the apostle John has something to

say about when such dead Christians will be raised from their sleep in death. In Revelation 14:12, 13 John writes: "Here [in connection with the world organization for international peace and security] is where it means endurance for the holy ones, those who observe the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." And I heard a voice out of heaven say: "Write: Happy are the dead who die in union with the Lord from this time onward. Yes, says the spirit, let them rest from their labors, for the things they did go right with them." So, now, from when on is "from this time onward"?

⁸ In the light of what the apostle Paul writes in 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17, it must be during the "presence," or parousia, of Jesus Christ, not before it begins, but after. Even during his being invisibly present in spirit there will be spirit-begotten Christians on earth who will "die in union with the Lord." These especially are to be "happy" in dying during his "presence." Their death in the flesh does not terminate their 'deeds,' for any length of time. Why not? Because "the things they did go right with them," or, literally, according to the Greek text, 'follow with them.'

⁹ This requires a transfer of operations, from works in the flesh on earth, to works in the spirit in the heavenly realm. As regards those "who die in union with the Lord," the apostle Paul says: "So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised up in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised up in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised up in power. It is sown a physical body, it is raised up a spiritual body. If there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual one." (1 Cor. 15:42-44) So these "happy" resurrected ones follow up their earthly

* See *Our Incoming World Government—God's Kingdom*, chap. 9.

† New International Version.

5, 6. How does 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17 show that God will observe order and "rank" in harvesting those who die "in Adam"?

7. About which particular dead was Paul there speaking, and how does Revelation 14:12, 13 indicate a special time for them to be resurrected?

8. Why would "from that time onward" mean during the presence of the Lord in spirit, and does their dying then terminate their deeds?

9. Why, then, are the "holy ones" who die at that time "happy," according to Revelation 14:13?

"labors" with works in spirit bodies in the spirit realm. They do not have to sleep in death waiting for Christ's presence.

WITH WHAT THE LORD DESCENDS FROM HEAVEN

¹⁰ The apostle Paul tells us what accompanies the Lord's spiritual descent from heaven, saying: "We the living who survive to the presence [parousia] of the Lord shall in no way precede [in the experiencing of a spiritual resurrection] those who have fallen asleep in death; because the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a commanding call, with an archangel's voice and with God's trumpet, and those who are dead in union with Christ will rise first."—1 Thess. 4:15, 16.

¹¹ Who hears the "commanding call" with which the Lord Jesus Christ comes down from his heavenly position at God's right hand? Evidently the spirit-begotten Christians who, till then, have died "in union with the Lord." We know that no living humans on earth have directly heard his voice since his spiritual descent, that is, since his invisible "presence," or parousia, began in early autumn of 1914. But the "dead in Christ" (*Authorized Version*) heard him and obeyed him.

¹² Those thus resurrected by Jesus Christ belong to the disciples concerning whom he said: "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in yourselves. He that feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has everlasting life [from the time of being raised from the dead], and I shall resurrect him at the last day." (John 6:53, 54) On that "last day" there is power in his "commanding call" to raise from the sleep of death his

10. With what will the Lord Jesus Christ descend from heaven at the time for resurrecting his spirit-begotten disciples?

11. Who hear the "commanding call" of the Lord Jesus Christ on his descent from heaven and obey?

12. (a) When does the "last day" of which Jesus spoke in John 6:53, 54 begin, and how do those disciples enter into "everlasting life"? (b) From what other so-called "last day" does this differ?

disciples who have shared in this special privilege with respect to his flesh and blood. For such privileged disciples the "last day" begins when they enter into the "everlasting life" in heaven by being resurrected in a "spiritual body" like that of Christ. Since this "last day" applies to the resurrection of the faithful spirit-begotten Christians with a heavenly hope, it differs from the "last day" that Martha of Bethany had in mind, for she then had no idea at all of a spiritual resurrection to heaven.

¹³ The glorified Lord Jesus Christ descends also "with an archangel's voice." This is his own voice. He is the "archangel." In his parable of the sheep and the goats Jesus referred to himself in this archangelic capacity by saying: "When the Son of man arrives in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit down on his glorious throne. And all the nations will be gathered before him." (Matt. 25: 31, 32) In his prehuman state in heaven his name was Michael. There is no question of doubt that he is the one meant in the pre-Christian prophecy of Daniel 12: 1, 2: "During that time Michael will stand up, the great prince who is standing in behalf of the sons of your [Daniel's] people. And there will certainly occur a time of distress such as has not been made to occur since there came to be a nation until that time. And during that time your people will escape, every one who is found written down in the book. And there will be many of those asleep in the ground of dust who will wake up, these to indefinitely lasting life and those to reproaches and to indefinitely lasting abhorrence."

¹⁴ Also, Revelation 12:7 shows angels to be subordinate to Michael, saying: "War

13. (a) Whose voice is it that the "dead in Christ" hear, and who is the "archangel"? (b) What Scriptural proof do we have for this?

14. Revelation 12:7 gives the archangel's name as being what, and how does Jude 9 refer to a previous contest of this one?

broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels [not resurrected spirit-begotten Christians] battled." Furthermore, Jude 9 speaks of him as an archangel, saying: "Michael the archangel had a difference with the Devil and was disputing about Moses' body." The Devil did not get the body.

¹⁵ All along in the age-old contest Satan the Devil has lost. In the war in heaven he was defeated and he and his demon angels were hurled down to the neighborhood of our earth, whereas the archangel Michael, namely, the Lord Jesus Christ, and his angels remained victorious in the heavens. Since the victorious Jesus Christ uses the "archangel's voice" when he commands those who died in union with the Christ to come forth, his "commanding call" has more authority and stronger effect. Furthermore, the defeated Satan the Devil will not have power enough to prevent the spiritual resurrection of those dead in union with Christ and will not be able to prevent their entrance into the spirit realm nor their ascent in heaven to be with the victorious Jesus Christ.

¹⁶ Another thing that accompanies Christ's descent from heaven is the sound of "God's trumpet." (1 Thess. 4:16) The trumpet in this case is not a war signal for assembling troops that they might fight and put the enemy to death. Rather, the blast of "God's trumpet" is a peaceful one for assembling Jehovah's people, as when the two silver trumpets were blown in Moses' day to assemble the 12 tribes of Israel. (Num. 10:1-10) Elsewhere, in 1 Corinthians 15:52, the apostle Paul connects such a rousing assembly "trumpet" with the resurrection of the Christian dead, when he says: "During the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead

will be raised up incorruptible, and we shall be changed." Who are the first to respond to that "last trumpet," when it, as "God's trumpet," sounds forth for the gathering of the dead back to life? In answer, 1 Thessalonians 4:16 says: "And those who are dead in union with Christ will rise first."

¹⁷ However, the resurrection of those "dead in union with Christ" is not visible to humans on earth. Why not? Because they are blessed with a spiritual resurrection, each one being "raised up a spiritual body." (1 Cor. 15:44) Because human eyes are not strong enough to see spirit bodies, the resurrection of the "dead in Christ" is unseen to humans. That is why, since the start of Christ's "presence," or parousia, from 1914 onward, mankind has not seen him nor been aware of the resurrection of his disciples.

¹⁸ The apostle Paul speaks of himself as if surviving on earth until that happy event for spirit-begotten Christians, when he says: "Afterward we the living who are surviving will, together with them, be caught away in clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and thus we shall always be with the Lord."—1 Thess. 4:17.

¹⁹ The apostle Paul did not here mean that the spirit-begotten Christians like himself would not die but would be "caught away," human body and all, into the skies amid literal clouds. Paul died. Spirit-begotten Christians today surviving during Christ's "presence," or parousia, must likewise die. Like seeds planted in the ground, they must each be "sown a physical body" by dying a human death. (1 Cor. 15:44) How, then, are they "caught away in clouds" together with those "dead in union with Christ" who were resurrected first?

15. How did Satan the Devil fare in the war with the archangel Michael, and can he prevent the resurrection of Christ's disciples and their ascent in heaven to be with Jesus Christ?

16. For what purpose does "God's trumpet" sound at the time of the Lord's descent from heaven, and who will be first to respond to it?

17. Why is the resurrection of those "dead in union with Christ" not visible to human eyes?

18, 19. (a) By what Paul said at 1 Thessalonians 4:17, did he mean that those Christians would not die before being "caught away"? (b) In what sense, then, are they "caught away," and in what bodies do they ascend to meet the Lord in happiness?

In this way: When they are sown as physical bodies, they do not enter into a death sleep. They instantaneously experience a spiritual resurrection, leaving their human bodies behind on earth and being raised up each a "spiritual body." It is as spiritual bodies that they ascend to meet their heavenly Lord. For these reasons they especially may be counted as "happy," according to Revelation 14:13.

²⁰ However, what would their being caught away "in clouds" mean? Of course, clouds float on high in the skies and denote elevation. They also conceal from us on earth what is in them or above them. Spiritual bodies do not need our literal clouds to make them invisible to us. So what is meant in 1 Thessalonians 4:17 are symbolic clouds, which, as it were, hide from earthly view the catching away of the resurrected Christians to meet their highly elevated Lord. Let us recall how, on the 40th day from his resurrection, Jesus Christ ascended back to heaven and,

20. In what kind of "clouds" is it that the living, surviving Christians are "caught away," and to indicate what about their ascent?

during his ascent, "a cloud caught him up from [the watching disciples'] vision." —Acts 1:9.

²¹ What does all of this prove? This: The descending Lord Jesus Christ does not come down to direct contact with our earth. Clouds, in which the resurrected Christians are pictured as meeting their heavenly Lord, hover high above earth's surface. Moreover, it is "in the air" that the resurrected Christians meet their Lord, not down here on the ground, neither at Jerusalem, the Mount of Olives nor at any other spot on our earth. Moreover, the "last day" in which this catching away occurs is not an earthly 24-hour day. It is a period of time that is completed first when the last one of those spirit-begotten Christians who take part in "the first resurrection" is raised to heavenly life. (Rev. 20:4, 6; John 6:54) Fulfillment of Bible prophecy indicates that we are already living in that particular "last day."

21. Does the Lord's descent from heaven end in his direct, personal contact with our earth, and when does the "last day" on which he raises his spirit-begotten disciples end?

Living Now IN THAT "LAST DAY" OF RESURRECTION

SINCE the "dead in Christ" are raised up in spiritual bodies invisible to human eyes on that "last day," we humans must walk by faith, not by sight, as to its actually taking place now. We recall that for some decades quite a few thought that

1. For decades beforehand, it was thought that the glorification of the remnant of surviving Christians would occur at what time, but was what was foretold at 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17 fulfilled from then on?

the glorification of all surviving members of the Christian congregation would occur at the end of the Gentile Times around October 1, 1914. (Luke 21:24) However, nothing like what is described in 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17 took place at that date. Rather, war broke out in heaven, and the losers, Satan and his demons, experienced a rapid descent earthward. (Rev. 12:7-13)

Interestingly, quite a number of spirit-begotten Christians who were alive and active on earth in 1914 are still with us in the flesh. Apparently something was wrong about the timing of the "last day" for the glorification of the spirit-begotten congregation.

² Nonetheless, the invisible "presence," or parousia, of the glorified Jesus Christ began at the end of the Gentile Times in 1914. So from then on it is the time period when what is foretold at 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17 should take place respecting the surviving spirit-begotten Christians, to correspond with the "last day."—John 6:54.

³ Reasonably when does fulfillment start for 1 Corinthians 15:50-57? "Flesh and blood cannot inherit God's kingdom, neither does corruption inherit incorruption. Look! I tell you a sacred secret: We shall not all fall asleep in death [when the corruptible human body dies], but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, during the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised up incorruptible, and we [Christians like Paul] shall be changed. For this which is corruptible must put on incorruption, and this which is mortal must put on immortality. But when this which is corruptible puts on incorruption and this which is mortal puts on immortality, then the saying will take place that is written: 'Death is swallowed up forever.' 'Death, where is your victory? Death, where is your sting?' The sting producing death is sin, but the power for sin is the [Mosaic] Law. But thanks to God, for he gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!"

⁴ Toward a Scriptural calculation of the time, we can compare events that run

parallel or that correspond in their nature. So we ask, When was Jesus Christ himself resurrected to become "Christ the firstfruits"? This was on Sunday, Nisan 16, of the year 33 C.E. Two days earlier, on Passover, Nisan 14, he had been hung on a stake till dead. That day of Christ's sacrifice was a time marked off in the schedule of events drawn up by Jehovah God and recorded in Daniel 9:24-27. It marked the middle of that last week of a series of "seventy weeks," weeks of years, not of days. Daniel's prophecy foretold that during this last or 70th week of years "Messiah will be cut off, with nothing for himself." But at what time during this last week of years, which began in autumn of the year 29 C.E.? Daniel 9:27 answers: "At the half of the week he will cause sacrifice and gift offering to cease." Hence, animal sacrifices were valueless after Jesus died.

⁵ Since Jesus sacrificed his perfect human life "at the half of the week," or on Nisan 14, 33 C.E., that "week" began three and a half lunar years earlier on Tishri 15, 29 C.E. Well, then, what event marked the start of that 70th "week" of years? Jesus proved to be the Messiah, which means "Anointed One." It was at the time when Jesus was baptized by John the Baptizer. Right afterward, Jesus was "anointed" with the holy spirit to become the Messianic King over Jehovah's people. Jesus was then 30 years old. (Luke 3:21-23; 4:1-21) This event really marked the start of the "time of the end" for Jerusalem and the Jewish system of sacrifices. Less than 41 years later, or in the summer of 70 C.E., Jerusalem and its temple were reduced to desolation. As Daniel 9:26 foretold: "The city and the holy place the people of a leader [General Titus] that is coming [in 70 C.E.] will bring to their

2, 3. The glorification is due to occur during what period, and so what question arises concerning the fulfillment of 1 Corinthians 15:50-57?

4. When did Jesus die, and how had Daniel 9:24-27 indicated this?

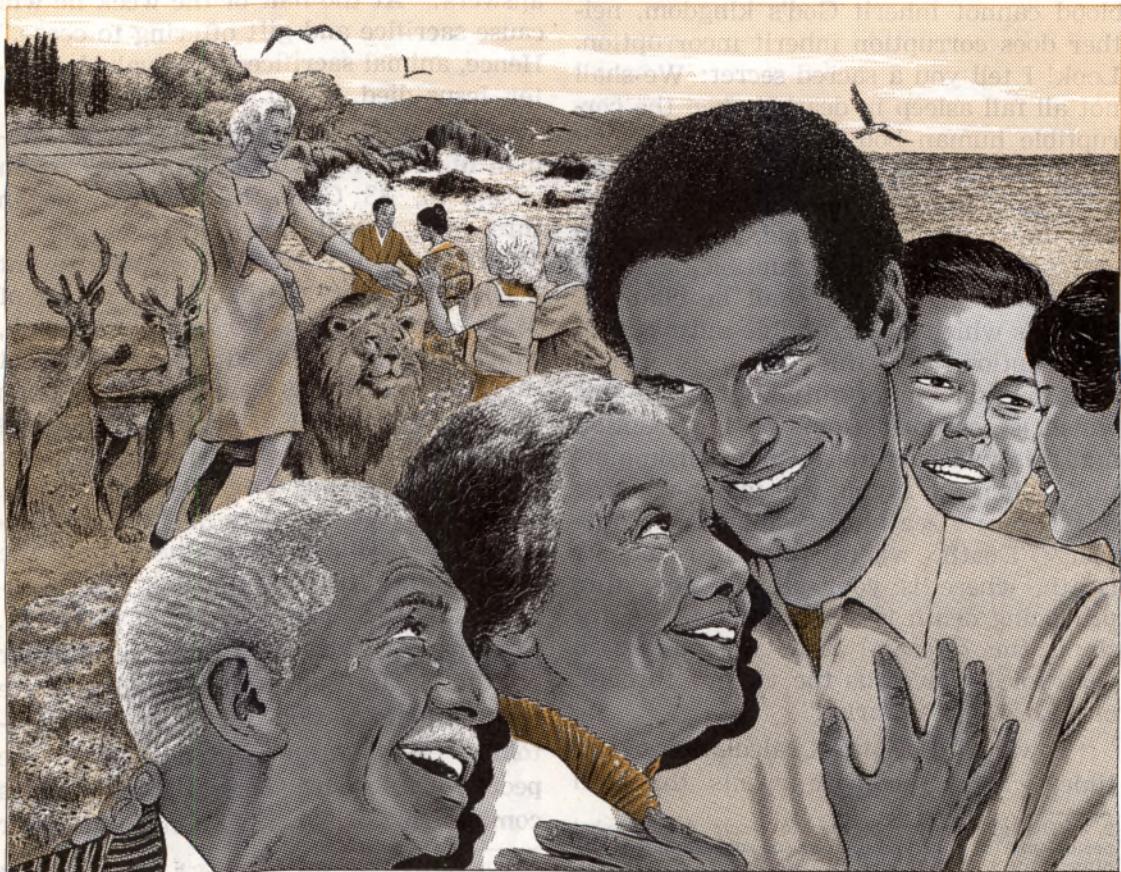
5. How is the beginning of the 70th "week" of years calculated, how was it marked, and what period did it begin for Jerusalem and the Jewish system?

ruin. And the end of it will be by the flood [of Roman legionnaires]. And until the end there will be war."

⁶ Parallelwise, when the Gentile Times expired in autumn of 1914, the "time of the end" began for this system of things. (Dan. 12:4) Immediately following upon that expiration of those Gentile Times the anointed Jesus in the heavens was installed as King, the permanent Heir of his ancient forefather, King David of Jerusalem. There and then the announcement that followed the blowing of the seventh trumpet became true. As regards this we read, in Revelation 11:15-18:

6, 7. What followed right after the end of the Gentile Times in 1914, and what announcement then made in heaven came true as regards our earth and its dead?

"And the seventh angel blew his trumpet. And loud voices occurred in heaven, saying: 'The kingdom of the world did become the kingdom of our Lord [the Sovereign Lord Jehovah] and of his Christ, and he [the Sovereign Lord Jehovah] will rule as king forever and ever.' . . . 'We thank you, Jehovah God, the Almighty, the One who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and begun ruling as king. But the nations became wrathful, and your own wrath came, and the appointed time for the dead to be judged, and to give their reward to your slaves the prophets and to the holy ones and to those fearing your name, the small and the great, and to bring to ruin those ruining the earth.'



Welcoming resurrected ones in Paradise

Illustration: © 1979 Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania

⁸ During World War I of 1914-1918 C.E., "the nations became wrathful," and they vented their wrath on the dedicated people of the Sovereign Lord Jehovah. Why? Because these were preaching the end of the Gentile Times in 1914 and the full establishment of Christ's kingdom in the heavens. This wrath of nations came to a head in the spring of 1918, markedly in the United States of America. This was three and a half years from the end of the Gentile Times and the installation of the anointed Jesus as a heavenly King. What happened to the Kingdom proclaimers on earth in 1918 runs quite parallel with what happened to Jesus at Jerusalem "at the half of the week." In his case a resurrection of the dead became necessary. Correspondingly, in 1918 the proclaimers of his kingdom were dealt what the persecutors thought was a "death blow," so that the Kingdom proclamation needed a revival, a resurrection.

⁹ The resurrection of Jesus on Nisan 16, 33 C.E., was of a spiritual kind, into the heavenly realm, but it was from an earthly tomb. In the case of the Kingdom proclaimers yet in the flesh, their revival was to an earthly activity, to renewed preaching of "this good news of the kingdom" in all the inhabited earth "for a witness to all the nations." (Matt. 24:14) Not yet were those spirit-begotten Christians to be glorified in heaven, to "be caught away in clouds to meet the Lord in the air." Their experiencing this was not scheduled to "precede" the resurrection of Christians who had "fallen asleep in death through Jesus" down till 1918. Rather, as 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17 points out, "those

who are dead in union with Christ will rise first." Fittingly, their resurrection first would precede the reviving or resuscitating of the Kingdom proclaimers to their further work in the flesh on earth during this "time of the end." This reviving occurred in spring of 1919. *like start over*

¹⁰ The spiritual resurrection of the "dead in Christ" in the spring of 1918, three and a half years from the enthronement of Christ at the end of the Gentile Times in autumn of 1914, would parallel Jesus' own resurrection on Nisan 16, 33 C.E., "at the half of the week." (Dan. 9:27) Thus they did "rise first." Their doing so did "precede" the resurrecting of those surviving to Christ's "presence," or parousia, and to the killing of Kingdom preaching.

¹¹ A similar time period comes into play in connection with God's prophetic witnesses pictured in Revelation, chapter 11. According to Revelation 11:3-7, they were killed after prophesying for 1,260 days, or 3½ years. But they have a resurrection: "After the three and a half days spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet, and great fear fell upon those beholding them. And they heard a loud voice out of heaven say to them: 'Come on up here.' And they went up into heaven in the cloud, and their enemies beheld them." (Rev. 11:11, 12) This prophetically pictured the reviving of the remnant of spirit-begotten Christians in Kingdom service in the spring of 1919. Their ascending to worldwide prominence was not the fulfillment of 1 Thessalonians 4:17. In this connection, we recall that the 120 disciples of Jesus Christ were not revived to public activity in Jerusalem until 51 days after the impalement and burial of their Lord, Jesus Christ.

8. (a) Against whom then did the nations become wrathful and why, and to what extent? (b) How did this parallel what happened to the anointed Jesus "at the half of the week"?

9. (a) Why would the reviving or figurative resurrection of the persecuted Kingdom proclaimers to renewed activity not be a true parallel of Jesus' resurrection Nisan 16, 33 C.E.? (b) Their being 'caught away to meet the Lord' could not precede whose spiritual resurrection?

10. Whose resurrection, and this at what time, would be the true parallel of Jesus' resurrection on Nisan 16, 33 C.E.?

11. What corresponding time period comes into play in connection with God's prophetic witnesses of Revelation, chapter 11, and does their ascent to heaven picture a fulfillment of 1 Thessalonians 4:17?

¹² Such a reviving of the surviving remnant was also foretold in Ezekiel 37:1-14. There Jehovah gave the prophet Ezekiel a vision of a valley full of dry Israelite bones. The bones were then reconstructed into living Israelites who were ready to leave their exile in pagan Babylon. Telling how the vision would be fulfilled, Jehovah said: "Here I am opening your burial places, and I will bring you up out of your burial places, O my people [exiled in Babylon], and bring you in upon the soil of Israel. And you will have to know that I am Jehovah when I open your burial places and when I bring you up out of your burial places, O my people."—Ezek. 37:12, 13.

¹³ In modern fulfillment of that vision the remnant of spiritual Israelites were revived in the spring of 1919 and were liberated from Babylon the Great, the world empire of false religion, and from abject subjection to her political, judicial and military paramours who did her bidding during World War I. Likely, with a prophetic bearing upon the modern timing of events, the reviving of Jesus' personal disciples and their liberation from the oppressive Jewish system of things did not take place until after his death and burial and his resurrection from the dead on the third day, Nisan 16, 33 C.E. This was shortly after the "half of the week" when Jesus was sacrificed as a ransom for all mankind.

¹⁴ In modern times, the revived, reactivated remnant of spiritual Israelites who took up the witness work again in the spring of 1919 were those whom the apostle Paul spoke of as "we the living who

12. How was such a reviving of the spiritual remnant also foretold in the vision set out in Ezekiel 37:1-14?

13. How was this vision of the valley of dry bones fulfilled in modern times, and how did this correspond with what happened to Jesus' disciples after what occurred "at the half of the week"?

14. To what class mentioned at 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17 do these revived, reactivated witnesses of modern times belong, and how is what Jesus called "the last day" a "happy" one for them?

survive to the presence of the Lord." (1 Thess. 4:15) They expect, after finishing the final Kingdom witness world wide, to die "in union with the Lord" and during his presence. Their death is during that "last day" during which, as Jesus said, he would raise up from the dead those disciples who are privileged to feed on his flesh and drink his blood. This signifies for them their being "caught away" to meet him, their Lord, "in the air." This instantaneous resurrection of theirs to heavenly life is unseen to humans left behind on earth as if it were obscured by "clouds." "Happy," indeed, they are because they "die in union with the Lord from this time onward" during the "presence of the Lord," not needing to sleep in death in expectation of his second coming.—Rev. 14:13; John 6:53, 54; 1 Cor. 15:52, 53.

¹⁵ Many Christian companions, a "great crowd" of them, are left behind. During this "time of the end" and during the invisible "presence of the Lord" they have become colablers with the remnant of spiritual Israelites in the final Kingdom witness to all the nations. This "great crowd" expects to survive the "great tribulation" in which this worldly system of things perishes. (Rev. 7:9, 14) Thus they will be on hand when the happy time arrives for the last ones of the remnant of spiritual Israelites to "be caught away in clouds to meet the Lord in the air." (1 Thess. 4:17) How loving it would be for the "great crowd" living in that last day of resurrection to bid farewell to the surviving remnant as these finish their earthly course at the close of the "last day"! (John 6:53, 54) This may be no easy parting, but it could be accompanied by a heartfelt interchange of affection between those departing and those left be-

15. What recent colablers will be on hand when the surviving remnant make their departure at the close of the "last day," and what kind of parting may this prove to be?

hind on a paradise earth. No more will the "great crowd" see them.

¹⁶ Although losing the physical association of the glorified remnant, the "great crowd" will be comforted by a numberless throng of new inhabitants of the paradise earth. Who are these, and from where do they come? These are other redeemed ones of mankind who will be resurrected from the land of "the last enemy," the Adamic death. (1 Cor. 15:26) What a joy it will then be for the "great crowd" to meet the resurrected Job, yes, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, John the Baptizer, ah, yes, even the young children of Bethlehem who were dispatched to the realm of the dead by their enemy, Herod the Great! What a joy also to meet known friends, the Fine Shepherd's "other sheep" who did not survive the "great tribulation" and enter directly into his 1,000-year-long reign! (Rev. 20:4, 6; John 10:16) Will the members of the anointed remnant who survive the "great tribulation" live on in the New

16. Although losing the personal association of whom, the "great crowd" will have the joy of welcoming what entrants into the paradise earth?

Order to witness the beginning of the resurrection of the earthly dead on their "last day"? (John 11:24) The Scriptures do not indicate this with any certainty.

¹⁷ Such resurrected humans will be harvested as the afterfruits, of which the resurrected Jesus became "Christ the first-fruits." (1 Cor. 15:20, 22, 23) Although needing no resurrection from the grave, the surviving "great crowd" will be just like the resurrected dead, still needing further benefits from the propitiatory sacrifice of Jesus Christ. All effects of inherited death must be wiped out. Blessed, indeed, it will be by the end of Christ's 1,000-year reign, when, "as the last enemy, death is to be brought to nothing" for all redeemed and obedient mankind, including the "great crowd" of tribulation survivors. Then, most deservedly, Jehovah God will "be all things to everyone."—1 Cor. 15:26, 28; Rev. 1:18; 20:11-14.

17. (a) As regards the harvesting of the earthly dead, those then resurrected will be what in comparison with Christ? (b) Although needing no resurrection from the grave, the "great crowd" will be like those resurrected in what respect, and what blessed situation will obtain at the end of Christ's millennial reign?

QUESTIONS from READERS

- Second Samuel 8:13 states that David struck down the Edomites in the Valley of Salt, but 1 Chronicles 18:12 attributes this accomplishment to Abishai, and the superscription of Psalm 60 says that Joab administered the defeat. Why is this?

The three accounts evidently present the defeat of the Edomites from different view-

points. In 2 Samuel, the victory is ascribed to David because he was the king, the commander-in-chief of the Israelite army and the one who authorized the battle engagement. Since Joab was the principal general, he is credited with the triumph in the superscription of Psalm 60. Abishai served as a divisional commander under Joab and doubtless had a prominent share in the military campaign. This would explain why the victory is attributed to him in the Chronicles account. Thus there is no contradiction. Even today it is customary to ascribe a particular deed to the person who authorized it or to the one who had a prominent share in its being carried out successfully.

Kind Words Can Have Good Effects

While declaring the "good news" from house to house, one of Jehovah's Witnesses in El Salvador spoke kindly to two young girls. When the mother returned home, her daughters told her about the kind visitor and what she had said. The mother was a member of an evangelical religion and believed in faith healing, since she thought her young son had been healed through prayer. She had never listened to the Witnesses, but decided that she would do so in the future because one of them had treated her little girls so kindly.

So when another Witness called, this woman invited her into the home and asked many questions. This led to a Bible study, and soon the woman was attending Christian meetings. But she kept going to her own church as well. Then her son again became ill, and she wondered: "Should I take him to church to be healed or not?" She happened to meet a Witness on

the street and told him about her problem. He explained that she should not go on "limping upon two different opinions." (1 Ki. 18:21) She did not take her son to the church to be healed, but he recovered. Today she is a baptized Christian. Indeed, kind words spoken by a Kingdom proclaimer to young children ultimately produced good results.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

- July 22: Resurrected—"Each in His Own Proper Place." Page 16. Songs to Be Used: 53, 72.

- July 29: "The Dead in Christ Shall Rise First."**

- August 5: Living Now in That "Last Day" of Resurrection. Page 26. Songs to Be Used: 98, 93