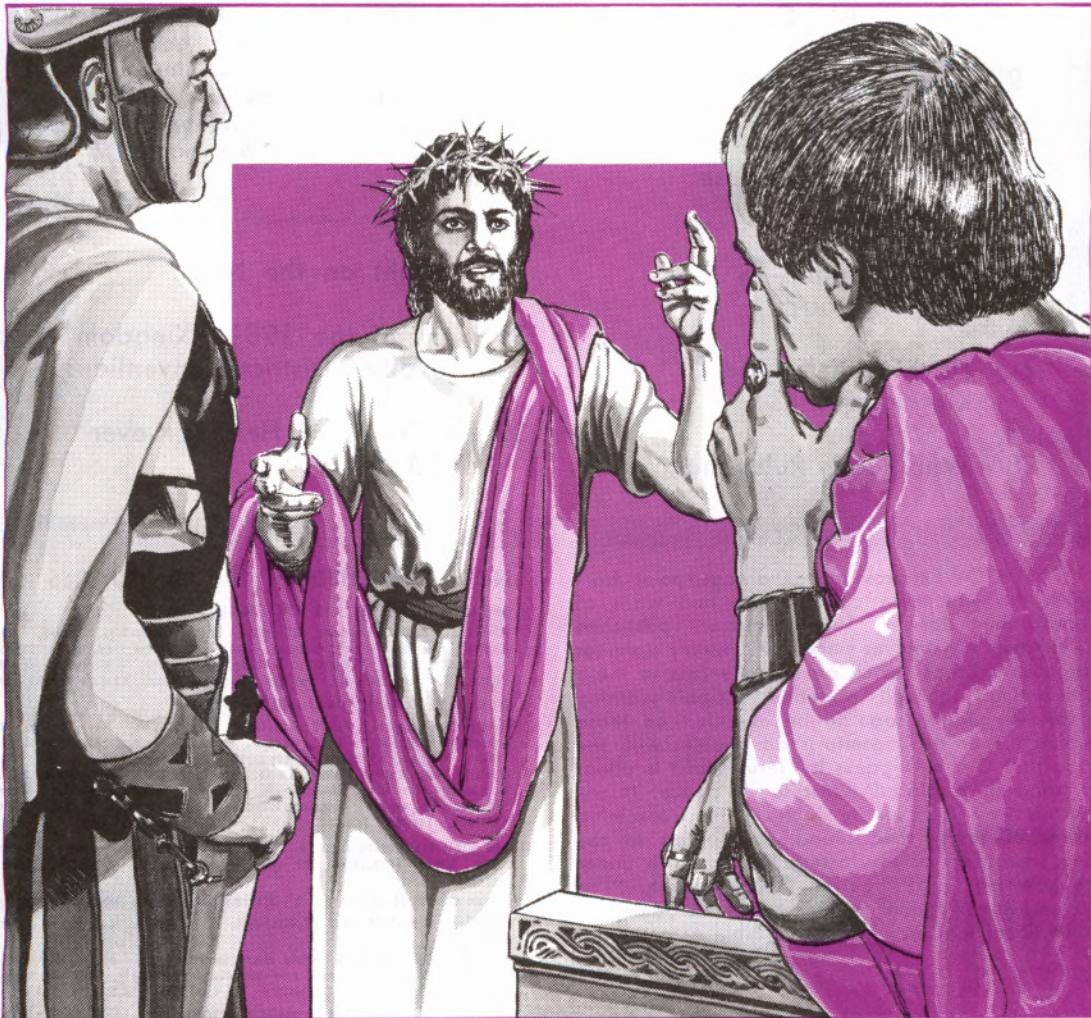


MAY 15, 1981

THE WATCHTOWER
Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom



THE KINGDOM—
Real to Jesus; is it to you?

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A WATCHTOWER provides a vantage point from which the watchman can observe and warn of approaching danger. This magazine, published by Jehovah's Witnesses since 1879, serves a similar purpose. It keeps watch on world events in these critical times and calls attention to God's warning of his vengeance soon to be executed on those ruining the earth. It comforts all peoples with the hope that God's kingdom by Jesus Christ is about to bring in a global paradise of peace. It encourages all to exercise faith in the ransoming power of Jesus' shed blood, and points to the joyous prospect of everlasting life on earth under the sovereignty of the true God, Jehovah. "The Watchtower Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom" is nonpolitical, and adheres to the Bible as authority.

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I have seen LIVES MARVELOUSLY CHANGED

As told by Percy Iszlaub

BACK in 1949 a Japanese man named Kimihiro Nakata murdered two men. He was paid to do it. Those were violent times. Millions of lives had been wasted on the battlefields, and, for a while, the violence of those times spilled over into the postwar years.

My wife, Ilma, and I had just come to Japan as missionaries in the wake of World War II. Kimihiro was only 18 years of age then. The court sentenced him to death by hanging. If he had been only a few months younger, he could not have been given the death sentence. He was sent to Fukuoka prison and assigned to death row.

In Japan it is not the policy to tell a condemned man when he will be executed. A person may be on death row for a week, a month, a year, or for many years; one man was there for 30 years. In prison, Kimihiro became a disturbed and violent man. He would grab the bars of his cell and scream out: "Why don't you kill me! Get it over with!" But the years passed and he was not executed.

In time, Kimihiro became interested in religion. He obtained a Bible and began to read it with enjoyment. However, he had questions for which he was unable to get answers. One day, in the mid-1950's, he received a copy of the *Watchtower* magazine. An acquaintance, who was not interested in the magazine himself, had sent it to him. This was just what Kimihiro was looking for. He wrote the Watch Tower Society for more information, and one of Jehovah's Witnesses was sent to call on him. The Witness arrived at the prison, and there, on death row, Kimihiro began to study the Bible.

Meanwhile, in September of 1957, our missionary assignment was changed to Fukuoka City. At the same time, the Witness who studied with Kimihiro moved away, so I took over the weekly studies on death row. Just prior to our arrival in Fukuoka, Kimihiro had been baptized in the prison bath.

So here I found a Christian brother whose personality had changed radically. Kimihiro became nearer and dearer to me as my weekly visits continued and the months passed. As we became acquainted, I could see similarities in our earlier lives. In fact, I often thought that if I had continued my former way of life I also may have ended up in prison.

A ROWDY LIFE

As a schoolboy growing up in southeast Queensland, Australia, I began smoking and drinking. This led me into trouble with the local police. Drunken barroom brawls were a weekly occurrence. One time I threw a glass of beer into the face of a man who insulted me. Drunken driving caused me to wreck two cars and I narrowly escaped serious injury when motorcycle racing.

Smoking and drinking led me to gambling. When police raided our gambling hangout, we would find another place to gamble. Once, to win a bet, I walked into a crowded dance hall at midnight in my pajamas with an ice cream in one hand and a string of sausages around my neck. I won the bet but lost the race with the police, who charged me with disorderly conduct.

I was even involved in stealing,

starting this activity by robbing a private home. Then I broke into a motion-picture theater, taking money and cigarettes. My stealing operations expanded when a mate of mine and I stole a car engine and installed it in another chassis. We sold it for a profit.

Rugby football was a favorite sport of mine. I played halfback behind the scrum. We played to win; 'get the other fellow' was our motto. One day when I was running with the ball the opposition "got" me—I came out with two broken ribs and an injured diaphragm.

SOME SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY

At the same time, I cared for my family. When my father and mother got sick and couldn't work, I quit school and got a job as an auto mechanic to help support the family. I was only 14. Ten years later, in 1940, I was foreman of a garage, overseeing 17 mechanics.

A principal entertainment in those days was the Saturday night dances. I played the cornet in a dance band. Often I would leave work about noon on Saturday, travel to a distant town and play late, arriving back home as the sun was coming up. Saturday night dances and going out with girls were a big part of my life.

A FINE INFLUENCE IN MY LIFE

It was when I was about 23 that I met Ilma at a dance. We began seeing each other regularly, first at the dances. But then she would come over to our house, my mother and she becoming good friends. Soon I made clear my intentions of marrying her. What a change our relationship was to have on my life!

I should mention here that some years earlier my mother had become one of Jehovah's Witnesses. Oh, how I hated this! I was ashamed of her standing on the streets offering passersby Bible literature. I argued with her about giving it up, but

without success. And I let her know that I didn't want her talking to Ilma about her 'crazy religion.'

Well, anyway, one particular night after a dance Ilma and I were talking about the war—the second world war had just begun in September 1939. Our conversation touched on world conditions, and Ilma said: "Wouldn't you like to see a just and righteous government established that would bring peaceful conditions to all mankind?"

"Sure I would," I replied, "but just who can accomplish it? Man has tried for years and where are we now? We're starting a world war!"

"Well, Almighty God can do it, and he will do it," Ilma replied.

"How come, then, that the Almighty has not done anything before now? Look at the war and the suffering everywhere. Can you answer that, my dear?"

Well, Ilma did answer my question, but not in the way I had anticipated. She brought out a little booklet, *Government and Peace*, and began to read from it: "There cannot be lasting peace without a just and righteous government. There can be no just and righteous government without peace."

I agreed with this. "But how would such a thing be accomplished?" I wanted to know. "Show me that booklet."

She passed it to me. Turning to the front page, I saw "WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY . . . First Printing 10,000,-000 copies." Did I 'hit the roof'! "How did you get this?" I asked.

"Why, from your mother," she said, "and I read it and I believe it."

It made me madder than ever to learn that Mother had been talking religion to Ilma. It so happened that some weeks earlier Ilma had asked Mother a question that perplexed her. "My church teaches that the wicked go to hell and the good go to heaven," she began. "Well, I don't

feel I'm good enough to go to heaven, but I'm not so bad that I should go to hell. So where do I fit in?"

Mother happily seized the opportunity to tell Ilma about God's original purpose to make the earth a paradise, and how that purpose will soon be fulfilled under the rule of his kingdom. She pointed out such scriptures as Psalm 37:11 and 29, which say: "The meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace. The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever." (*Authorized Version*) And she explained that Jesus had even promised the evildoer who died next to him that he would be brought back to life in that earthly paradise.—Luke 23:43.

So when Ilma would come over to our home to visit on weekends, my mother would sweetly ask me to go to the market and get some things for supper. While I was gone, she was busy discussing Bible teachings with Ilma. For how long this had gone on I don't know, but it came to a sizzling head that night.

I told Ilma that my mother wasn't supposed to talk to her about her religion because I was in disagreement with that. But then Ilma asked, "Don't you believe in freedom?"

"Sure I do!"

"Then aren't you a hypocrite?" she shot back at me.

I had been called worse things before, but this was different, coming from Ilma. "You said it would be a wonderful thing if there were a peaceful government," she went on. "But when you learned that it



is Jehovah's Witnesses who are telling how God will bring about such a thing you're not interested."

That was food for thought and, grumbling, I left in a huff. A week passed and I telephoned Ilma to see if I could come over and see her again. "Yes, if you act reasonable and discuss the things we were talking about the other night," she said.

So I visited her and asked just what made her believe "Rutherford's religion," as I called it. (J. F. Rutherford then was president of the Watch Tower Society.) "This is the first time that I have heard such wonderful things," she said. "It makes sense to me. When your mother answered my questions I could have danced for joy. I knew it was the truth from the time I heard it."

I must admit that I was not in the mood for dancing. But I did listen to some scriptures, and I agreed to investigate further. So, on December 8, 1939, we were married.

This may well have saved me from the kind of trouble that Kimihiro Nakata became involved in

HOW MY LIFE CHANGED DRAMATICALLY

"All right, we'll get somebody to study the Bible with us," I told Ilma. "But I don't want my mother or her 70-year-old friend." I really thought this was an old women's religion. So a couple of full-time ministers of Jehovah's Witnesses came.

At first I argued with them a lot. I couldn't understand, for example, how the first man Adam could have sinned if he was perfect. It seemed to me that God could not have done a very good job in creating him if he turned bad. But, in time, it got through to me that God created man a free moral agent—not a robot. So he had the ability to *choose* to do right or wrong.

As our studies progressed into February and March, my interest grew. One day I told Ilma: "Let's go to the assembly in Brisbane." It was in April, just four months after our marriage. So we went. What an impression it made! I couldn't believe that there were so many young people of our age that we met; this certainly wasn't just an old people's religion.

Returning home, I took our studies even more seriously and became zealous in preaching to others. In a nearby town, Norman Bellotti, a youth who had belonged to a rival gang, also became a Witness. So as companions now, rather than rival combatants, we began witnessing. In our small towns many knew us and couldn't believe what they saw. Smoking, drunken brawls, stealing, reckless driving, gambling, toying with sexual immorality—all these were things of the past. Why?

My eyes of understanding had been opened. I truly believed with my whole heart that Jehovah God would establish a

just government, his kingdom for which we pray. (Matt. 6:9, 10; Dan. 2:44) It was this knowledge and my appreciation of it that were responsible for the dramatic changes in my life. This may well have saved me from the kind of trouble that Kimihiro Nakata became involved in.

BEGINNING OF A NEW LIFE

In July 1940, Ilma and I decided to go to the assembly in Sydney and afterward begin the full-time preaching work, or pioneering as it is called. I quit my job as foreman at the garage, and we sold all our newly purchased furniture. I called Norman to tell him our plans. "Wait for me! Wait for me! I'll come too!" he said. So Norman and his sister Beatrice joined us.

During a faith-strengthening assembly, all four of us, on July 24, 1940, symbolized our dedication to God by water baptism. Afterward we went to the Watch Tower Society's branch office in Sydney and asked for pioneer assignments. We were sent to the city of Townsville, North Queensland.

The new life we began was not an easy one. But it was rewarding and we were happy because we were confident that we were doing what pleases Jehovah God.

The rainy season runs from November to January in North Queensland. At times it rained 15 inches (39 cm) and more *daily*, causing flash floods. Once we were isolated for several days between two swollen rivers. When our food supplies ran out, we ate wild tomatoes.

As the world war progressed, prejudice against Jehovah's Witnesses grew. In January 1941 the government banned our activities in Australia. But we kept right on

Night found us sleeping under an old creek bridge, or more often under a tree

with our preaching work. Norman and I would set out on a Monday morning to work outlying rural areas. We would load two cartons of books on one bike, and on the other blankets, a frying pan and a container with water for tea. Meanwhile Ilma and Beatrice did their witnessing around the town until we returned on Friday night.

Sometimes our food supplies ran low, and Norman and I would not have anything to eat for a day or two. Then we would be able to exchange some books for food. Or, on certain occasions, we would chop wood in exchange for a meal. Night found us sleeping under an old creek bridge, or more often under a tree. To keep the multitudes of mosquitoes at bay, we would burn cattle manure, a pile at the foot of our blanket and another pile at our head.

ENLARGED PRIVILEGES OF SERVICE

After a few months of pioneering, we returned home one day to find a letter from the Watch Tower Society. It was an invitation to serve at Bethel, the branch headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses in Sydney. Happily we accepted. But soon after we began work at Bethel the government ordered all Bethel family members out of the home and took over the Society's property.

Ilma and I were assigned to work in Melbourne. During the ban we preached with only our Bible, working by ourselves as inconspicuously as possible. Things became a bit lonely at times, but there were blessings. Ilma tells it this way: "One day I was working along and preached to a middle-aged woman about the paradise

earth. She recognized the ring of Bible truth immediately. She studied and came right along, even though we were under ban at that very time." The ban was lifted in June 1943.

The year 1947 found us in the circuit work in New South Wales, where I then served as a traveling representative of Jehovah's Witnesses. Now a new privilege was extended to us—an invitation to attend the Watchtower Bible School of Gil-ead, a missionary training school in New York State. What should we do?

Having left school at 14, I was apprehensive, feeling unqualified to attend such a school. But viewing the invitation as God's will, our response was that of his prophet Isaiah: 'Here we are! Send us.' (Isa. 6:8) Thus in January 1948, along with 17 others from Australia and New Zealand—including my former pioneer companion Norman Bellotti—we sailed for the United States.

After five months of intensive Bible instruction we were given our missionary assignments. Ours was Japan.

MISSIONARY LIFE IN JAPAN

Our first assignment was the city of Kobe. Our missionary home was situated on a high hill, which gave us a delightful view of the beautiful Inland Sea, with quaint boats of all shapes and sizes chugging up and down the sea-lanes. A lighthouse, faithfully twinkling day and night, guided seamen past the submerged rocks.

A kindly doctor who lived next door to us was moved to say: "This missionary home will become a source of spiritual light to the people in this vicinity." How true his words came to be! There were no

Kimihiro had requested my presence at his execution that morning

local Witnesses in Kobe City then, but now there are 20 congregations there with nearly 1,400 Kingdom publishers. The doctor's two daughters were baptized more than 20 years later, in the Tokyo area.

Our home was without furniture and in need of a good cleanup. The garden grass was very high, so we cut it and spread it out on the floor, sleeping in our clothes in this grass for three weeks until our goods arrived. We amusingly called it the "Three-Week Itch Hitch."

Learning the language was pretty rough on us at first, particularly on me. I used to tell the brothers such things as, "eat" (*taberu*) the sheep instead of "feed" (*tabesaseru*) them, or support the *Watchtower* "noodles" (*udon*) instead of support the *Watchtower* "campaign" (*undo*). However, the brothers always lovingly helped me over these rough spots, and we pressed on.

CHANGED LIVES—A BEAUTIFUL THING

Ilma and I have been in Japan for over 31 years now. It has become our home. When we arrived, there were only *three* native Witnesses in the whole country. Now there are over 58,400 of our brothers and sisters proclaiming the good news of the Kingdom. During these years I have seen many, many lives marvelously changed—persons who were guilty of 'shady deals' in business and those living very immoral lives. But then their hearts were touched by the truths of God's Word, and what a beautiful thing it has been to observe the change!

But to me the most dramatic change in anyone's life was that of Kimihiro Nakata, the disturbed, violent death-row prisoner

who had murdered two men. What a meek, kind young man he became! He was one of the most zealous Kingdom publishers I have known. "When I see the blue sky through my cell window," he would tell visitors, "how I wish I could be out there helping you preach!"

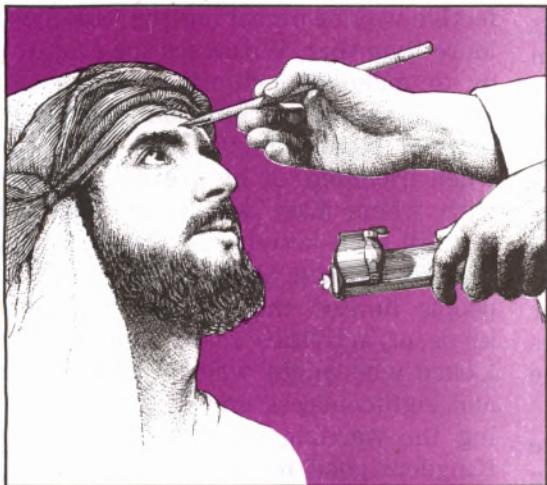
Yet even from his death-row cell Kimihiro helped many. He wrote the family of the persons he killed, witnessing to them, and they expressed interest. He also witnessed extensively to his own family. He studied Braille, and transcribed the book "*Let God Be True*," the booklet "*This Good News of the Kingdom*" and *Watchtower* and *Awake!* articles into Braille. These publications were distributed to different parts of Japan, including schools for the blind.

CONCENTRATING ON THE HOPE AHEAD

On June 10, 1959, a police car pulled up at our missionary home. Kimihiro had requested my presence at his execution that morning. His last words to me are not to be forgotten: "Today I feel strongly confident in Jehovah, and in the ransom sacrifice and the resurrection hope. For a little while I will sleep, and if it be Jehovah's will, I shall meet you all in the paradise." Kimihiro died to satisfy justice, giving 'life for life.' But he died not a hopeless hardened criminal but a dedicated, baptized, faithful servant of Jehovah.

Yes, I have seen lives marvelously changed—Kimihiro's life, my life. In spite of failing health, Ilma is still my faithful companion in full-time service, a privilege we have enjoyed for over 40 years. Together our gratitude goes out to Jehovah, the God who can change lives.

Showing LIFESAVING NEIGHBOR LOVE



THE year was 1559 of our Common Era. Prince William of the Netherlands and King Henry of France were in a hunting party on the outskirts of Paris. When, by chance, the two men were off by themselves, King Henry freely talked with the prince about a plan King Philip of Spain had formed to kill off all the Protestants in the Netherlands and in France. The executioners for the Netherlands were to be the Spanish troops stationed there.

All of this was shocking news to the Dutch prince, as he had not had the slightest inkling of such a plan.* Although himself reared a Catholic

* The accidental discovery of this plot by William may well have been providential, as there is no telling how much the history of Europe and the progress toward religious freedom might have been altered had the plot been carried out successfully.

(with a Lutheran background), he felt keenly for all those Protestants that were slated to be slain. Most discreetly he betrayed no surprise nor any other emotion at learning of this murderous plan, for which reason he became known as "William the Silent."

Before returning to the Netherlands, he was given specific orders as to his part in carrying out this terrible plot. But as soon as he got back to his homeland he aroused public sentiment for the departure of the Spanish troops from his country. In fact, he did all he could to frustrate that evil plan—all of which, it might be observed, started him on the road to becoming "the Father of his country."

In particular William had been given the names of certain "excellent persons suspected of the new religion" with instructions to make sure that these did not escape. Far from carrying out such instructions, he warned those "excellent persons," enabling them to get away. As he later put it, he was "thinking it more necessary to obey God than men." In all of this, William was truly displaying life-saving neighbor love.†

A WARNING BEING SOUNDED TODAY

Today there is a group of people, the Christian witnesses of Jehovah, that are similarly motivated. They are warning as many people as they can of a certain dire fate awaiting them in the near future. However, the fate that awaits so many today is not to result because of religious intolerance on the part of blinded men. Rather, it is because the righ-

† *Rise of the Dutch Republic*, Vol. 1, pp. 239, 240.

teous God of heaven and earth will soon take action against all those bringing reproach upon his name and ruining the earth. Fulfillment of Bible prophecy indicates that "the appointed time" is hastening on for Jehovah God "to bring to ruin those ruining the earth." (Rev. 11:18) Yes, near is the time for the beginning of the greatest tribulation ever to occur.—Matt. 24:21.

Because of the nearness of that catastrophic event Jehovah's Witnesses are echoing the angelic warning to all lovers of truth and righteousness in the domain of the world empire of false religion, "Babylon the Great": "Get out of her, . . . if you do not want to share with her in her sins, and if you do not want to receive part of her plagues." (Rev. 18:2, 4) Of course, it is not enough for these sincere ones to separate themselves from all false organized religion. They must also flee for safety to God's kingdom. So the Witnesses keep preaching "this good news of the kingdom" worldwide.—Matt. 24:14.

That is why Jehovah's Witnesses are also devoting all their efforts in helping sincere truth-seekers to obey the command found in the Bible book of Zephaniah: "Seek Jehovah, all you meek ones of the earth, who have practiced His own judicial decision. Seek righteousness, seek meekness. Probably you may be concealed in the day of Jehovah's anger." (Zeph. 2:3) Thus these Witnesses are obeying the parting command of Jesus Christ to his followers: "Go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy spirit, teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you."—Matt. 28:19, 20.

PREACHING AND TEACHING FROM HOUSE TO HOUSE

It is because of the nearness of Jehovah's day of judgment that the Witnesses

feel an urgency to point truth-lovers to God's kingdom as their only means of escape. Since life is so important, it is surely showing love to aid people in this way.

Reports show that fine Christian conduct has helped some people to get on the road leading to life. As one Russian journalist, attending a Witness convention in Germany, put it: "Your conduct is your best sermon." The Witnesses have found that standing on street corners offering Bible magazines to passersby is an effective way of preaching the "good news." More than that, Witnesses are alert to find or to make opportunities to preach the good news of God's kingdom to people they happen to meet in business contacts and when traveling, or by preaching to people with whom they work. The facts show that all such activity is also fruitful.

However, it is obvious that if Jehovah's people limited their witnessing to these kinds of activities many would be overlooked who might well be lovers of truth and righteousness and deserving of hearing the warning message as well as the Kingdom good news. For this reason the Witnesses have embraced the house-to-house form of preaching. In fact, they have become so industrious in pursuing this method of preaching that it has become a trademark, as it were, of the Witnesses. Thus on a certain TV program a family group were shown responding to a knock at the door with the observation, 'Most likely one of Jehovah's Witnesses.'

Not long ago this activity of the Witnesses was banned in a certain Central American land. When the Witnesses appealed, the government official handling the appeal said: 'Other religious denominations do not go from house to house the way you Witnesses do. Is this activity a part of your worship?' He was told that it was not only a part of their worship but one of the most important parts of their worship. As a result the ban was lifted.

For pursuing the house-to-house activity the Witnesses have sound Scriptural precedents. When Jesus sent out his disciples, he commanded them to go to the homes of the people with their message. (Matt. 10:7, 12, 13, 42; Luke 10:5, 6) Furthermore, the apostle Paul told the elders of the congregation at Ephesus: "You well know how from the first day that I stepped into the district of Asia I was with you the whole time, . . . while I did not hold back from telling you any of the things that were profitable nor from teaching you publicly and from house to house. But I thoroughly bore witness both to Jews and to Greeks about repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus."—Acts 20:18-21.

Yes, Paul taught in 'house after house.' While he no doubt called on those who already were Christians to strengthen and encourage them, we may by no means limit Paul's words here to such pastoral or shepherding activities. Why not? Because Paul said that he was preaching "repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus" to both Jew and Greek. That clearly indicates that these were not as yet Christians. That he considered this a life-saving work can be seen from his further statement that, as a result of his preaching, he was "clean from the blood of all men."—Acts 20:25-27.

A PROPHETIC PATTERN

Corroborating the foregoing is the prophecy found at Ezekiel chapter 9, which foreshadowed the house-to-house activity of Jehovah's Witnesses today. It tells of a vision that the prophet Ezekiel had some 2,500 years ago.

In the previous chapter the prophet tells of having been given a vision showing various kinds of idolatries and apostasies carried on by the Jews at their temple in Jerusalem. Then, in chapter 9, Ezekiel records a vision of six men armed with

slaughtering weapons and a seventh man clothed not in armor but in linen with a secretary's inkhorn at his side. This man was told to go through the city of Jerusalem and "put a mark on the foreheads of the men that are sighing and groaning over all the detestable things that are being done in the midst of it." (Verse 4) The six men with slaughtering weapons were commanded to follow after him and to execute all those who did not have that mark, yes, all those who did not groan and sigh because of all the wickedness being practiced in the city.

How was this man in linen to locate all those who were sighing and groaning? *The Watchtower* of January 15, 1972, explained: "Not just by going to the public square or to the marketplace, but to the homes of the people, going from house to house. In that way he would be able to hear their heartfelt expressions and decide whether they should be marked on the forehead or not. This was no speedy operation, by any means, but called for patiently and conscientiously going from house to house or from door to door and making an honest inspection, showing no partiality but marking only those who sincerely grieved at all the detestable things that others were doing inside the royal city. . . . he put the distinguishing mark upon their foreheads where it could be publicly seen by friend or foe."

Even as it required house-to-house visitation for the man clothed in linen to discharge fully his obligation of marking those deserving to be spared from execution, so today it takes house-to-house activity on the part of Jehovah's Witnesses to find all those who love truth and righteousness and give them the opportunity to flee to God's kingdom.

What today would correspond to the mark that the man in linen put upon the foreheads of those deserving to be spared? Being marked in the forehead appears to

represent the cultivating of a Christlike personality. Only by possessing such a personality would one merit being spared by Jehovah's executioners at the coming "great tribulation." (Matt. 24:21) A Christlike personality would be something for all to see, even as a mark on the forehead could be seen by all. Cultivating such a Christlike personality is repeatedly urged in the Scriptures. Of course, to mark a person in such a way takes much time, energy and means, but Jehovah's Witnesses are glad to make such sacrifices. Thereby also they are showing lifesaving neighbor love.—Eph. 4:20-24; Col. 3:9-11.

Yes, important as is the first step of going from house to house to find those lovers of truth and righteousness who are sighing and groaning because of the wicked

conditions prevailing, it is but the first step. Showing lifesaving neighbor love requires the servant of Jehovah to follow through by making return visits and conducting Bible studies. Such Bible students also need to learn how to pray, they need to associate with the Christian congregation and they need to apply Bible principles in their lives. In turn, they themselves need to share in letting still others know about the things they are learning. All of this should lead to their dedicating themselves to Jehovah God to do his will and to their being baptized. Such a course, it should be added, is essential to being 'marked,' to putting on the Christlike personality. And by carrying on this activity the witnesses of Jehovah are truly showing lifesaving neighbor love.

The HOUSE-TO-HOUSE CHALLENGE

HE WAS one of Jehovah's Witnesses in his mid-70's. As he went from door to door he hobbled quite a bit; but no wonder, for he was getting around on two wooden legs. Upon his knocking on one door, a woman came out. Pointing a finger at him, she asked in an angry tone of voice: 'Are you one of Jehovah's Witnesses?'

He paused for a moment and then, looking the woman straight in the eye, said: 'I tell you, ma'am, I try to be. It isn't easy. I'm working at it. It's a difficult assign-

ment. Can you imagine what it means to be a witness of the Most High, Jehovah, the Sovereign of the universe? That's a real assignment. I'll tell you, ma'am, I'm working at it.'

What did the woman say in reply? Not a word. What could she say?

There is no gainsaying it. Going from house to house with the good news of Jehovah God's kingdom presents a real challenge. Doubtless that is why this form of evangelism is unique with the Witnesses. No other religious group stresses or ex-

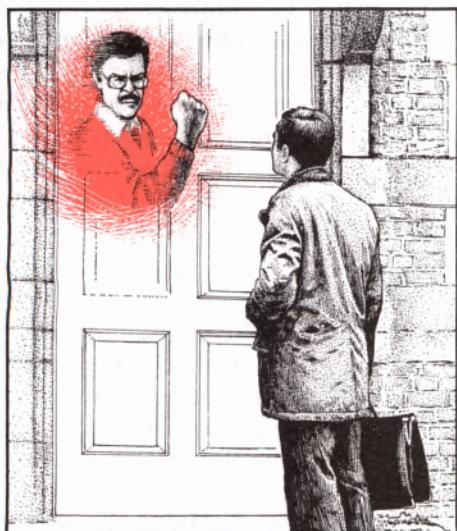
psects this kind of activity on the part of all its members. And it is indeed of interest that those who so severely criticize the teachings of Jehovah's Witnesses do not accuse them of carrying on a work for which there is no Scriptural precedent. Far from charging that the Witnesses do not have a Scriptural basis for their activity, time and again these critics have in print acknowledged the Scripturality of this type of evangelism. Some even lament the fact that their own particular denomination does not expect the same from its members.

It is not that the Witnesses would have no reasons for going from door to door even if there were no direct or explicit commands and precedents found in God's Word for their doing so. Love of God and of neighbor impels them to witness to all they can, telling others the good news of God's kingdom and warning them about the "great tribulation" just ahead—and to do so by every effective means. In apostolic times the apostle Paul and others visited synagogues and were able to preach

the "good news" to those assembled. (Matt. 24:14, 21; Acts 13:14-16; 14:1; 17:1, 2, 10, 17; 18:4, 19, 26; 19:8) Of course, today Witnesses rarely have the opportunity to address audiences in synagogues or other religious edifices. But the fact that present-day Witnesses cannot imitate this kind of activity does not mean that they should not imitate other kinds of apostolic evangelism that are available to them.

Why, the very fact that house-to-house evangelizing meets with so much opposition is testimony to its effectiveness! When a government becomes totalitarian, one of the first things it invariably does is ban the house-to-house preaching work of the Witnesses. Many religious leaders, particularly in times past, have influenced even democratic governmental authorities to interfere with this kind of evangelism, either by misapplying laws to them or by having laws passed for the specific purpose of stopping their house-to-house work. To establish their legal right to preach from door to door, the Witnesses have time and again carried legal battles into the higher courts, including the Supreme Court of the United States. Almost invariably that court has decided in their favor, which decisions testified not only to the legal right of the Witnesses to carry on this work but also to the effectiveness of it. Typical is the following verdict:

"The hand distribution of religious tracts is an age-old form of missionary evangelism—as old as the history of printing presses. It has been a potent force in various religious movements down through the years. This form of evangelism is utilized today, on a large scale by various religious sects whose colporteurs carry the Gospel to thousands upon thousands of homes and seek through personal visitations to win adherents to their faith. . . . This form of religious activity occupies the



same high estate under the First Amendment as do worship in the churches and preaching from the pulpits."

A CHALLENGE

Let us face it: to begin going from house to house with a Bible message is one of the hardest things for the average modest person, male or female, young or old, to do. In fact, occasionally Witnesses who have spent decades preaching full time have confessed that after all those years it so goes against their natural inclinations that it takes real effort to get started each morning. There is always the uncertainty of what kind of reception one may get at the door. Without question, not a few persons are offended when an individual comes to their door with a Bible message, and no one enjoys offending people. The initial reaction of many a truth-lover who was studying the Bible with one of the Witnesses has been, 'I could never go from house to house.' How difficult it may seem can be seen from the experience of a New York City fireman. Accompanying his Bible teacher in going from house to house for the first time, he exclaimed: "Why, this is worse than going into a burning building!" But before long he, too, was enjoying house-to-house preaching.

Of course, the average churchgoer has little to motivate him to go from house to house. What would he tell the householders? Most likely he does not have a good knowledge of what his own church teaches; merely a lot of generalities based on the creeds of his church. More than that, by and large, religion is presented as primarily a selfish matter. Its chief concern is saving one's own soul; church services are not structured to train and motivate the listeners to become active evangelizers. So it is no wonder that the house-to-house activity is a challenge rarely met by others than Jehovah's Witnesses.

Challenge though it is, the house-to-

house activity is not above the capabilities of even the most humble Christian. Thus, once a Mexican Witness from the rurals, dressed in very simple country garb, knocked at the door of a palatial mansion. A man in a silken bathrobe responded and asked what he wanted. The Witness said: "If a mule should come to your door with two bags of gold, would you accept it?" Annoyed, the householder replied: "I do not understand what you are telling me. I am a famous engineer." The Witness then asked him: "What do you understand about prophecies?" The man admitted he did not know anything about them. Then the Witness said: "That is what I want to speak to you about. . . . I am that mule that came to your door, and the two bags of gold are these magazines, *The Watchtower* and *Awake!*" The man was impressed by the presentation of this humble Witness and took the two magazines. All of this calls to mind the incident recorded at Acts 4:8-13.

THE CHALLENGE OF PERSEVERING

Time and again Jehovah's servants have had to meet challenges by persevering and enduring. A notable example is that of Jeremiah who, for upward of 40 years, kept proclaiming Jehovah God's message under the most unfavorable circumstances. No wonder that he at one time felt like quitting! But he could not keep quiet; he just had to speak, to witness about his God Jehovah and against the wayward Jews of his time.—Jer. 20:9.

Today, also, the servants of Jehovah must persevere, yes, even persist, in carrying out their God-given assignment. And there are many reasons for their doing so. Each time they call on a householder they endeavor to leave a few grains of truth, a few drops of spiritual water, as it were, either orally or by means of the printed page. Time and again these have had a cumulative effect, eventually bearing fruit,

even as the apostle Paul noted when he said: "I planted, Apollos watered, but God kept making it grow."—1 Cor. 3:6.

And there are more reasons for Jehovah's Witnesses to persevere, to persist in their house-to-house ministry. As *The Watchtower* once so well expressed it:

"Lives are involved. (2 Tim. 4:5) That means making repeated calls. For one thing, circumstances keep changing. Today a man may not be at home, next time he may be. Today he may be too busy to listen, but the next time he may not be. Today one member of the family answers the door, the next time another member does; . . . Often families are divided as to religion, . . . Besides, people keep moving . . ."

"Not only do the circumstances change, but the people themselves change. . . . For just some trifles a man may have been out of sorts and not at all willing to discuss religion or anything else no matter who came to his door, but it does not at all follow that he will be of that mental attitude at another time. Or, just because a man was not at all interested in discussing religion last month does not mean he might not be this month. Since the last time a Witness called this man may have had a soul-harrowing experience or in some other way learned something that made him humble instead of proud, hungry and conscious of his spiritual need instead of self-satisfied."

Truly, many are the reasons for calling on people time and again, persevering, searching for sheeplike ones.—Matt. 25:31-33.

PERSONAL BENEFITS

Foremost among the things accomplished by the Witnesses going from house to house is that the name of Jehovah is being made known. That they are making people aware of this distinctive name of the Creator is apparent from the cartoon

that was once published by a popular New York City magazine. It showed a man praying alongside his bed and the Germanic god Wotan standing on the other side of his bed. The cartoon quoted the man praying as saying: "I'm sorry that I inconvenienced you, Wotan. You see, I just naturally thought that when I said God, I would get, you know, Jehovah."

Further, as can be seen from the foregoing, preaching from house to house enables Jehovah's Witnesses to help lovers of truth and righteousness to get on the road leading to life. Also, by proclaiming the day of Jehovah's vengeance, the Witnesses serve lovingly to warn all who are not lovers of truth and righteousness, but lovers of pleasures. (2 Tim. 3:1-5) And many, indeed, are the benefits that accrue to the Witnesses themselves, for the Bible proverb is true: "A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed."—Prov. 11:25, *New International Version*.

Thus a Witness elder who once spent nine years in a German concentration camp once stated that there was nothing like the house-to-house method of evangelizing to help one to cultivate the fruits of God's holy spirit. There is no doubt about it. By persevering in this activity one learns to exercise unselfish love, to be joyful, peaceably inclined, patient and long-suffering, to put one's faith to work and to manifest mildness, kindness, goodness and self-control.—Gal. 5:22, 23.

Going from house to house with the good news of the Kingdom also helps one to cultivate the virtue of humility. A proud person is sensitive, acts independently, is not concerned with pleasing others. But for a Witness to be effective he must, like the apostle Paul, "become all things to people of all sorts" so that he might win some.—1 Cor. 9:19-23.

Still another blessing that comes to those who keep meeting the house-to-house

challenge is that it tends to make one more sympathetic, more empathetic. On the one hand, one learns to feel for persons who have been blinded spiritually by false shepherds, and on the other hand, one learns to commiserate with people as they tell of their problems: poverty, unemployment, sickness, domestic discord, juvenile delinquency, and so forth. Even as was true in Jesus' day, the people today are "skinned and thrown about like sheep without a shepherd." They need Jehovah's kingdom. Jesus' words to his disciples of the first century are even more meaningful in these "last days," namely, "The harvest is great, but the workers are few." While praying for more workers to be sent out into the harvest, are we ourselves sharing zealously in Kingdom work, successfully meeting the house-to-house challenge?—Matt. 9: 36-38.

A PROTECTION

The house-to-house activity serves also as a protection from the world. Concerning it the apostle John warns: "Do not be loving either the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him; because everything in the world—the desire of the flesh and the desire of the eyes and the showy display of one's means of life—does not originate with the Father, but origi-

nates with the world." These worldly things tend to tempt the Christian witness of Jehovah, but his keeping active by preaching will tend to minimize this temptation.—1 John 2:15, 16.

Making this point is an old Jewish legend or parable. It tells about a certain righteous man who came to the wicked city of Sodom and kept on preaching although no one paid any attention to him. One day, a native noticing this asked him why he kept on preaching when no one was paying any attention to him. What was his reply? 'So that the people of Sodom do not change me.' Well has it been said that 'the best defense is an offense.' So long as the Witnesses are trying hard to change people of the world, the world will not succeed in changing them.

Nor is that all. By their obeying God's commands to witness to his name and kingdom, they are doing good to others and actually are laying up treasures in heaven, even as Jesus urged in his Sermon on the Mount. (Matt. 6:19-21) Yes, by using their time, their energies and their means in such unselfish ways, they are making friends for themselves of Jehovah God and Jesus Christ. Then when this wicked system of things comes to its end they can hope to survive it to enter into a post-Armageddon new system of things, even as Noah and his family survived the Deluge to enter into a new system of things.—Luke 16:9.

There is no question about it. Representing the Most High God Jehovah is a great honor and presents a real challenge. It has a sound Scriptural precedent and is within the capabilities of just about every dedicated Christian regardless of secular education. Those who successfully meet the challenge of house-to-house witnessing are able to do much good to their fellowmen and receive blessings from Jehovah God for it.

In Coming Issues

- Be Wise—Conduct Yourself as a Lesser One
- Basis for an Assured Faith
- Is God in Your Marriage?

THE KINGDOM— IS IT REAL TO YOU?

"My kingdom is no part of this world. If my kingdom were part of this world, my attendants would have fought that I should not be delivered up to the Jews. But, as it is, my kingdom is not from this source."

—John 18:36.

OVER 2,600 years ago, with prophetic vision Isaiah said concerning government and kingdom:

"For there has been a child born to us, there has been a son given to us; and the princely rule [government] will come to be upon his shoulder. And his name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. To the abundance of the princely rule [government] and to peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom in order to establish it firmly and to sustain it by means of justice and by means of righteousness, from now on and to time indefinite. The very zeal of Jehovah of armies will do this." (Isa. 9:6, 7; compare "An American Translation"; "Authorized Version.")

Centuries earlier, our heavenly Father spoke figuratively of this same kingdom and government as going into action. Spearheaded by the 'seed of His woman,' it was to strike a deathblow to the arch-enemy of the Kingdom government.—Gen. 3:15.

1. (a) How are kingdom and government linked in Isaiah 9:6, 7? (b) Earlier, where were kingdom and government referred to figuratively?

² The Creator of heaven and earth did not let that original promise die. Years later, Jehovah told his friend Abraham: "*I will bless those who bless you, and him that calls down evil upon you I shall curse, and all the families of the ground will certainly bless themselves by means of you.*" (Gen. 12:3)

The blessing to "*all the families of the ground*" would take place only through fulfillment of that first promise, and this Abraham recognized. Hence, the Christian apostle Paul reports: "By faith [Abraham] resided as an alien in the land of the promise *as in a foreign land*, and dwelt in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the very same promise. For he was awaiting the city [kingdom] having real foundations, the builder and creator of which city is God." (Heb. 11:9, 10) Abraham was so intent on his hope in that Kingdom government that he *acted as a foreigner* and an alien resident, even though residing in the Promised Land.

³ How do we personally look upon this world? Do we see ourselves as 'foreigners' and 'aliens,' even though we may dwell in the land of our birth with our own race? Are others in our community viewing us as being different? Do they see us as set apart? If not, how strong is our faith in the Kingdom government? Are we merely 'blending in' with our community? Or, are we God's friends, as was Abraham?—Jas. 2:23.

2. How did Abraham demonstrate his faith in the Kingdom government promise?

3. What questions might we ask ourselves about our faith in the Kingdom government?

⁴ Jehovah kept that hope glowing within Abraham by reminding him much later: “I shall surely bless you and I shall surely multiply your seed like the stars of the heavens and like the grains of sand that are on the seashore; and your seed will take possession of the gate of his enemies. And by means of your seed all nations of the earth will certainly bless themselves due to the fact that you have listened to my voice.” (Gen. 22:17, 18)

Actually, by means of the same “seed” mentioned at Genesis 3:15, not just some but *all nations of the earth* would bless themselves. Yes, and so would every *individual* in those nations, regardless of race and whether rich or poor, provided that person recognizes and acknowledges the importance of that “seed.” Indeed, as matters turn out, “everyone exercising faith in him [will] not be destroyed but have everlasting life.” The opportunity is there for many to be subjects of that government, if they exercise faith.—John 3:16; Acts 10:34, 35.

⁵ How do we know that Jesus Christ was, indeed, that principal “seed” of Abraham? With startling frankness, Paul says: “Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. It says, not: ‘And to seeds,’ as in the case of many such, but as in the case of one: ‘And to your seed,’ who is Christ.” (Gal. 3:16) Then, in writing Ephesian Christians, the apostle points to Jehovah’s way of handling matters with regard to unifying Jesus’ disciples under Christ, the promised “Seed” and King, and bringing the rest of mankind on earth into harmony with God through His Son. Paul wrote:

“It is according to his good pleasure which he purposed in himself for an administra-

tion at the full limit of the appointed times, namely, to gather all things together again in the Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth.”—Eph. 1:8-10.

KINGDOM GOVERNMENT BECOMES THE ISSUE

⁶ Prior to his earthly sojourn, “the Christ” had acted as the Word (or, *Logos*), the mouthpiece of our heavenly Father. (John 1:1) So Jesus knew of the prophecies recorded at Genesis 3:15 and Isaiah 9:6, 7. He was aware of the words directed to Abraham. (Gen. 12:3; 22:17, 18) Additionally, he was conscious of the fact that he would be the one to fulfill the wonderful promises related to the promised seed and the Kingdom government.

⁷ During Jesus’ earthly sojourn and particularly his three-and-a-half-year ministry, he drew attention to that kingly role. Such expressions as “the kingdom of God is in your midst” and “the kingdom of God has drawn near” were heard from his lips. By means of his many illustrations and parables, Jesus drew attention to that kingdom.—Matt. 13:1-52; Mark 1:14, 15; Luke 17:21.

⁸ As the King-designate, Jesus also did many miraculous things. Through the power of the holy spirit, he walked on water. He gave sight to the blind and hearing to the deaf. Jesus healed the sick and the lame, and restored the dead to life. Why, if such a man were facing a television interviewer today, just imagine the probable line of questioning! ‘Are you the man who walked on water? How did you give sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf and life to the dead—how is this possible?’ Well, when before the “interviewer” Pontius Pilate, what did Jesus Christ do?

4. Who stand to benefit by recognition of the “seed” of heavenly government, and what must they do to benefit?

5. As the promised “Seed” and King, what will be accomplished through Christ?

6. Why was Jesus aware of his future role in Kingdom government?

7. How did Jesus draw attention to his kingly role?

8. What miraculous things did Jesus do?

⁹ Jesus outstandingly made *the Kingdom* the issue. Pilate 'ate out of Christ's hand,' as it were, in following and emphasizing the *theme of Kingdom government*. Of course, Pilate had no choice, owing to the deft way that Jesus handled matters in those closing hours of his earthly life. Let us take our Bibles and turn to the Gospel of John, chapter 18, verse 33.

¹⁰ In his first question directed to Jesus, Pilate asked, "Are you the king of the Jews?" So, in the Roman governor's mind, the theme had already been set. It was the very theme that needed to be pursued that day, for when Pilate had asked the Jews what accusation they were bringing against Jesus, they had said: "This man we found subverting our nation and forbidding the paying of taxes to Caesar and saying he himself is Christ *a king*." Fittingly, then, Pilate asked Jesus: "Are you the king of the Jews?"—Luke 23:1-3.

¹¹ If you had been in Jesus' place and had been asked the same question, how would you have replied? Would you have related all the things you had or had not done in an effort to make your judgment lighter, thus possibly avoiding a death sentence? This would be the normal reaction of most, but it was not that of Jesus. He might have been able to lead Pilate off the theme of the Kingdom. But Kingdom government really was the issue. Down through the decades the Kingdom always has been the issue, and now, with God's modern-day people, the issue is still the Kingdom. It was in Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, America, Australia, Canada and other parts of the earth during World War II. The question has been, Which government is supreme in an individual's life—man's

9. When Jesus was before Pilate, what outstandingly was pushed to the fore?

10. What was Pilate's first question to Jesus, and why was it so fitting?

11. (a) To answer Pilate's further question, what might Jesus have done? (b) What has always been the principal issue with God's people?

or God's? In recent times, too, the issue remains the same, whether in Malawi, China, the Soviet Union, or any other land. The principal issue is not one of blood transfusion or some other prohibition, but always finally, Which government is ultimately superior in a person's life?

¹² Jesus did not answer Pilate's question directly, but replied:

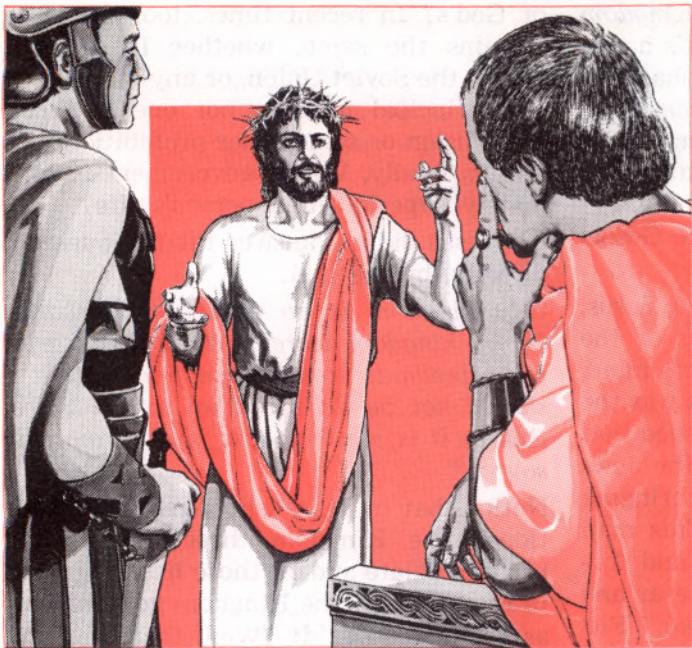
"My kingdom is no part of this world. If my kingdom were part of this world, my attendants would have fought that I should not be delivered up to the Jews. But, as it is, my kingdom is not from this source."

Notice that in Jesus' short reply he mentioned the Kingdom three times. This brought Pilate and all those listening back to the theme of the Kingdom government, as Pilate then said: "Well, then, are you a king?" (John 18:36, 37) The scene was firmly set on that dramatic stage, and no one would be able to overlook the reason for Christ's being on trial. Notice the sequence of events. Jesus responded and said: "*You yourself are saying that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone that is on the side of the truth listens to my voice.*"—John 18:37.

¹³ At this point Pilate said to the religious leaders and the Jewish mob: "I find no crime in this man." However, the crowd became insistent and told Pilate how Jesus' Kingdom teaching had spread throughout Judea, starting from Galilee. At that time Herod Antipas was tetrarch in Galilee and was aspiring to the kingship of the Jews. To Pilate, what could be more fitting than that Herod should be confronted by Jesus, since Herod was in Jerusalem at the time?

12. How did Jesus further draw attention to the Kingdom, and what question did this now cause Pilate to utter?

13. How was the Kingdom issue further emphasized in Herod's meeting with Jesus?



The Kingdom was real to Jesus

So he sent Jesus to Herod, who questioned Jesus at length, in the hope that he would perform some sign. But Jesus, Jehovah's anointed King, had no desire to belittle his kingship just to satisfy Herod's curiosity. He remained silent. Frustrated, would-be king Herod made fun of Jesus' kingship, having his soldiers clothe Jesus with a regal garment and sending him back to Pilate.—Luke 23:4-11.

¹⁴ Though Pilate befriended Herod from that day, it did Herod no good. In passing, we may note the contrast between the final outcome to Herod and to Jesus. History relates that, some years later, the ambitious Herod was egged on by his adulterous wife, Herodias, to go to Rome and request kingship from the emperor Caligula. But this angered Caesar, who banished Herod to Gaul. Herod lost both his position and his wealth. Jesus, for his part, had refused to be made an earthly king. He had di-

vested himself of everything he might have possessed here on earth. (Matt. 8:20; John 6:15) He humbled himself, becoming completely submissive to Jehovah's will. He rejoiced to do that will and to make the *heavenly* kingdom his goal. "For the joy that was set before him," he endured every indignity and torture that his enemies could heap upon him, knowing that his integrity to the death would qualify him for the glorious kingship that lay ahead of him.—Heb. 12:2; Matt. 25:31.

¹⁵ Once again, Jesus stood before Pilate. And once again the Kingdom issue came to the fore, as Pilate asked the Jewish mob: "Do you . . . wish me to release to you the king of the Jews?" But it did not end there. The Roman soldiers picked up the theme that kingship and government were at issue. In mockery, they made a crown of thorns and took a purple outer garment and put these on Jesus. They slapped him on the face, calling him the king of the Jews. (John 18:39-19:3) There is no indication that Jesus tried to remove that crown of thorns. It remained on his head, and that served to highlight the issue at stake. No one was to be left in doubt. When Pilate suggested to the Jews that they take Jesus and impale him themselves, they very artfully but falsely focused on the issue as an infringement on Roman governmental authority, saying: "If you release this man, you are not a friend of Caesar. Every man making himself a king speaks against Caesar."—John 19:12.

14. With regard to kingship, what would be the final outcome to Herod and to Jesus?

15. How was the issue of kingship highlighted by the discussion when Jesus was before Pilate?

¹⁶ It was as though Pilate served God's purpose on that day, as Cyrus the Persian had in the past. (Compare Isaiah 45:1-7.) Next, Pilate began to climax matters by saying: "See! Your *king!*" At that, the Jews demanded Jesus' impalement, whereupon Pilate asked: "Shall I impale your *king?*" Their response? "We have no king but Caesar." (John 19:14, 15) In essence, these people themselves were bearing witness concerning the issue over which Christ was about to be killed, and Jesus did not need to say a word. The matter was being very well emphasized by their own mouths.

¹⁷ Emphasis on the issue of Kingdom government finally was highlighted by Pilate's action in having placed on Jesus' torture stake a title written in Hebrew, Latin and Greek. All present that day could read it and would not be left in doubt as to why the impalement took place. This title said: "Jesus the Nazarene

16. How did those present at Jesus' trial bear witness to the issue over which Christ was about to be killed?

17. How did Pilate's final action with regard to Jesus stress the issue of Kingdom government?

the *King of the Jews.*" When the Jewish chief priests saw it, they were incensed and said to Pilate: "Do not write 'The King of the Jews,' but that *he said*, 'I am King of the Jews.'" However, Pilate replied: "What I have written I have written."—John 19:19-22.

¹⁸ The dramatic events of that trialsome day should make very evident to all Christians what their lives should be centered on today. Every dedicated servant of Jehovah should examine just how real that Kingdom is to him or to her. Do we see ourselves as prospective subjects of that government? What efforts are we making as advocates of Kingdom rule? How zealous is our activity in support of that government? In the succeeding article, we will find good reason for intense interest in the issue of the Kingdom. And we will note that there is need for a sense of urgency in manifesting such interest. 'May the Lord be with the spirit we show' in upholding the Kingdom!—2 Tim. 4:22.

18. (a) What should our lives be centered on today?
(b) What questions should we ask ourselves?

HAVE FAITH IN THE KINGDOM!

"Now as for the times and the seasons, brothers, you need nothing to be written to you. For you yourselves know quite well that Jehovah's day is coming exactly as a thief in the night."—1 Thessalonians 5:1, 2.

AS THE "Word," or *Logos*, Jesus Christ was used extensively by our heavenly

1, 2. How has Jehovah continued to use the resurrected Jesus Christ?

Father. (John 1:1-3; Col. 1:16) But Jehovah God's use of Jesus continued even after his death and resurrection. This is well emphasized by the enlightening comments of the apostle Paul.

² The apostle plainly declared that God has purposed to reconcile all things in heaven and on earth to him, doing so through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. (Col. 1:19, 20) This harmonizes with Paul's statement to the effect that Jehovah has arranged for 'gathering together

again in Christ all things in heaven and on earth.' (Eph. 1:10; Phil. 2:9-11) But climactic developments in this regard would also involve the establishment of God's Messianic kingdom and the dramatic coming of "Jehovah's day." (1 Thess. 5:1, 2) The Scriptures make abundantly clear the role of Christ since his ascension to heaven over 1,900 years ago. We do well to give our rapt attention to his significant place in Jehovah's arrangement.

³ Because of his role as the *Logos*, or "Word," prior to coming to the earth, Jesus was very much aware of the prophetic words spoken concerning the Kingdom government. Accordingly, as a man, Jesus invited the reader to use discernment when meditating on Daniel's words having to do with "the time of the end." (Dan. 12:4; Matt. 24:15-22) Let us, then, turn to the book of Daniel and consider some things Jesus undoubtedly perceived as the *Logos*, or "Word." For apparently he was the One used by our heavenly Father to cause the prophets of ancient times to write as they did.

⁴ As we look into the book of Daniel with a discerning eye, three interesting expressions particularly come to our attention. The first is found at Daniel 2:44: "*In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be brought to ruin. And the kingdom itself will not be passed on to any other people. It will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, and it itself will stand to times indefinite.*"

A related expression is found at Daniel 7:13, 14, which says:

"I kept on beholding in the visions of the night, and, see there! with the clouds of the heavens someone like a son of man happened to be coming; and to the Ancient

of Days he gained access, and they brought him up close even before that One. And to him there were given rulership and dignity and kingdom, that the peoples, national groups and languages should all serve even him. His rulership is an indefinitely lasting rulership that will not pass away, and his kingdom one that will not be brought to ruin."

Finally, Daniel 12:1 has this to say:

"During that time Michael will stand up, the great prince who is standing in behalf of the sons of your 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."

Here, in three passages of his prophecy, Daniel makes reference to the establishment of the Kingdom government, and this in the hands of no one else but 'the son of man,' or Michael. These expressions clearly refer to Christ Jesus in Kingdom power.—Rev. 12:7-10.

⁵ You will notice that in the foregoing expressions of Paul and Daniel a time factor is mentioned for the appearance and the taking up of power by the heavenly government. If we are conscious of the time factor, then 1 Thessalonians 5:1 most truly applies to us when it says:

"Now as for the times and the seasons, brothers, you need nothing to be written to you."

If we truly discern the full import of God's Word, particularly as we move deeply into "the time of the end," we will not be taken by surprise. We will surely be persons of discernment concerning events having to do with the time of the "conclusion of the system of things." (Matt. 24:3) Let us, then, examine the background of the three expressions made by Daniel relative to the setting up of the Kingdom government.

3. Why was Jesus aware of the prophetic words spoken about Kingdom government?

4. As regards Kingdom government, what are we told at Daniel 2:44; 7:13, 14 and 12:1?

5. Is it Scriptural to be conscious of a time factor in connection with the taking up of power by the Kingdom government?

DANIEL'S WARNING WORDS

⁶ Many of us are familiar with the dream image described in Daniel chapter two and know that, with the aid of Jehovah's holy spirit, the prophet told King Nebuchadnezzar what this image meant. It represented a succession of world kingdoms, starting with Babylon. We are interested particularly in the "fourth kingdom," concerning which Daniel said:

"As for the fourth kingdom, it will prove to be strong like iron. Forasmuch as iron is crushing and grinding everything else, so, like iron that shatters, it will crush and shatter even all these."—Dan. 2:40.

⁷ Which kingdom does this ironlike one prove to be? In Bible history, the "fourth kingdom," or world power, counting down from Babylon, is the Roman Empire, with Medo-Persia and Greece in between. In course of time the Roman Empire was subdivided, for better administrative purposes, into an eastern empire and a western empire. It was out of this western empire that there came the outgrowth of the British Empire. As a result of the revolution of the American colonies, the United States of America was established. For vital fundamental reasons these two countries found it convenient to cooperate together militarily and otherwise so as to form in effect the Anglo-American World Power.

⁸ However, with regard to that "fourth kingdom"—in its original identity as the Roman Empire—Daniel tells us in another of his prophecies:

"After this I kept on beholding in the visions of the night, and, see there! a fourth beast, fearsome and terrible and unusually strong. And it had teeth of iron, big ones. It was devouring and crushing, and what

6. At Daniel 2:40, what is said about the "fourth kingdom"?

7. What is this "fourth kingdom"?

8, 9. What similarities are there between Daniel 2:40 and Daniel 7:7?

was left it was treading down with its feet. And it was something different from all the other beasts that were prior to it, and it had ten horns."—Dan. 7:7.

⁹ In examining Daniel chapter seven, it will be noted that the prophet is outlining the same four kingdoms, or world powers, as those presented in chapter two. But instead of describing such powers as parts of an image, starting with the head of gold, he describes them as beasts. In the seventh chapter, he starts with a lion (Babylon) and concludes with the unusually strong fourth beast having iron teeth. It is no coincidence, then, that Daniel 7:7 corresponds very closely with Daniel 2:40. In both these texts, grinding, crushing and fearsome ironlike strength are clearly associated with this kingdom of Rome. But the question remains: How does this "fourth kingdom" come to represent two world powers?

¹⁰ Let us read on, in Daniel 7:8:

"I kept on considering the horns, and, look! another horn, a small one, came up in among them, and there were three of the first horns that were plucked up from before it. And, look! there were eyes like the eyes of a man in this horn, and there was a mouth speaking grandiose things."

How interesting! This fourth kingdom, the Roman World Power, starts growing another horn out of its symbolic beastlike head. And three of the existing horns are plucked up to make way for this outgrowth. What does all of this mean? Let us look at the facts of history.

HISTORY CONFIRMS DANIEL'S WARNING

¹¹ We actually 'need nothing more to be written to us' because all is already written down in God's inspired Word. Additionally, if we are truly perceptive spiritually, universal events will not overtake

10. The 'small horn' has what origin?

11. Why is it of interest to note how the Roman Empire fulfilled in detail events described by Daniel?

us as a thief might overtake the unwary. But we do need to be well informed Scripturally, and it is of interest to note how the Roman Empire fulfilled in detail the events described in Daniel's prophetic visions.

¹² Rome, from its inception, was very much a military power, and it extended its influence and control widely. Britain, at that time basically under the influence of tribal kingship, became part of the Roman Empire, and throughout the British Isles there are many evidences of such domination. These include the wall Emperor Hadrian built across the northern part of England.

¹³ As Rome became more affluent and increasingly decadent because of the licentious living of its ruling class, it diminished as a military power. By the time of Nero and successive emperors, the decline of Rome's military might was clearly evident. But the perpetrators of this empire devised a scheme to keep it going as a dominant factor in world affairs for centuries to come, even though not as a military power. How was this done?

¹⁴ Coming forward into the third and fourth centuries C.E., it appears that Rome became very much a religio-political power, in addition to being a military power. Artfully, a scheme was devised whereby the papal authority in Rome was able to maintain control far and wide over a great portion of the then known inhabited earth. This arrangement was known as the feudal system and, with the aid of it the Holy Roman Empire with Papal Rome as its focal point, dictated the course of world affairs for at least 1,000 years.

¹⁵ Under the feudal system, the vast majority of people eked out a living as peasants

12. To what extent did the domination of Rome affect the British Isles?

13, 14. (a) At first, Rome's power was of what kind? (b) But what developed in the third and fourth centuries?

15. How did the papacy maintain control for several hundred years?

ants in abject ignorance and poverty. From their meager livelihood, they were required to support the indolent lords of the manor houses and castles throughout Europe, including the British Isles. In turn, these feudal lords were compelled to pay tribute, or tax, to the king in whose domain they found themselves. Then each of the kings, whether in England, Saxony or other parts of Europe, basically were vassal-like in their existence and were required to pay feudal dues or tribute to the papacy at Rome. Hence, the papacy grew wealthy both in riches and authority throughout that long period often called the Dark Ages.

¹⁶ Against this historical backdrop, how apt seems Daniel's prophetic description of a kingdom represented by the iron legs of the "immense image"! (Dan. 2:31) And how appropriate the fearsome, crushing and devouring beast with iron teeth represented in Daniel chapter seven! First, it rampaged throughout Europe, subjecting everything in its path by military might. Then it maintained and further consolidated its power by political, religious and commercial enterprise and subterfuge. But what about this outgrowth, this 'small horn,' that is seen to grow out of the head of the fearsome "fourth beast" representing Rome? When does this occur?

THE 'SMALL HORN' APPEARS

¹⁷ Until the year 1533 C.E., British kingship remained vassal-like in makeup, being subject to the papacy. The following year, however, King Henry VIII became the supreme head of the Catholic Church of England. He severed ties with Rome and they with him. Now the wealth of the British Isles, much of which previously had been siphoned off by the Roman Cath-

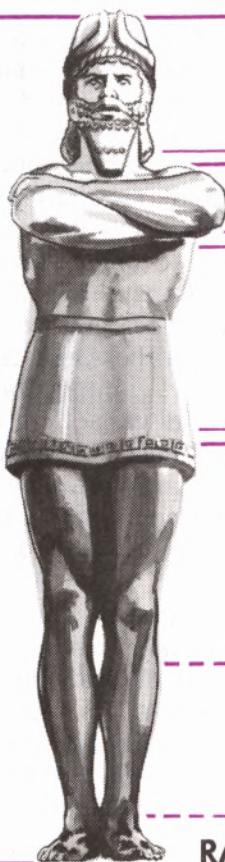
16. (a) How is the Holy Roman Empire well described by Daniel? (b) What is seen growing out of the head of the "fourth beast," Rome?

17. How did the growth of the 'small horn' begin?

SYMBOLISMS IN DANIEL'S KINGDOM PROPHECIES

The immense image
(Daniel 2:31-45)

The four huge beasts
(Daniel 7:2-22)



BABYLONIA
from 625 B.C.E.



MEDO-PERSIA
from 539 B.C.E.



GREECE
from 331 B.C.E.



ROME
from 30 B.C.E.

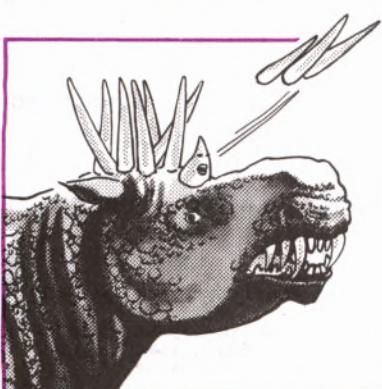


BRITAIN & AMERICA
from 1763 C.E.

RADICAL POPULAR MOVEMENTS

The small horn appears

(Daniel 7:8)



Emperor Constantine (312-337 C.E.)
establishes eastern capital, in addition
to Rome from which Anglo-American Power
descends

Henry VIII severs ties with Rome (1534 C.E.)



From time of Elizabeth I (1558-1603 C.E.),
Britain proceeds to 'pluck out the three horns'
of Spain, Netherlands and finally France

olic Church, was being accumulated under the headship of the king of England over the English Catholic Church. (The Catholic Church of England retained the same format as the Roman Catholic Church and, to a large extent, does to this day.) The power of the Holy Roman Empire was beginning to wane, but from it a 'small horn' was growing.

¹⁸ A few decades roll by and Britain finds itself under the rulership of Queen Elizabeth I. By this time the accumulated wealth of the feudal system within the British Isles is having its effect. A naval fleet of some prowess has emerged. In a short while, under the guidance of such noted men as Drake, Raleigh and Hawkins, the British fleet makes itself felt in conflict with the naval powers of Spain, the Netherlands and France (all still under Rome's ritual domination), causing defeat to all, including the Spanish Armada. As a consequence, Britain rules the waves and boasts about it.

¹⁹ What does Daniel 7:8 say? Yes, three "horns" would be plucked up from before this outgrowth, the 'small horn,' and it would speak "grandiose things." So here, with the emergence of the British World Power, later joined by America, we have the absolute fulfillment of this grand prophecy. The Anglo-American World Power is an outgrowth of the Roman Empire. It is Rome's "baby." Hence, it is prophetically represented as growing out of the "head" of Rome, the "fourth beast" with iron teeth. By paralleling Daniel chapters two and seven, it is easy to see how the 'legs of iron' represent two successive world powers and not just one.
—Dan. 2:32, 33.

18. In what position was Britain by the time of Queen Elizabeth I, and what did this mean for France, the Netherlands and Spain?

19. By paralleling Daniel chapters two and seven, concerning what do we now see a grand fulfillment?

WHERE ARE WE IN THE STREAM OF TIME?

²⁰ According to Daniel 2:41-43, we note that clearly identifiable world kingdoms would pass. Do the two 'legs of iron,' then, each represent a separate world power? No, not so, any more than the two 'arms of silver' in the upper part of the image stand for two world powers in the heyday of Medo-Persia. Those two legs and the iron of the feet develop together out of the Roman Empire, and especially from the fourth century, when Constantine leaves his western capital at Rome to establish an eastern capital at Constantinople. Out of this divided empire descend various dependent nations, with the Anglo-American World Power finally gaining dominance. During the two world wars of our century, those "legs" proved indeed to be like "iron" as the Anglo-American World Power's military might crushed opposing armies and used nuclear armament in war for the first time.

²¹ Here, we come down to the extremity of this immense image. It still represents the Anglo-American World Power. But now it has a weakness. Its feet and toes have lost the full ironlike strength of the legs. For they are made "partly of iron and partly of molded clay." Daniel interprets this, saying:

"Whereas you beheld iron mixed with moist clay, they will come to be mixed with the offspring of mankind; but they will not prove to be sticking together, this one to that one, just as iron is not mixing with molded clay."—Dan. 2:33, 43.

²² Does this mean that the modern socialistic and communistic rulers become a world power? No, for Bible prophecy indicates that those political elements of a

20. How may we trace the development of the 'legs of iron' down into our 20th century?

21. What weakness appears finally at the extremity of the image?

22. (a) Why do not the socialistic and communistic rulers here enter into the picture? (b) Who, then, is "the offspring of mankind"? (c) What has resulted with regard to the "iron" and the "clay"?

popular kind will never rise to world dominance. The last part of the terrible image, as it comes to its extremity in the passage of time, is still made largely of iron. It is still the world power that grew out of the Holy Roman Empire. But this ironlike power is weakened at the end of the age by the intrusion of a soft, claylike element—a movement calling for the people to have a bigger voice in affairs, as through trade unions, protest activities and the like. "The offspring of mankind," the so-called common man, endeavors to have his "say" in the way things are run. This we observe today, not only in those western European countries that were once part of the Holy Roman Empire but outstandingly in the realm of the Anglo-American World Power. Here it is that work slowdowns, strikes and labor unrest have greatly weakened governmental authority that once was like "iron." As labor fights capital, "the offspring of mankind" tries to dictate how it will work and live. Has this brought about a stable condition between the workingman and the government? God's Word simply says: "They will *not* prove to be sticking together."

²³ Where are we, then, in the stream of time? At the conclusion of verse 43 there is no more "image" left. We have come down to the very "toes"! We are living in that time when the development of man-made government reaches its sorry end. The climax of the ages is upon us! Daniel has told us what to expect. Yes, Christ's

23. (a) What does it mean that we have now reached the "toes" of the image? (b) What may we expect next? (c) At this "time of the end," what should we be moved to do?

kingdom that is to rule all peoples, the "stone" cut out of the "mountain" of Jehovah's universal sovereignty, is about to hurl itself at the feet of the terrible image, toppling and demolishing the entire structure of oppressive man-rule. That will mark the "time of distress such as has not been made to occur since there came to be a nation until that time." But it will be followed swiftly by the most wonderful period of all human history, Christ's 1,000-year reign. Can any true Christian sit apathetically and placidly watch events at this "time of the end" without being moved to support the Kingdom government? Now is the time to show whose side we are on, Jehovah's or Satan's!—Dan. 2:44, 45; 7:14; 12:1, 4.

²⁴ As 1 Thessalonians 5:1 says, we need nothing to be written to us regarding the times and seasons! It is all there in God's Word. It is just a matter of 'digging it out.' So let us do as Hebrews 10:35-39 suggests: "Do not, therefore, throw away your freedom 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." Let us have abiding, motivating faith in the Kingdom!

24. What kind of people will we continue to be, and why?

"The kingdom of the world did become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will rule as king forever and ever."—Rev. 11:15.

Who really rules the world?

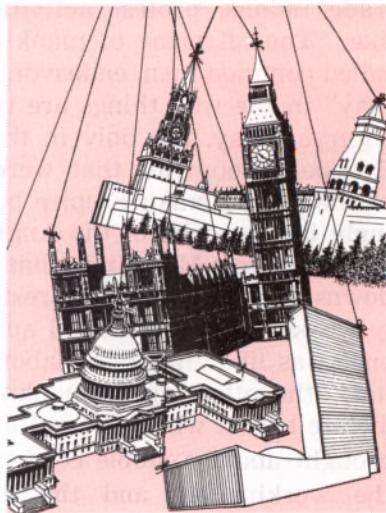
SO ALIKE has been the course of the nations over thousands of years that historians have advanced the theory that history repeats itself. Wars, oppression and intimidation have been common in the rise and fall of nations. Why?

Could it be that a common invisible power has dominated all nations? Has the same guiding force been responsible for their similar acts of violence?

There is no need to guess at the matter. The Bible clearly proves that an intelligent superforce has been influencing both men and nations. In God's Word, Jesus Christ himself calls that superforce "the ruler of this world." (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11) Who is he?

To help answer this question, consider the situation at the beginning of Jesus' ministry here on earth. The Bible tells us that after Jesus was baptized he went into the wilderness, where he was tempted by Satan the Devil. Part of that tempting took the form of three proposals made by the Devil to Jesus. The third of these is described in this way:

"Again the Devil took him along to an unusually high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory,



and he said to him: ‘All these things I will give you if you fall down and do an act of worship to me.’”—Matt. 4:8, 9.

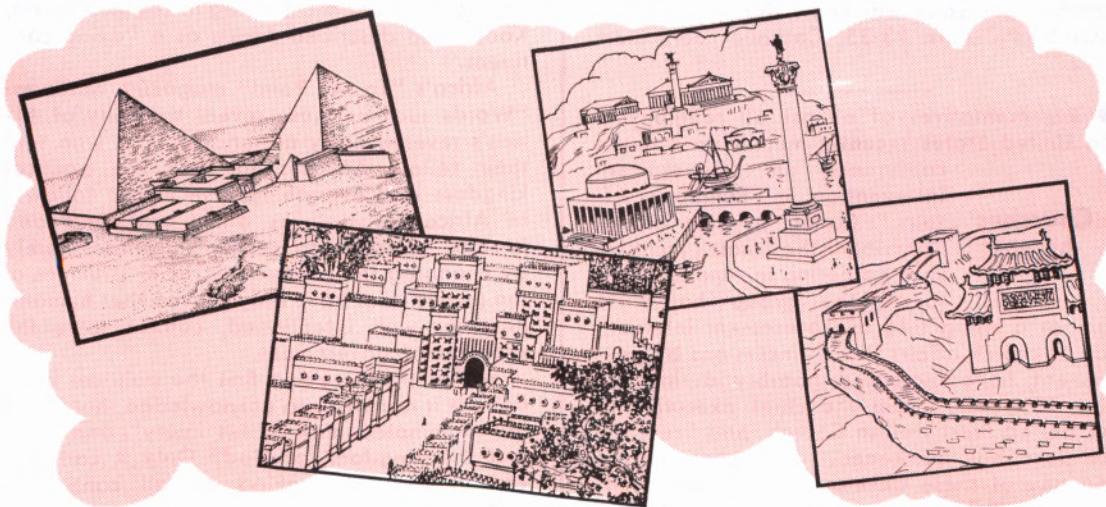
What did the Devil offer Christ? It was “*all the kingdoms of the world*.” Were all the world governments really the Devil’s property? Yes, for how else could he have offered them to Christ? Satan was the invisible ruler of them. For that reason Jesus later said: “My kingdom is no part of this world.”—John 18:36.

The Bible clearly explains that all the nations are under the Devil’s control, saying: “The whole world is lying in the power of the wicked one.”

(1 John 5:19) God’s Word, in fact, calls Satan “the god of this system of things.”—2 Cor. 4:4.

This information helps us to understand why it is that nations hate and try to destroy one another when it is the natural desire of all normal persons to live at peace. Yes, “Satan . . . is misleading the entire inhabited earth.”—Rev. 12:9; Eph. 6:12.

Shortly, however, all of this will change. The time is near at hand when the resurrected Jesus Christ will bring to their end Satan and his wicked world, while preserving God’s servants alive forever.—Rev. 20:1-3; 1 John 2:17.



INSIGHT ON THE NEWS

● According to "GEO" magazine, "many of [Belgium's] leaders are asking whether [its] 151st year might not be its last." Why? It seems

Hate Among "Brothers" Splits Nation

that among the nation's 4 million French-speaking Walloons and 5.5 million Dutch-speaking Flemings "mutual disdain [due to ethnic pride] has split the country deeply, so that today, the national life of Belgium is at a near standstill." Actual physical violence between the two feuding factions reportedly has occurred on a number of occasions.

Yet almost 98 percent of these people are Roman Catholic "brothers." Rather than religion's acting as a uniting factor, religious institutions and ceremonies are just as divided as the people. "The Catholic University of Leuven (Louvain), the alma mater of Erasmus, has been split . . . into linguistic halves," reports "GEO." "Nearly all the movable assets of the old institution were methodically divvied up, and today there is only the most minimal communication between the divorced partners."

Such deep divisions based on ethnic or linguistic pride cause thinking persons to ask why the members of a church that professes to be Christ's true one are not exemplary in the quality that Jesus said would characterize his true followers: "By this love you have for one another, everyone will know that you are my disciples."—John 13:35, Catholic "Jerusalem Bible."

● Representatives of almost all religions in the United States recently met in an unusual conference on "Government Intervention in Religious Affairs."

Churches Afraid

Called by one official "possibly the most inclusive such gathering in American history," the group hopes to combat a rising tide of government intervention in church affairs. "Such incursions by government have increased notably during the past 10 years," said the chief executive of the United Presbyterian Church, and "recently the pace has quickened." He observed that "no one of these developments, taken by itself, is sufficiently alarming to necessitate a

convocation like this . . . But the pattern that they form when viewed together is an alarming one, and that is why we are here."

Meanwhile, 2,000 delegates at a joint meeting of National Religious Broadcasters and the National Association of Evangelicals were told that "secular humanists have declared war on Christianity in this country and they are progressing very rapidly."

Such a situation in the United States would have been unthinkable even a decade ago, but times have changed for religion. The Bible foresaw this development, and, calling false religion a "great harlot" because of her political meddling, declares that her former political lovers would begin to "hate the harlot and will make her devastated and naked." (Rev. 17:1, 16) Evidently such political resentment is beginning to rise.

● "Our ancient continent is now on the brink of disaster, hurtling towards the abyss of confrontation, caught in the grip of violence," says Edem Kodjo, secretary-general of the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

"Dying Continent"

"Gone are the smiles, the joy of life from its sombre face. Can there be nothing, nothing left but a hardening of attitudes, a heightening of antagonisms, the violent upsurge of fratricidal conflict?" At an OAU-sponsored economic meeting in Lagos, Nigeria, Kodjo also described Africa as a "dying continent."

Africa's "To the Point" magazine observes: "Words such as these reveal the folly of Africa's revered early nationalists . . . who told their fellow Africans to seek the political kingdom and everything else would follow." In Africa, as well as other continents and islands, attempts to rectify injustices merely by changing the political or racial structure of the government have only proved that humans, however well intentioned, cannot solve the problem of government.

Rather than seeking first the political kingdom, is it not wiser to acknowledge that "man has dominated man to his injury" and 'seek first the kingdom' of God? Only it can give eternal life to mankind on all continents.—Eccl. 8:9; Matt. 6:33.

Attend the 1981 "Kingdom Loyalty" District Conventions

TRULY unique among the blessings Jehovah's Witnesses enjoy are their annual district conventions. What fine reports we received at headquarters regarding the benefits obtained by those who attended last year's "Divine Love" District Conventions! How greatly our brothers enjoyed a rich spiritual feast consisting of discourses, demonstrations, experiences, dramas and releases, as well as the opportunity to share in volunteer service and in the house-to-house ministry! As a result, all returned home with a keener appreciation of Jehovah God's great love and with an increased determination to show love to their brothers and to those on the outside. Up to the present time we have received reports regarding these district conventions from 85 lands, where a total of 3,696,191 were in attendance and where all together 40,996 were baptized.

This year's "Kingdom Loyalty" District Conventions promise to be just as interesting and upbuilding as were those "Divine Love" District Conventions. What a sterling quality loyalty is! How timely to have that as our convention theme this year! Loyalty goes beyond faithfulness, which has the thought primarily of dependability. Loyalty implies steadfast attachment in spite of temptations or pressures, for which reason the term cannot be applied to the brute creation, or to inanimate things, as can 'faithfulness.'—Ps. 89:37.

Most fittingly we read of Jehovah as being preeminently the loyal One. "Who will not really fear you, Jehovah, and glorify your name, because you alone are loyal?" He is "loyal in all his works." (Rev. 15:4; Ps. 145:17) Most fittingly God's firstborn Son is repeatedly referred to as "your loyal one." (Ps. 16:10; Acts 2:27) Similarly, God's faithful servants are many times referred to as "loyal ones," especially in the book of Psalms.—1 Sam. 2:9; Ps. 30:4; 50:5; 85:8; 145:10.

THE WATCHTOWER — MAY 15, 1981

Today, our Kingdom loyalty is under attack as never before. Satan, knowing that his time is short, rages in great anger against the loyal servants of Jehovah God. By means of his visible and invisible organization, Satan is bringing to bear on God's people the pressures of nationalism and fear of man, with temptations toward materialism, sexual and other kinds of immorality, apostasy, bitterness, apathy and rebellion. Truly these are difficult times, hard to deal with.—Rev. 12:12; 2 Tim. 3:1-5.

By our attending the "Kingdom Loyalty" Conventions, we will receive instruction, admonition, encouragement and exhortation on all the various ways we can and must show loyalty—to Jehovah, to his organization, to our brothers, to our families. Let us show loyalty by our very attendance at this convention, being present right from the opening song, if at all possible, to the concluding prayer each day. Concentrate on what is said from the platform, "paying more than the usual attention," and join in heartfelt singing of our Kingdom songs, for most of us the only active part in formal worship, as far as the program is concerned.—Heb. 2:1; Eph. 5:18, 19.

Loyalty to our brothers would include not being greedy as to the saving of seats. Loyal ones will also share in field service, will they not? And, of course, should we have a part on the program, let us do our very best, to Jehovah's praise and to the blessing of others and ourselves.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS
June 21: The Kingdom—Is It Real to You?
 Page 17. Songs to Be Used: 74, 119.
June 28: Have Faith in the Kingdom! Page 21.
 Songs to Be Used: 80, 1.

