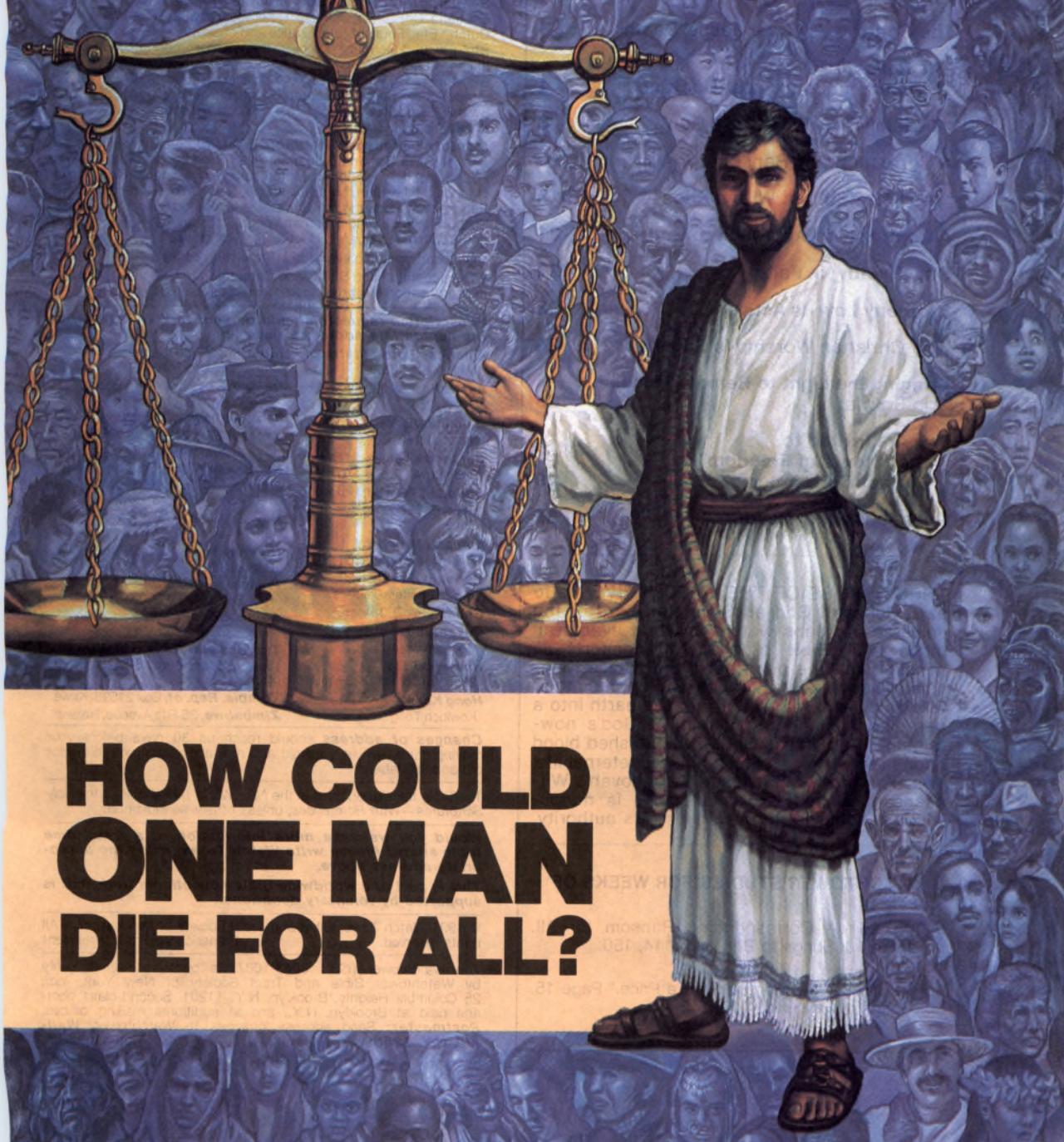


February 15, 1991

The Watchtower

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom



**HOW COULD
ONE MAN
DIE FOR ALL?**

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THE PURPOSE OF *THE WATCHTOWER* is to exalt Jehovah God as Sovereign Lord of the universe. It keeps watch on world events as these fulfill Bible prophecy. It comforts all peoples with the good news that God's Kingdom will soon destroy those who oppress their fellowmen and that it will turn the earth into a paradise. It encourages faith in God's now-reigning King, Jesus Christ, whose shed blood opens the way for mankind to gain eternal life. *The Watchtower*, published by Jehovah's Witnesses continuously since 1879, is nonpolitical. It adheres to the Bible as its authority.

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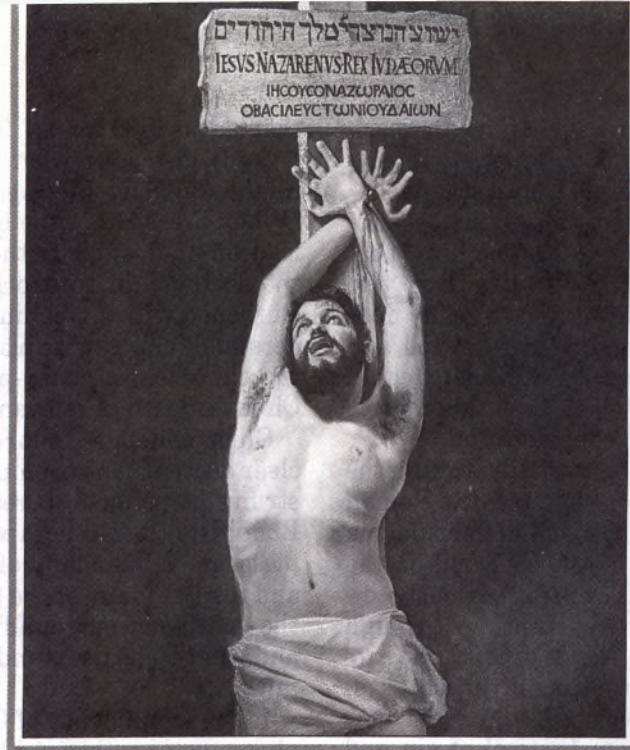
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THE CONTROVERSY OVER JESUS' DEATH

ON THE day of Passover 33 C.E., a triple execution took place. Three condemned men were herded to a site outside Jerusalem's walls and put to death in one of the most agonizing, humiliating ways: impalement on upright wooden stakes. Such executions were common in Roman times, so it might be expected that by now the Passover killings would long be forgotten. One of the slain men, though, was Jesus Christ. His death unleashed momentous religious change and controversy.

Nearly two thousand years have passed since that event, so you may be inclined to regard it as merely ancient history. However, are you aware that the controversy that arose is far from settled?

As you may know, millions hold that Jesus died for them. They fervently believe that Christ's death is the key to redemption and forgiveness of sins, that faith in his death is the means to salvation. Surprisingly, though, an article in the *Anglican Theological Review* reports that this cherished tenet is "in trouble." And the "trouble" is coming from religious leaders.

Explains the *Anglican Theological Review*: "The doctrine of atonement in Christian thought is in trouble because its biblical bases are in question, its formulation has become overladen with ephemeral [short-lived] notions . . . , and its expression in popular spirituality has taken on the form of personal emotionalism and uncritical self-justification." Indeed, both Protestant and

Catholic theologians have failed to reach any sort of agreement as to what, if anything, the death of Jesus Christ means.

You might feel that this is just squabbling by a few theological specialists, that it does not relate to your life. But give thought to this: If Jesus' death really does tie in with your standing before God and your prospects for everlasting existence (in heaven or anywhere else), then this controversy demands your consideration.

Why are the theologians still arguing the matter? Consider, for example, the Roman Catholic Church. It has well-defined dogma on the immortality of the soul and on the Trinity. Yet, the church is curiously indecisive regarding redemption through Christ's death. The *New Catholic Encyclopedia* admits: "Many and divergent systems have been developed to explain how man is delivered from the evil of sin and restored to grace . . . But none of these systems has been totally successful. . . . The theology of the Redemption is in some part unachieved and continues to pose itself as a problem in theology."

It should not be a surprise to you, then, that of the millions who fervently intone

that 'Jesus died for us,' few have more than a vague idea as to what that really means. As the *Anglican Theological Review* puts it: "When pressed . . . the believing Christian is often unable to cite the biblical source of the doctrine, or to explain how it works." Burdened with a teaching they neither understand nor can explain, worshipers in the churches are hard-pressed to see how Christ's death is relevant to their lives.

Christendom's failure to articulate a clear doctrine on redemption has also hamstrung her efforts to reach Jews, Hindus, Buddhists, and others with the Christian message. While many of such ones admire and respect many of the teachings of Jesus, the confusion surrounding Christ's death and what it means stands as a roadblock to faith.

Is the significance of Christ's death simply a mystery—beyond human comprehension? Or is there a reasonable, Bible-based explanation of it? These questions deserve your consideration, for the Bible makes this astonishing claim regarding Christ: 'Everyone exercising faith in him will not be destroyed but gain everlasting life.'

—John 3:16.

THE RANSOM CHRISTENDOM'S LOST DOCTRINE

THE ransom, the belief that Jesus died in exchange for sinful mankind, is fundamental to true Christianity. Yet, the doctrine has long been subject to criticism and ridicule by Christendom's theologians.

Why is that so? Did not Jesus himself say at Mark 10:45: "The Son of man came, not

to be ministered to, but to minister and to give his soul a ransom in exchange for many"?

Some have claimed that Jesus never uttered those words, that after his death these were fabricated under the influence of the apostle Paul. Others argue that "ransom" here is a figure of speech or that the

Protestant and Catholic theologians have developed numerous theories about redemption and the ransom, but what does the Bible teach?

doctrine comes from Greek mythology! So the ransom has virtually disappeared from church teachings.

You might well wonder, though, how early Christians understood the death of Jesus. Paul tells us at 2 Corinthians 5:14, 15: "The love the Christ has compels us, because this is what we have judged, that *one man died for all* . . . that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died for them and was raised up." How eloquently simple this doctrine was—utterly free of the complicated alterations it would later undergo at the hands of church theologians.

Is it possible that Paul invented this doctrine? No, for he explains at 1 Corinthians 15:3: "I handed on to you, among the first things, *that which I also received*, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." Clearly, long before Paul wrote his epistles, Christians already understood Jesus' death to be sacrificial, a real price paid to redeem sinful mankind, a ransom. Furthermore, as Paul indicates, they understood Christ's death to fulfill "the Scriptures," that is, prophecies such as Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53 in the Hebrew Scriptures, or "Old Testament."

Unanswered Questions

If you choose to investigate the facts for yourself, you will find that apostate teachings infiltrated Christianity back near the apostles' time. (Acts 20:29, 30; 2 Timothy 4:3, 4) Yet, belief in the ransom sacrifice of Christ persisted, as the writings of early Church Fathers show. However, when some later theologians delved into the ransom doctrine, they came up with some difficult



questions, such as, To whom was the ransom paid? And why was such payment necessary?

In the fourth century C.E., Gregory of Nyssa and others expounded the view that the ransom had been paid to Satan the Devil! Satan, they argued, had a hold on man, and a ransom was paid to him to free mankind. However, a contemporary named Gregory of Nazianzus saw a gaping hole in this theory. It implied that God was beholden to the Devil—absurd indeed! The idea of a ransom paid to the Devil caught on nonetheless and lingered for centuries.

Could the ransom have been paid to God himself? Gregory of Nazianzus felt that he saw problems with this idea too. Since 'we were not in bondage to [God],' why would a ransom need to be paid him? Furthermore, 'could the Father delight in the death of his Son' by demanding a ransom? Seemingly difficult questions that appeared to cast doubt upon the ransom itself.

Death of the Ransom

Your investigation of this matter might then take you up to the early 12th century. Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, attempted to answer these questions in his book *Cur Deus Homo* (Why God Became Man). The book taught that Christ's death served as the means of satisfying divine justice, though not as a ransom. Anselm held that to forgive sin by a ransom without

satisfying justice would amount to leaving sin uncorrected. "But God cannot properly leave anything uncorrected in His Kingdom," said Anselm. How, then, did God correct matters?

Arguing that 'sin dishonors God,' Anselm said that it would not have been enough "simply to restore what has been taken away" by Adam's sin. Since God had been insulted, a ransom—even the sacrifice of a perfect man—would not suffice. "In consideration of the insult offered," the cleric reasoned, "*more* than what was taken away must be rendered back." (Italics ours.) Anselm argued that this required the death of one who was "both God and man"!

Whatever your reaction to Anselm's teachings might be, they won over his contemporaries and continue to wield influence in our day. Why, in one stroke, Anselm had both reinforced the Trinity doctrine and dealt a death blow to the ransom, at least in Christendom! "Satisfaction" became the byword of theologians, the term "ransom" gradually fading into obscurity. Nevertheless, Anselm's theories were based almost entirely on specious logic, not on the Bible. And as time passed, scholars such as Thomas Aquinas began chipping away at Anselm's theory of "satisfaction" with clever logic of their own. Speculation became rife. Redemption theories multiplied, and the debate moved further from Scripture and deeper into human reasoning, philosophy, and mysticism.

The Reformation and the Ransom

Let us, though, move a little closer to our time. When the storm of the Protestant Reformation erupted in the 16th century, a radical group called the Socinians was born.* They denied that Jesus' death in any

* See "The Socinians—Why Did They Reject the Trinity?" in our companion journal *Awake!* of November 22, 1988.

way "merited salvation for us," calling such belief "fallacious, erroneous, and very pernicious . . . , repugnant both to Scripture and reason." (*The Racovian Catechism*) Since God forgives freely, no satisfaction of justice was necessary. Christ's death, they claimed, redeemed in that it moved men to imitate his perfect example.

Assaulted by these and other heresies, the Catholic Church launched a counter-attack, convoking the Council of Trent (from 1545 to 1563 C.E.). But while positions were taken on many doctrinal issues, the council proved vague and noncommittal regarding redemption. It spoke of the 'merit of Jesus Christ' and used the term "satisfaction" but scrupulously avoided the term "ransom." Consequently, the church stopped far short of committing itself to any clear-cut Scriptural position. The door of speculation remained wide open.

Why Religious Leaders Have Failed

Since the Council of Trent, theologians—Catholic and Protestant alike—have developed countless redemption theories. (See box on page 7.) Yet, no accord on the meaning of Christ's death is in sight. Theologians agree only in their disdain of the Scriptural term "ransom," preferring to ignore it, downplay it, or explain it away. The meaning of Christ's death is expounded in technical jargon, complex twists of fallacious logic, and high-sounding terms, such as "moral influence" and "representative physical satisfaction." Rather than building faith in Christ's death, Christendom's clergy have made his torture stake a confusing stumbling block.

What is the underlying reason for this abysmal failure? Catholic theologian Boniface A. Willems attributes it to the fact that theologians are "educated in a carefully-guarded isolation"—too far re-

A SAMPLING OF REDEMPTION THEORIES

□ **RECTORAL, OR GOVERNMENTAL, THEORY:** Dutch Theologian Hugo Grotius developed this in the 17th century to refute the theories of the Socinians. Grotius viewed Christ's death "as a kind of legal transaction, God filling the role of Rector or Governor, and man that of culprit."—Hastings' *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*.

□ **VITAL ATONEMENT THEORY:** This was proposed in 1946 by Protestant theologian Clarence H. Hewitt. He viewed Christ's work, not as paying some legal penalty, but as 'freeing us from the domination of the law of sin and death and inducing repentance and godly sorrow, thereby bringing us into a forgivable state before God.'

□ **REDEMPTION BY CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP:** Roman Catholic theologian Boniface A. Willems (1970) equates "redemption" with "turning away from our egoism and throwing our hearts open to one another."

He adds: "The Christian notion of substitution or vicarious suffering is that one knows oneself to be linked in solidarity with the sin-ravaged human race. . . . The Church is then the fellowship of those who are ready to live in special service for the sake of others."

□ **SCAPEGOAT THEORY:** Catholic theologian Raymund Schwager proposed this in 1978. He rejected the idea that God would "demand an eye for an eye." He views Christ's sacrifice as some sort of catharsis (purification) that allows human society to vent—and hence rid itself—of its innate violent tendencies.

□ **SOCIO-POLITICAL REDEMPTION:** Baptist theologian Thorwald Lorenzen wrote in 1985: "God does not merely seek religious forgiveness for the sinner but also political liberation for the poor and oppressed. . . . The death of Jesus, therefore, reveals a God who is concerned with the healing of all dimensions of human life."

moved from the real needs of people.* Are you not inclined to agree with that assessment? However, Jeremiah 8:9 goes further, pointing to the real root of the problem: "Look! They have rejected the very word of Jehovah, and what wisdom do they have?"

Granted, the doctrine of the ransom may give rise to some difficult questions. (2 Peter 3:16) But instead of searching the Scriptures for answers, theologians have used human wisdom and logic. (1 Corinthians 1:19, 20; 2:13) They have presumed to reject whatever portions of the Bible do not suit their fancies—or theories. (2 Timothy 3:16) They have promoted unscriptural teachings, such as the Trinity doctrine. (John 14:28) And their biggest failure is that they have made the salvation of man

paramount, ignoring weightier issues involving God's name and Kingdom.—Matthew 6:9, 10.

An Advocate of the Ransom

Now, please move your examination up to the late 1800's. A God-fearing man named Charles Taze Russell separated himself from mainstream theology and began publishing this very journal—*The Watch Tower*. "From the first," recalled Russell, "it has been a special advocate of the Ransom."

The Watchtower continues to serve as such to this day. For well over a hundred years, it has presented sound Scriptural reasons to believe in the ransom, and it has given reasonable, Scriptural replies to the challenges of critics. We therefore invite you now to take a further look at what the Bible says regarding the death of Jesus and its meaning.

* Note, however, Willems' own theory in the box above.

"Certainly This Was God's Son"

JESUS has not been on the stake long when, at midday, a mysterious, three-hour-long darkness occurs. A solar eclipse is not responsible, since these take place only at the time of the new moon, and the moon is full at Passover time. Moreover, solar eclipses last only a few minutes. So the darkness is of divine origin! It probably gives pause to those mocking Jesus, even causing their taunts to cease.

If the eerie phenomenon occurs before the one evildoer chastises his companion and asks Jesus to remember him, it may be a factor in his repentance. Perhaps it is during the darkness that four women, namely, Jesus' mother and her sister Salome, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of the apostle James the Less, make their way close to the torture stake. John, Jesus' beloved apostle, is with them there.

How the heart of Jesus' mother is 'pierced through' as she watches the son she nursed and nurtured hanging there in agony! Yet, Jesus thinks, not of his own pain, but of her welfare. With great effort, he nods toward John and says to his mother: "Woman, see! Your son!" Then, nodding toward Mary, he says to John: "See! Your mother!"

Jesus thereby entrusts the care of his mother, who is evidently now a widow, to his specially loved apostle. He does this because Mary's other sons have not as yet manifested faith in him. Thus he sets a fine example of making provision not only for his mother's physical needs but also for her spiritual ones.

At about three in the afternoon, Jesus says: "I am thirsty." Then, sensing that

his Father has, as it were, withdrawn protection from him in order that his integrity might be tested to the limit, he calls out with a loud voice: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Upon hearing this, some who are standing nearby exclaim: "See! He is calling Elijah." Immediately one of them runs and, using a sponge soaked with sour wine on the end of a hyssop stalk, gives him a drink. But others say: "Let him be! Let us see whether Elijah comes to take him down."

When Jesus receives the sour wine, he cries out: "It has been accomplished!" Yes, he has finished everything that his Father has sent him to earth to do. Finally, he says: "Father, into your hands I entrust my spirit." Jesus thereby commits to God his life-force in confidence that God will restore it to him again. Then he bows his head and dies.

The moment Jesus breathes his last breath, a violent earthquake occurs, splitting open the rock-masses. The quake is so powerful that the memorial tombs outside Jerusalem are broken open, and corpses are thrown out of them. Passersby, who see the dead bodies that have been exposed, enter the city and report it.

Furthermore, at the moment Jesus dies, the huge curtain that divides the Holy from the Most Holy in God's temple is rent in two, from top to bottom. Apparently this beautifully ornamented curtain is some 60 feet high and very heavy! The astonishing miracle





not only manifests God's wrath against the killers of His Son but signifies that entry into the Most Holy, heaven itself, is now made possible by Jesus' death.

Well, when people feel the earthquake and see the things happening, they grow very much afraid. The army officer in charge at the execution gives glory to God. "Certainly this was God's Son," he proclaims. Likely he had been present when the claim of divine sonship was discussed at Jesus' trial before Pilate. And now he is convinced that Jesus is the Son of God, yes, that he is indeed the greatest man who ever lived.

Others too are overcome by these miraculous events, and they begin returning home beating their breasts, as

a gesture of their intense grief and shame. Observing the spectacle at a distance are many female disciples of Jesus who are deeply moved by these momentous events. The apostle John is also present. **Matthew 27:45-56; Mark 15:33-41; Luke 23:44-49; 2:34, 35; John 19:25-30.**

- ♦ Why can a solar eclipse not be responsible for the three hours of darkness?
- ♦ Shortly before his death, what fine example does Jesus provide for those with aged parents?
- ♦ What are Jesus' last four statements before he dies?
- ♦ What does the earthquake accomplish, and what is the significance of the temple curtain's being rent in two?
- ♦ How is the army officer in charge at the execution affected by the miracles?



A CORRESPONDING RANSOM FOR ALL

"The Son of man came, not to be ministered to, but to minister and to give his soul a ransom in exchange for many." —MATTHEW 20:28.

THE ransom is God's greatest gift to mankind. By means of "the release by ransom," we can have "the forgiveness of our trespasses." (Ephesians 1:7) It is the foundation of a hope of everlasting life, whether in heaven or on a paradise earth. (Luke 23:43; John 3:16) And because

1, 2. (a) Why can it be said that the ransom is God's greatest gift to mankind? (b) What benefit comes from examining the ransom?

of it, Christians may enjoy a clean standing before God even now.—Revelation 7:14, 15.

² The ransom is therefore not something vague or abstract. Having a legal foundation in divine principles, the ransom can bring real, tangible benefits. Certain aspects of this doctrine may be "hard to understand." (2 Peter 3:16) But you will find it well worth the effort to examine the ransom closely, for it reflects God's surpassing

love for mankind. To grasp the meaning of the ransom is to understand a key feature of God's unfathomable "riches and wisdom and knowledge."—Romans 5:8; 11:33.

Issues to Be Settled

³ The ransom became necessary due to the sin of the first human, Adam, who bequeathed his offspring a futile legacy of sickness, disease, sorrow, and pain. (Romans 8:20) By virtue of their inherited imperfection, all of Adam's descendants are "children of wrath," deserving of death. (Ephesians 2:3; Deuteronomy 32:5) God could not yield to unprincipled sentiment and simply forgive mankind out of hand. His own Word shows that "the wages sin pays is death." (Romans 6:23) To excuse mankind's sinfulness, God would have had to ignore his own righteous standards, to invalidate his own legal justice! (Job 40:8) Yet, "righteousness and judgment are the established place of [God's] throne." (Psalm 89:14) Any deflection from righteousness on his part would only encourage lawlessness and undermine his position as Universal Sovereign.—Compare Ecclesiastes 8:11.

⁴ God also had to settle other issues raised by Satan's rebellion, issues of far greater significance than the human predicament. Satan cast a dark shadow across God's good name by accusing Jehovah of being a liar and a cruel dictator who deprived his creatures of knowledge and freedom. (Genesis 3:1-5) Furthermore, by seemingly thwarting God's purpose to fill the earth with righteous humans, Satan made God appear to be a failure. (Genesis 1:28; Isaiah 55:10, 11) Satan also emboldened himself to slander God's loyal servants, charging that they served Him only out of selfish motives. If placed under pressure, boasted Satan,

3. How did a ransom become necessary, and why could God not simply excuse mankind's sinfulness?

4. Satan's rebellion raised what issues?

none of them would remain loyal to God!—Job 1:9-11.

⁵ These challenges could not be ignored. If they were left unanswered, confidence in and support for God's rulership would finally be eroded. (Proverbs 14:28) If law and order deteriorated, would havoc not reign throughout the universe? God thus owed it to himself and to his righteous ways to vindicate his sovereignty. He owed it to his faithful servants to allow them to demonstrate their unbreakable loyalty to him. This meant dealing with the plight of sinful humanity in a way that gave precedence to the paramount issues. He later told Israel: "I—I am the One that is wiping out your transgressions for my own sake."—Isaiah 43:25.

Ransom: A Covering

⁶ At Psalm 92:5, we read: "How great your works are, O Jehovah! Very deep your thoughts are." It therefore requires effort for us to comprehend what God did for mankind. (Compare Psalm 36:5, 6.) Happily, the Bible helps us understand matters by using a number of terms that describe or illustrate God's grand works from a variety of viewpoints. The Bible speaks of the ransom in terms of a purchase, a reconciliation, a propitiation, a redemption, and an atonement. (Psalm 49:8; Daniel 9:24; Galatians 3:13; Colossians 1:20; Hebrews 2:17) But perhaps the expression that best describes matters was the one used by Jesus himself at Matthew 20:28: "The Son of man came, not to be ministered to, but to minister and to give his soul a ransom [Greek, *ly'tron*] in exchange for many."

⁷ What is a ransom? The Greek word

5. Why could God not ignore Satan's challenges?

6. What are some of the terms used in the Bible to describe God's means of saving mankind?

7, 8. (a) What do we learn from the Greek and Hebrew words for ransom? (b) Illustrate how a ransom involves correspondency.

ly'tron comes from a verb meaning "to loose." It was used to describe money paid in exchange for the releasing of prisoners of war. In the Hebrew Scriptures, however, the word for ransom, *ko'pher*, comes from a verb meaning to "cover" or "overlay." For example, God told Noah to cover (*ka-phar'*) the ark with tar. (Genesis 6:14) From this viewpoint, then, to ransom, or to atone for sins, means to cover sins.—Psalm 65:3.

⁸ The *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* notes that *ko'pher* "always denotes an equivalent," or correspondency. Thus, the cover (*kap-po'reth*) of the ark of the covenant corresponded in shape to the ark itself. Likewise, in atoning for sin, or ransoming, divine justice demands 'soul for soul, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.' (Deuteronomy 19:21) At times, though, justice can be satisfied if an equivalent is offered in lieu of strict punishment. To illustrate: Exodus 21:28-32 speaks of a bull that gores a person to death. If the owner knew of the bull's disposition but did not take proper precautions, he could be made to cover, or pay, for the life of the slain one with his own! Yet, what if the owner was only partially responsible? He would need a *ko'pher*, something to cover his error. Appointed judges could impose upon him a ransom, or fine, as a redemption price.

⁹ Another Hebrew term related to "ransoming" is *pa-dhah'*, a verb that basically means to "redeem." Numbers 3:39-51 illustrates how exact the price of redemption was to be. Having rescued the Israelite firstborn from execution at Passover 1513 B.C.E., God owned them. He could thus have required every Israelite firstborn son to serve him in the temple. Instead, God accepted a "redemption price" (*pidh-yohm'*,

9. How does a situation involving Israel's firstborn illustrate the exactness required in a redemption price?

a noun derived from *pa-dhah'*), decreeing: "Take the Levites for me . . . in place of all the firstborn among the sons of Israel." But the substitution had to be exact. A census of the tribe of Levi was taken: 22,000 males. Next, a census of all Israelite firstborn: 22,273 males. Only by the paying of a "ransom price" of five shekels for each individual could the 273 excess firstborn be redeemed, excused from temple service.

A Corresponding Ransom

¹⁰ The foregoing illustrates that a ransom must be the equivalent of that for which it substitutes, or covers. The animal sacrifices that men of faith from Abel onward offered up could not really cover men's sins, since humans are superior to brute beasts. (Psalm 8:4-8) Paul could thus write that "it is not possible for the blood of bulls and of goats to take sins away." Such sacrifices could serve simply as a pictorial, or symbolic, covering in anticipation of the ransom that was to come.—Hebrews 10:1-4.

¹¹ This foreshadowed ransom had to be the exact equivalent of Adam, since the death penalty that God justly applied to Adam resulted in the condemnation of the human race. "In Adam all are dying," says 1 Corinthians 15:22. So it was not necessary for thousands of millions of individual humans to die sacrificial deaths to correspond to each individual of Adam's progeny. "Through one man [Adam] sin entered into the world and death through sin." (Romans 5:12) And "since death is through a man," redemption of mankind could also come "through a man."—1 Corinthians 15:21.

10. Why could animal sacrifices not adequately cover mankind's sins?
- 11, 12. (a) Why did thousands of millions of humans not have to die sacrificial deaths to cover mankind's sinfulness? (b) Who alone could serve as "a corresponding ransom," and what purpose does his death serve?



Animal sacrifices were inadequate to cover human sins; they pictured the greater sacrifice to come

fit from the ransom. The Mosaic Law contained this principle: "You must take no ransom for the soul of a murderer who is deserving to die." (Numbers 35:31) Adam was not deceived, so his sin was willful, deliberate. (1 Timothy 2:14) It amounted to the murder of his offspring, for they now inherited his imperfection, thus coming under sentence of death. Clearly, Adam deserved to die, for as a perfect man, he had willfully chosen to disobey God's law. It would have been contrary to Jehovah's righteous principles for him to apply the ransom in Adam's behalf. Paying the wage for Adam's sin, however, does provide for the nullifying of the death sentence upon Adam's offspring! (Romans 5:16) In a legal sense, the destructive power of sin is cut off right at its source. The ransomer 'tastes death for every man,' bearing the consequences of sin for all of Adam's children. —Hebrews 2:9; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:24.

¹² The man who could be the ransom had to be a perfect human of flesh and blood—the exact equal of Adam. (Romans 5:14) A spirit creature or a "God-man" would not balance the scales of justice. Only a perfect human, someone not under the Adamic death sentence, could offer "a corresponding ransom," one corresponding perfectly to Adam. (1 Timothy 2:6)* By voluntarily sacrificing his life, this "last Adam" could pay the wage for the sin of the "first man Adam."—1 Corinthians 15:45; Romans 6:23.

¹³ Neither Adam nor Eve, however, bene-

* The Greek word here used, *an-ti'ly-tron*, appears nowhere else in the Bible. It is related to the word that Jesus used for ransom (*ly'tron*) at Mark 10:45. However, *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* points out that *an-ti'ly-tron* 'accentuates the notion of exchange.' Appropriately, the *New World Translation* renders it "corresponding ransom."

13, 14. (a) Do Adam and Eve benefit from the ransom? Explain. (b) How does the ransom benefit Adam's descendants? Illustrate.

¹⁴ To illustrate: Imagine a large factory with hundreds of employees. A dishonest factory manager bankrupts the business; the factory closes its doors. Hundreds are now out of work and unable to pay their bills. Their marriage mates, children, and, yes, creditors all suffer because of that one man's corruption! Then along comes a wealthy benefactor who pays off the company's debt and reopens the factory. The cancellation of that one debt, in turn, brings full relief to the many employees, their families, and the creditors. But does the original manager get to share in the new prosperity? No, he is in prison and thus permanently out of his job! Similarly, the cancellation of Adam's one debt brings benefits to millions of his descendants—but not to Adam.

Who Provides the Ransom?

¹⁵ The psalmist lamented: "Not one of them can by any means redeem even a brother, nor give to God a ransom for him; (and the redemption price of their soul is so precious that it has ceased to time indefinite)." *The New English Bible* says that the ransom price was "for ever beyond his power to pay." (Psalm 49:7, 8) Who, then, would provide the ransom? Only Jehovah could provide the perfect "Lamb . . . that takes away the sin of the world." (John 1:29) God did not send some angel to rescue mankind. He made the supreme sacrifice of sending his only-begotten Son, "the one he was specially fond of."—Proverbs 8:30; John 3:16.

¹⁶ By his willing participation in the divine arrangement, God's Son "emptied himself" of his heavenly nature. (Philippians 2:7) Jehovah transferred the life-force and the personality pattern of his firstborn heavenly Son to the womb of a Jewish virgin named Mary. Holy spirit then 'overshadowed her,' guaranteeing that the child growing in her womb would be holy, absolutely free of sin. (Luke 1:35; 1 Peter 2:22)

15. Who could provide a ransom for mankind, and why?

16. (a) How did God's Son come to be born as a perfect human? (b) What could Jesus be called in a legal sense?

Review Questions

- What issues were of even greater importance than the salvation of mankind?
- What does it mean to "ransom" sinners?
- To whom did Jesus have to correspond, and why?
- Who provides the ransom, and to whom is it paid?
- Why was it necessary that Christ be raised from the dead as a spirit?

As a man, he would be called Jesus. But in a legal sense, he could be called 'the second Adam,' for he corresponded perfectly to Adam. (1 Corinthians 15:45, 47) Jesus could thus offer himself up in sacrifice as "an unblemished and spotless lamb," a ransom for sinful mankind.—1 Peter 1:18, 19.

¹⁷ To whom, though, would that ransom be paid? For centuries Christendom's theologians argued that it was paid to Satan the Devil. The fact is that mankind has been "sold under" sin and thus has come under the control of Satan. (Romans 7:14; 1 John 5:19) Still, Jehovah, not Satan, "exacts punishment" for wrongdoing. (1 Thessalonians 4:6) Therefore, as Psalm 49:7 explicitly states, the ransom is to be paid "to God." Jehovah makes the ransom available, but after the Lamb of God has been sacrificed, the value of his ransom must be paid to God. (Compare Genesis 22:7, 8, 11-13; Hebrews 11:17.) This does not reduce the ransom to a pointless, mechanical exchange, as if money were taken out of one pocket and put in another. The ransom involves not so much a physical exchange as a legal transaction. By insisting that a ransom be paid—even at great cost to himself—Jehovah affirmed his unwavering adherence to righteous principles.—James 1:17.

"It Has Been Accomplished!"

¹⁸ In the spring of 33 C.E., it was time for the ransom to be paid. Jesus Christ was arrested on false charges, judged guilty, and nailed to a stake of execution. He petitioned God with "strong outcries and tears" because of the intense pain and the humiliation involved. (Hebrews 5:7) Was it necessary for Jesus to suffer so? Yes, for by remaining "loyal, guileless, undefiled, sepa-

17. (a) To whom is the ransom paid, and why? (b) Since God both provides and receives the ransom, why is the exchange made at all?
18, 19. Why was it necessary for Jesus to suffer?

rated from the sinners," right down to the end, Jesus settled with dramatic finality the issue of the integrity of God's servants.—Hebrews 7:26.

¹⁹ Christ's sufferings also served to perfect him for his role as High Priest for mankind. As such, he would not be some cold, detached bureaucrat. "For in that he himself has suffered when being put to the test, he is able to come to the aid of those who are being put to the test." (Hebrews 2:10, 18; 4:15) With his dying breath, Jesus could cry out in triumph, "It has been accomplished!" (John 19:30) Not only had he proved his own integrity but he had succeeded in laying the basis for the salvation of mankind—and more important, the vindication of Jehovah's sovereignty!

²⁰ In what manner, though, would the ransom actually be applied to sinful mankind? When? How? These matters were not

20, 21. (a) Why was Christ raised from the dead? (b) Why was Jesus Christ "made alive in the spirit"?

left to chance. On the third day after Christ's death, Jehovah raised him from the dead. (Acts 3:15; 10:40) By this momentous act, a fact verified by hundreds of eyewitnesses, Jehovah not only rewarded his Son's faithful service but gave him opportunity to finish his redemptive work.—Romans 1:4; 1 Corinthians 15:3-8.

²¹ Jesus was "made alive in the spirit," his earthly remains disposed of in some undisclosed manner. (1 Peter 3:18; Psalm 16:10; Acts 2:27) As a spirit creature, the resurrected Jesus could now make a triumphant return to heaven. What unbridled jubilation there must have been in heaven on that occasion! (Compare Job 38:7.) Jesus did not return simply to enjoy his welcome. He came to perform other work, including that of making it possible for the whole human race to benefit from his ransom. (Compare John 5:17, 20, 21.) Just how he accomplished this and what it means for mankind will be discussed in the next article.

"YOU WERE BOUGHT WITH A PRICE"

"You were bought with a price. By all means, glorify God in the body of your people."—1 CORINTHIANS 6:20.

THE true God is for us a God of saving acts," said the psalmist, "and to Jehovah the Sovereign Lord belong the ways out from death."

1, 2. (a) What opened up "the ways out from death"? (b) What had to be done to make Christ's sacrifice legally valid, as foreshadowed by what?

(Psalm 68:20) The sacrifice of Jesus Christ opened up that way. But for that sacrifice to be legally valid, Christ had to make a personal appearance before God himself.

² This was foreshadowed on Atonement Day when the high priest entered the Most Holy. (Leviticus 16:12-15) "However,"

wrote the apostle Paul, “when Christ came as a high priest . . . , he entered, no, not with the blood of goats and of young bulls, but with his own blood, once for all time into the holy place and obtained an everlasting deliverance for us. For Christ entered, not into a holy place made with hands, which is a copy of the reality, but into heaven itself, now to appear before the person of God for us.”—Hebrews 9:11, 12, 24.

The Power of Blood

³ What role does Christ’s blood play in our salvation? Since Noah’s day, true worshipers have viewed blood as sacred. (Genesis 9:4-6) Blood plays an important part in the life process, for the Bible says that “the soul [or life] of the flesh is in the blood.” (Leviticus 17:11) So the Mosaic Law required that when an animal was sacrificed, its blood be poured out before Jehovah. At times blood was also placed upon the horns of the altar. Clearly, the atoning power of a sacrifice was in its blood. (Leviticus 8:15; 9:9) “Nearly all things are cleansed with blood according to the Law, and unless blood is poured out no forgiveness takes place.”—Hebrews 9:22.

⁴ Little wonder, then, that under the Law, any misuse of blood was punishable by death! (Leviticus 17:10) All of us know that when a substance is made rare, or severely restricted as to its use, its value increases. Jehovah’s curb on its use ensured that blood would be viewed, not as

3. (a) How is blood viewed by Jehovah’s worshipers, and why? (b) What shows that blood has the legal power to atone for sins?

4. (a) What purpose was served by God’s restricting the use of blood? (b) What was significant about the way Jesus was put to death?



something of ordinary value, but as precious, valuable. (Acts 15:29; Hebrews 10:29) This accorded with the exalted purpose the blood of Christ would serve. Fittingly, he died in a manner that caused his blood to be shed. Thus, it was evident that Christ not only sacrificed his human body but poured out his soul, sacrificed his very life as a perfect human! (Isaiah 53:12) Christ did not forfeit the legal right to that life because of imperfection, so his poured-out blood had great value and could be presented before God for the atonement of mankind’s sins.

⁵ Christ could not take his literal blood into heaven. (1 Corinthians 15:50) Rather, he took what that blood symbolized: the legal value of his sacrificed perfect human life. Before the person of God, he could make formal presentation of that life as a ransom in exchange for sinful mankind. Jehovah’s acceptance of that sacrifice became evident at Pentecost 33 C.E., when the holy spirit came upon 120 disciples in

5. (a) What did Christ take into heaven, and why? (b) How was it evident that God accepted Christ’s sacrifice?

One who appreciates God's forgiveness is willing to extend forgiveness to others

Jerusalem. (Acts 2:1-4) Christ, as it were, now owned the human race by purchase. (Galatians 3:13; 4:5; 2 Peter 2:1) Hence, ransom benefits could flow to mankind.

The First Beneficiaries of the Ransom

⁶ This did not mean, however, that mankind would be granted instant physical perfection, for unless man's sinful nature was overcome, physical perfection would not be possible. (Romans 7:18-24) How and when would sinfulness be overcome? God first arranged for 144,000 heavenly 'priests to our God to rule as kings over the earth' with Christ Jesus. (Revelation 5:9, 10; 7:4; 14:1-3) Through them the benefits of the ransom will gradually be applied to mankind over a period of a thousand years.—1 Corinthians 15:24-26; Revelation 21:3, 4.

⁷ Leading up to that, the 144,000 king-priests are "bought from among mankind." (Revelation 14:4) This is accomplished by means of "a new covenant." This covenant is a contract between Jehovah God and the spiritual Israel of God for its members to serve as kings and priests. (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Galatians 6:16; Hebrews 8:6-13; 1 Peter 2:9) Yet, how is a covenant between God and imperfect man possible? Paul explains: "Where there is a covenant [between God and imperfect man], the death of the human covenanter needs to be furnished. For a covenant is valid over dead victims, since it is not in force at any time while the human covenanter is living."—Hebrews 9:16, 17.

6. What arrangements has God made for the application of the benefits of Christ's ransom?

7. (a) What is the new covenant, who are the parties to it, and what purpose does it serve? (b) Why did a death have to take place to make the new covenant possible, and what role does Christ's blood play?



⁸ Hence, the ransom sacrifice is fundamental to the new covenant, of which Jesus is the Mediator. Paul wrote: "There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, a man, Christ Jesus, who gave himself a corresponding ransom for all—this is what is to be witnessed to at its own particular times." (1 Timothy 2:5, 6) Those words especially apply to the 144,000, with whom the new covenant is made.

⁹ When God made a covenant with fleshly Israel, it was not legally valid until animal blood was shed in sacrifice. (Hebrews 9:18-21) Similarly, for the new covenant to become operative, Christ had to shed the "blood of the covenant." (Matthew 26:28; Luke 22:20) With Christ acting as both High Priest and "mediator of a new covenant," God applies the value of Jesus' blood to those being brought into the new covenant, legally crediting them with human righteousness. (Hebrews 9:15; Romans 3:24; 8:1, 2) God then can take them into the new covenant to be

8, 9. How is the ransom related to the new covenant?

heavenly king-priests! As their Mediator and High Priest, Jesus assists them in maintaining a clean standing before God.—Hebrews 2:16; 1 John 2:1, 2.

Gathering the Things on Earth

¹⁰ Is it only anointed Christians who can experience a release by ransom, the forgiveness of their sins? No, God is reconciling to himself all other things by making peace through the blood shed on the torture stake, as Colossians 1:14, 20 indicates. This involves the things in the heavens (the 144,000) as well as the things upon the earth. The latter are those in line for earthly life, humans who will enjoy perfect life in Paradise on earth. Especially since 1935 has there been a concerted effort to gather such ones. Revelation 7:9-17 describes them as “a great crowd” who owe salvation to God and to the Lamb. They still need to survive “the great tribulation” and be ‘guided to fountains of waters of life,’ for Revelation 20:5 shows that such ones will become fully alive, having perfect human life, by the end of the Thousand Year Reign of Christ. Those who then pass a final test in their perfect human state will be declared righteous for everlasting life on earth.—Revelation 20:7, 8.

¹¹ Nevertheless, in a preliminary way, the great crowd have already “washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” (Revelation 7:14) Christ does not act as Mediator of the new covenant toward them, yet they benefit from this covenant through the work of God’s Kingdom. Christ still acts toward them, however, as High Priest, through whom Jehovah can and does apply the

10, 11. (a) How does the ransom extend beyond anointed Christians? (b) Who are the great crowd, and what standing do they have with God?

ransom to the extent of their now being declared righteous as God’s friends. (Compare James 2:23.) During the Millennium, they will gradually “be set free from enslavement to corruption [until finally they] have the glorious freedom of the children of God.”—Romans 8:21.

¹² As to their standing with God, it might seem that those of the great crowd differ little from pre-Christian worshippers. However, God dealt with the latter with the future ransom provision in view. (Romans 3:25, 26) They enjoyed forgiveness of their sins only in a provisional way. (Psalm 32:1, 2) Rather than fully relieving them of the “consciousness of sins,” animal sacrifices caused “a reminding of sins.”—Hebrews 10:1-3.

¹³ It is different with true Christians today. They worship on the basis of a ransom that has been paid! Through their High Priest, they “approach with freeness of speech to the throne of undeserved kindness.” (Hebrews 4:14-16) Being reconciled to God is not some hoped-for development but a present reality! (2 Corinthians 5:20) When they err, they can receive real forgiveness. (Ephesians 1:7) They enjoy a truly cleansed conscience. (Hebrews 9:9; 10:22; 1 Peter 3:21) These blessings are a foretaste of the glorious freedom of the children of God that Jehovah’s servants will enjoy in the future!

The Depth of God’s Wisdom and Love

¹⁴ What a marvelous gift from Jehovah the ransom is! It is easily comprehended, yet profound enough to strike awe into the

12. On what basis did God deal with faithful men in pre-Christian times?

13. What advantages do we have over pre-Christian servants of God?

14, 15. How does the ransom highlight Jehovah’s unfathomable wisdom, as well as his righteousness and love?

greatest intellect. Our review of the workings of the ransom has barely scratched the surface. Yet, we exclaim with the apostle Paul: "O the depth of God's riches and wisdom and knowledge! How unsearchable his judgments are and past tracing out his ways are!" (Romans 11:33) Jehovah's wisdom is shown in that he was able both to rescue mankind and to vindicate his sovereignty. By means of the ransom, "God's righteousness has been made manifest . . . God set [Christ] forth as an offering for propitiation through faith in his blood."—Romans 3:21-26.

¹⁵ No criticism can be leveled against God for forgiving the sins that were committed in the past by pre-Christian worshipers. Furthermore, no criticism can be leveled against Jehovah for declaring the anointed righteous as his sons or the great crowd as his friends. (Romans 8:33) At great cost to himself, God has been perfectly legal, or upright, in his dealings, completely refuting Satan's lying claim that Jehovah is an unjust ruler! God's unselfish love for his creatures has likewise been demonstrated beyond question.—Romans 5:8-11.

¹⁶ The way in which the ransom was provided also settled the issues involving the integrity of God's servants. Jesus' obedience alone accomplished that. (Proverbs 27:11; Romans 5:18, 19) But add to that the life course of 144,000 Christians who, in spite of Satan's opposition, remain faithful till death! (Revelation 2:10) The ransom makes it possible for these to receive as their reward immortality—indestructible life! (1 Corinthians 15:53; Hebrews 7:16) This makes absurd Satan's claim that God's servants

16. (a) In what way has the ransom provided for settling the issue of the integrity of God's servants? (b) How does the ransom give us a basis for faith in a coming new world of righteousness?

are untrustworthy! The ransom has also given us a solid basis for faith in God's promises. We can behold a framework of salvation that is "legally established" through the ransom sacrifice. (Hebrews 8:6) A new world of righteousness is thus guaranteed!—Hebrews 6:16-19.

Do Not Miss Its Purpose

¹⁷ To benefit from the ransom, it is necessary that one take in knowledge, exercise faith, and live by Bible standards. (John 3:16; 17:3) Relatively few, though, are willing to do so. (Matthew 7:13, 14) Even among true Christians, some may "accept the undeserved kindness of God and miss its purpose." (2 Corinthians 6:1) For example, over the years thousands have been disfellowshipped for sexual misconduct. What a shame in view of what Jehovah and Christ have done for us! Should not appreciation for the ransom move a person to avoid becoming "forgetful of his cleansing from his sins of long ago"? (2 Peter 1:9) Appropriately, then, Paul reminds Christians: "You were bought with a price. By all means, glorify God in the body of you people." (1 Corinthians 6:20) Remembering this gives us powerful motivation to remain morally clean!—1 Peter 1:14-19.

¹⁸ What if a person has already fallen into serious sin? He should take advantage of the forgiveness that the ransom makes possible, receiving assistance from loving overseers. (James 5:14, 15) Even if strong discipline is needed, a repentant Christian should not give out under such correction. (Hebrews 12:5) We have this marvelous Biblical assurance: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous

17. (a) How do some show that they have missed the purpose of the ransom? (b) What can motivate us to remain morally clean?

18. How can a Christian who falls into serious sin still avail himself of the ransom?

so as to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”—1 John 1:9.

¹⁹ Sometimes Christians are unduly discouraged because of past misconduct. “Before coming into the truth,” wrote one disheartened brother, “my wife and I contracted genital herpes. At times we feel unclean, as if we don’t ‘fit’ in Jehovah’s clean organization.” Granted, even after becoming Christians, some may reap a degree of suffering from past mistakes. (Galatians 6:7) Still, there is no reason to feel unclean in Jehovah’s eyes if one has repented. “The blood of the Christ” is able to “cleanse our consciences from dead works.”—Hebrews 9:14.

²⁰ Yes, faith in the ransom can help to relieve us of unnecessary burdens of guilt. One young sister admitted: “I have been struggling with the unclean habit of masturbation for over 11 years now. I nearly left the congregation at one point, feeling that Jehovah would never want a person so disgusting to defile his congregation.” We must remember, though, Jehovah is “good and ready to forgive” as long as we conscientiously put up a fight against unrighteousness, not succumbing to it! —Psalm 86:5.

²¹ The ransom should also have a bearing on how we deal with others. For instance, how do you react when a fellow Christian offends you? Do you freely extend Christlike forgiveness? (Luke 17:3, 4) Are you “tenderly compassionate, freely forgiving [others] just as God also by Christ freely forgave you”? (Ephesians 4:32) Or do you tend to harbor grudges or nurture resentment? That certainly would

19. What view can a Christian take of his misconduct that took place before learning the truth?
20. How can faith in the ransom relieve a Christian of unnecessary guilt?
21. How should the ransom affect our view of those who offend us?

be missing the purpose of the ransom.—Matthew 6:15.

²² Finally, appreciation for the ransom should have a profound effect on our goals and life-style. Said Paul: “You were bought with a price; stop becoming slaves of men.” (1 Corinthians 7:23) Are economic needs—home, job, food, clothing—still the center of your life? Or are you seeking the Kingdom first, putting faith in God’s promise to provide for you? (Matthew 6:25-33) Might you slave for your employer but fail to make enough room for theocratic activities? Remember, Christ “gave himself for us that he might . . . cleanse for himself a people peculiarly his own, zealous for fine works.”—Titus 2:14; 2 Corinthians 5:15.

²³ “Thanks to God through Jesus Christ” for this superlative gift—the ransom! (Romans 7:25) May we never miss the purpose of the ransom but allow it to be a real force in our lives. In thought, in word, and in deed, may we always glorify God, gratefully remembering that we have been bought with a price.

- 22, 23. (a) What effect should the ransom have on our goals and life-style? (b) What resolve should all Christians make regarding the ransom?

Review Questions

- Why is blood considered sacred, and how was Christ’s blood presented before Jehovah in heaven?
- What role did Christ’s blood play in ratifying the new covenant?
- How does the ransom benefit the anointed and the great crowd?
- How can we show that we have not missed the purpose of the ransom?

A COMPLICATED APPROACH TO GOD

"I AM the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me," said Jesus Christ. He added: "Most truly I say to you, If you ask the Father for anything he will give it to you in my name."—John 14:6; 16:23.

For centuries, however, religions of Christendom, particularly the Roman Catholic Church, with its hellfire, purgatory, and Trinity doctrines, have confounded "the way." Jesus was portrayed, not as the willing intercessor for sinful men, but as a babe in arms or as a fearsome judge, more given to condemning and punishing sinners than to saving them. How, then, could a sinner approach God?

The book *The Glories of Mary* (1750) explains. Comparing Jesus to the blazing sun of justice, the 13th-century pope Innocent III declared: "Whoever is in the night of sin, let him cast his eyes on the moon, let him implore Mary." In Mary, the mother of Jesus, another intercessor was invented. Perhaps through her supposed motherly influence, a favor might be gained from Jesus and from God. Thus, in the words of Laurence Justinian, a 15th-century cleric, Mary became "the ladder to paradise, the gate of heaven, the most true mediatrix between God and man."

With all the adulation given her, in time she was no longer viewed as just the "Virgin



The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bequest of Benjamin Altman, 1913. (14.40.633)

Mary" but became the "Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy," styled as so immaculate and exalted that she also was too sacred for direct approach. Could yet another intercessor be found? What about *her* mother?

Since the Bible is silent on the subject, the answer was sought elsewhere. The Apocryphal book *Protoevangelium of James* tells the story of Anne (or Anna), the wife of Joachim, who was childless af-

ter many years of marriage. Finally, an angel appeared to her and announced that she would bear a child. In due time, she became the mother of the "Virgin Mary," it was claimed.

Thus there arose a cult of "Saint" Anne. Shrines and churches were built in her honor. Veneration of "Saint" Anne became widespread in Europe in the 14th century.

"How complicated religion had become!" observes the book *The Story of the Reformation*. "People prayed to Anna who interceded with Mary who interceded with her Son who interceded with God for sinful men. It was fantastic, but that was the kind of superstitious belief on which the souls of men were nourished." Here, then, is another case to which Jesus' words aptly apply: "You make the word of God invalid by your tradition." —Mark 7:13.

Stay Healthy in Faith!

Highlights From Titus

THE Christian congregations on the Mediterranean island of Crete were in need of spiritual attention. Who could help them? Why, the apostle Paul's coworker Titus! He was courageous, qualified to teach, zealous for fine works, and healthy in faith.

Paul visited Crete between his first and second imprisonments in Rome. He left Titus behind on the island to correct some things and to appoint congregation elders. Titus would also be called upon to reprove false teachers and to set a fine example. All of this is revealed in Paul's letter to Titus, possibly sent from Macedonia between 61 and 64 C.E. Applying the apostle's counsel can help present-day overseers and fellow believers to be courageous, zealous, and spiritually healthy.

What Is Required of Overseers?

It was necessary to appoint overseers and handle some serious problems. (1:1-16) For appointment as an overseer, a man had

to be free from accusation, exemplary personally and in his family life, hospitable, balanced, and self-controlled. He had to teach what is true and to exhort and reprove those expressing contradictory views. Courage was needed because unruly men in the congregations had to be silenced. Especially was this so of those adhering to the circumcision, for they had subverted entire households. Severe reproof would be necessary if the congregations were to remain spiritually healthy. Today, Christian overseers also need the courage to give reproof and exhortation, with a view to building up the congregation.

Apply Healthful Teaching

Titus was to impart spiritually healthful teaching. (2:1-15) Aged men were to be exemplary in moderation, seriousness, soundness of mind, faith, love, and endurance. Elderly women were to be "reverent in behavior." As "teachers of what is good," they could help younger women to have the

right view of their duties as wives and mothers. Younger men were to be sound in mind, and slaves were to be in subjection to their owners in a manner that would adorn the teaching of God. All Christians were to repudiate ungodliness and live with soundness of mind in this system of things while awaiting the glorious manifestation of God and of Jesus Christ, "who gave himself for us that he might deliver us from every sort of lawlessness and cleanse for himself a people peculiarly his own, zealous for fine works." By applying such healthful counsel, let us also 'adorn the teaching of God.'

Paul's closing counsel promotes spiritual health. (3:1-15) It is necessary to show proper submission to rulers and to cultivate reasonableness. Christians have the hope of everlasting life, and Paul's words were to be stressed to encourage them to keep their minds on fine works. Foolish questionings and fights over the Law were to be avoided, and a promoter of a sect was to be rejected after being admonished twice. As elders apply such counsel today, they and their fellow believers will stay healthy in faith.

Not Enslaved to Wine: Though women must not teach men in the congregation, older sisters can instruct younger women privately. But to be effective in this regard, elderly women must heed Paul's words: "Let the aged women be reverent in behavior, not slanderous, neither enslaved to a lot of wine, teachers of what is good." (Titus 2:1-5; 1 Timothy 2:11-14) Because of concern about the effects of drinking, overseers, ministerial servants, and older women must be moderate, not giving themselves to a lot of wine. (1 Timothy 3:2, 3, 8, 11) All Christians must avoid drunkenness and need to refrain from drinking alcoholic beverages while doing "the holy work" of preaching the good news.—Romans 15:16; Proverbs 23:20, 21.



Brotherly Love Is Active

Highlights From Philemon

JESUS CHRIST gave his followers the "new commandment" that they love one another just as he loved them. (John 13:34, 35) Because of that love, they would even die for one another. Yes, brotherly love is that strong and active.

The apostle Paul was sure that brotherly love would motivate Philemon, a Christian associated with the congregation at Colossae, a city in Asia Minor. Love had already prompted Philemon to open his house for use as a Christian meeting place. Philemon's slave Onesimus had run away, possibly stealing funds to finance a voyage to Rome, where he later met Paul and embraced Christianity.

While imprisoned at Rome about 60-61 C.E., Paul wrote a letter addressed primarily to Philemon. It appealed to Philemon to receive returning Onesimus in a spirit of brotherly love. Read this letter, and you will see that it is a fine example of affection and tact—one that Jehovah's people can well imitate.

Commendation for Love and Faith

Addressing Philemon and others, Paul first gave commendation. (Verses 1-7) The apostle kept hearing about the love Philemon had for Christ and all the holy ones and about his faith. This moved Paul to thank Jehovah and brought him much joy and comfort. Do we personally commend fellow believers who are exemplary in love and faith? We should do so.

Exhortation on the basis of love is always desirable in dealing with fellow Christians, as Paul's words show. (Verses 8-14) After his tactful approach, the apostle said that although he could order Philemon "to do what is proper," he chose to exhort him instead. To do what? Why, to receive the slave Onesimus back in a kind manner! Paul would have liked to retain the useful services of Onesimus but would not do this without Philemon's consent.

Seemingly unfavorable developments often prove beneficial, as Paul next indicated. (Vers-

es 15-21) Actually, good had resulted when Onesimus had run away. Why? Because Philemon could now have him back as a willing, honest Christian brother, not as an unwilling, possibly dishonest slave. Paul asked Philemon to welcome Onesimus back even as Paul might be welcomed. If Onesimus had wronged Philemon in any way, the apostle would make repayment. To make Philemon still more willing to comply, Paul reminded him that he himself was indebted to the apostle for becoming a Christian. Hence, Paul was sure that Philemon would do even more than he was asked to do. What a tactful, loving appeal! Surely, this is the way we should deal with fellow Christians.

Paul concluded his letter with a hope, greetings, and good wishes. (Verses 22-25) He hoped that through the prayers of others in his behalf, he would soon be freed from prison. (As Paul's second letter to Timothy shows, those prayers were answered.) Concluding his letter, Paul sent greetings and expressed the wish that the undeserved kindness of Jesus Christ might be with the spirit shown by Philemon and his fellow worshipers of Jehovah.

More Than a Slave: Regarding the return of Philemon's runaway slave Onesimus, Paul said: "Perhaps . . . he broke away for an hour, that you may have him back forever, no longer as a slave but as more than a slave, as a brother beloved, especially so to me, yet how much more so to you both in fleshly relationship and in the Lord." (Philemon 15, 16) In the Roman Empire, slavery was enforced by the imperial government, and Paul recognized such "superior authorities." (Romans 13:1-7) He did not advocate a slave's revolt but helped such individuals to gain spiritual freedom as Christians. In harmony with his own counsel for slaves to be in subjection to their masters, Paul sent Onesimus back to Philemon. (Colossians 3:22-24; Titus 2:9, 10) Onesimus was now more than a worldly slave. He was a beloved fellow believer who would be in relative subjection to Philemon as a better slave, one governed by godly principles and displaying brotherly love.



Why Christian Worship Is Superior

Highlights From the Letter to the Hebrews

JEOHOVAH GOD introduced superior features of worship when he sent his Son, Jesus Christ, to the earth. That was so because Jesus, the Founder of Christianity, is superior to the angels and the prophet Moses. Christ's priesthood is of great superiority when compared to that of the Levites in ancient Israel. And Jesus' sacrifice is far superior to that of animals offered under the Mosaic Law.

These points are made clear in the letter to the Hebrews. Apparently it was penned by the apostle Paul in Rome about 61 C.E. and sent to Hebrew believers in Judea. From early times, Greek and Asiatic Christians held that Paul was the writer, and this is supported by both the writer's comprehensive familiarity with the Hebrew Scriptures and his use of logical development, which are typical of the apostle. He may have omitted his name because of Jewish prejudice against him and because he was known as "an apostle to the nations." (Romans 11:13) Now let us take a closer look

at the superior features of Christianity, as revealed in Paul's letter to the Hebrews.

Christ Superior to Angels and Moses

Shown first is the superior position of God's Son. (1:1-3:6) Angels do obeisance to him, and his kingly rule rests upon God. So we should give extraordinary attention to what was spoken by the Son. Moreover, we should remember that even though the man Jesus was lower than the angels, he was exalted above them and given dominion over the inhabited earth to come.

Jesus Christ is also superior to Moses. How so? Well, Moses was only an attendant in the Israelite house of God. However, Jehovah placed Jesus over that entire house, or congregation of God's people.

Christians Enter God's Rest

The apostle next points out that it is possible to enter into God's rest. (3:7-4:13) The Israelites freed from Egyptian bondage failed to enter into it because they were disobedient and

lacked faith. But we can enter into that rest if we exercise faith in God and obediently follow Christ. Then, instead of just observing a weekly Sabbath, we will daily enjoy the superior blessing of having rest from all selfish works.

Entry into God's rest is one promise of his word, which "is sharper than any two-edged sword and pierces even to the dividing of soul and spirit." It does so in that it penetrates to discern motives and attitudes, to divide between fleshly desires and mental disposition. (Compare Romans 7:25.) If our "soul," or life as an individual, is coupled with a godly "spirit," or disposition, we can enter into God's rest.

Superior Priesthood and Covenant

Paul next shows the superiority of Christ's priesthood and of the new covenant. (4:14-10:31) The sinless Jesus Christ has compassion for sinful humans because, like us, he has been tested in all respects. Moreover, God has appointed him "a priest forever according to the manner of Melchizedek." Unlike Levitical high priests, Jesus possesses an indestructible life and thus needs no successors in his saving work. He does not have to offer up animal sacrifices, for he has offered up his greatly superior

Various Baptisms: Features of worship at Israel's tabernacle had to do "only with foods and drinks and various baptisms." (Hebrews 9:9, 10) These baptisms were ritual washings required by the Mosaic Law. Vessels made unclean were washed, and ceremonial cleansing included washing one's garments and bathing. (Leviticus 11:32; 14:8, 9; 15:5) Priests bathed, and things having to do with burnt offerings were rinsed in water. (Exodus 29:4; 30:17-21; Leviticus 1:13; 2 Chronicles 4:6) But the "various baptisms" did not include the ritualistic 'baptizing of cups, pitchers, and copper vessels' practiced by some Jews by the time the Messiah arrived; nor does Hebrews 9:10 refer to water immersion performed by John the Baptizer or to the baptism of those symbolizing their dedication to God as Christians.—Matthew 28:19, 20; Mark 7:4; Luke 3:3.



sinless body and has entered heaven with the value of his blood.

The new covenant, validated by Jesus' blood, is superior to the Law covenant. Those in the new covenant have God's laws in their hearts and enjoy forgiveness of sins. (Jeremiah 31:31-34) Gratitude for this moves them to make public declaration of their hope and to assemble with fellow believers. Unlike them, willful sinners no longer have any sacrifice for sins.

Faith Is Vital!

To benefit from the superior new covenant, we need faith. (10:32-

12:29) Endurance is also needed if we are to receive what Jehovah has promised. As encouragement to endure, we have a 'great cloud' of pre-Christian witnesses surrounding us. Especially, however, should we consider closely Jesus' flawless course under suffering. Any suffering that God allows to befall us may in a sense be viewed as discipline that can yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness. The reliability of Jehovah's promises should increase our desire to render sacred service to him "with godly fear and awe."

Paul concludes with exhortations. (13:1-25) Faith should move us to display brotherly love, be hospitable, remember suffering fellow believers, hold marriage in honor, and be "content with the present things." We should imitate the faith of those taking the lead in the congregation and should obey them. Moreover, we must avoid apostasy, bear the reproach Jesus bore, "always offer to God a sacrifice of praise," and continue to do good. Such conduct is also among the superior features of true Christianity.

BRINGING THE LIGHT TO REMOTE PLACES IN **BOLIVIA**

NORTH and east of Bolivia's lofty mountains lie flat tropical lowlands, lush with vegetation. These are divided by turbulent rivers that wind through jungles and pampas. What is it like to preach the Kingdom good news in such remote areas?

Imagine yourself in a large canoe, shaped from a hollowed-out tree trunk and driven by a motor at the back. This was the experience of six full-time ministers from Trinidad, a city in the El Beni section of Bolivia. They had planned this trip so that they could witness at river settlements never before reached with the "good news of the kingdom." (Matthew 24:14) After cutting through a wide expanse of sparkling water, their craft began navigating a

narrow stream in the direction of the Mamoré River.

One in the group relates: "We had almost reached the Mamoré when we discovered that the last part of the stream was dry. Getting out of the boat, we found ourselves sinking in mire up to our thighs! My wife lost her shoes trying to get free. But with the help of passersby, we were able to haul the heavy canoe out of the mud and onto more solid ground. After two laborious hours, we reached the Mamoré.

"We then motored smoothly up the river, which was flanked by high banks with abundant tropical vegetation. At the sound of the motor, large turtles slipped off floating logs, while graceful dolphins at times arched out of the waters. Our first stop



was indicated by a plume of smoke from a shoreside fire set to ward off insects.

After docking our canoe amid a tangle of branches, we conversed with the friendly folk about the coming Kingdom blessings. Appreciatively they loaded us with fruit and eggs.

"As the day passed, we made additional stops to plant more seeds of truth. It was dark by the time we reached San Antonio. The villagers had gone to bed. Yet, as word spread that a film would be shown, lamps began to be lit. A horse and a wagon were hitched up to bring our equipment into town. Many people became acquainted with Jehovah's Witnesses both on film and in person."

"The following day we continued visiting new places. On a high bank, women were washing their clothes, and even a baby, in

gigantic turtle shells. They had never before heard our Bible message. At one place small fish jumped high out of the water next to the boat, and many landed inside. So after showing the film, we had fried fish before retiring. By the trip's end, much literature had been left in this remote area, and we were content to have helped many hear the good news for the first time."

—Compare Romans 15:20, 21.

Evidence of Angelic Direction

Picture yourself now on a mission to locate one person in a town of 12,000, which you are visiting for the first time. You know little about her beyond her name. That was the challenge facing two full-time ministers who arrived at Guayaramerín hoping to find a person who had previously studied the Bible and attended meetings in another town but then had moved to this town. After getting settled, the pioneer couple decided to stroll down to

the plaza, where there were crowds of people either eating at tables or just conversing. Almost immediately a man approached the couple and struck up a conversation. They asked him if he knew the woman they were seeking. "No," he said, "but my mother-in-law is one of Jehovah's Witnesses." Since no Witnesses were known to be in the town, they thought he might be confused.

However, the next day they visited this elderly lady, who was bedridden with a broken leg. "I am one of Jehovah's Witnesses, but I'm not baptized yet," she said. Asked who taught her the truth, she pointed to a portrait of her granddaughter on the wall and said: "She did." They could hardly believe their eyes! It was the young woman for whom they were looking! "Why did your son-in-law deny knowing her?" they asked. "Oh, she's married now, and he knows only her married name," she replied. The granddaughter was away at the time, but a Bible study was thereafter conducted through correspondence. The result? Both she and her grandmother progressed to the point of getting baptized. Their house served as the Kingdom Hall for a growing congregation, and as a full-time minister, the younger woman has directed many to Jehovah's organization.

Preaching in the Heart of the Tropics

Next, imagine your plane touching down on a grassy runway at San Joaquín, deep in the heart of the Bolivian tropics. You have an uneasy feeling when you think of a mysterious plague that, two years earlier, wiped out a fifth of the population of this town.

The pioneer couple arriving from Trinidad by plane had already had a taste of the people's hospitality. The husband relates: "A Bible conversation held during our flight led to an invitation to stay at a

private home, free of charge. Our hosts even supplied our meals at a low cost, enabling us to devote all our time to our preaching work. Soon after arriving, we were told to report to the military barracks right away. When the official learned that we were not revolutionaries but Jehovah's Witnesses, he showed unusual interest and acquired a Bible, as well as Bible literature and subscriptions to the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines. Thereafter, almost everyone in town listened attentively to the Bible's promise of perfect health in the near future."—Revelation 21:4.

Four full-time ministers wanted to get from San Joaquín to San Ramón, but the only mode of transportation available was oxcart. They used literature cartons for seats. These soon became crushed out of shape because of the bouncing and heavy jolts of the covered cart, with its high wooden wheels. Even the chickens on board got visibly dizzy from motion sickness.

After ten hours of lumbering through underbrush, they reached the point where not even a trail marked the way, and it was getting dark. The driver alarmed the group by saying, "I think we are lost!" They were just beginning to wonder, 'How can we stay out in this underbrush infested with snakes and dangerous wild animals?' when the driver added, "But don't worry. The animals have made the trip before." So it was. Within an hour they emerged from the underbrush right at San Ramón!

Here, too, many days were spent announcing the coming Paradise to ears that had never heard of it before. No Witnesses lived here; yet something happened that changed that.

A Catholic missionary had been following the Witnesses as they went from door to door. Somehow they crossed paths and found her in the next home they came upon. Surprised by her friendliness, they

left her the book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life*. Though not genuinely interested herself, she gave the book to her sister-in-law, who devoured its contents, studied further, and later became a baptized Witness.

Tension on Tropical Rivers

Now picture yourself at the helm of a river launch navigating dangerous, turbulent waters. Hidden rocks, mud banks, and tree trunks, along with the sudden appearance of a huge whirlpool, are just a few of the perils. Piranhas, electric eels, and stingrays abound in these waters. Such were the challenges facing the brothers in Riberalta who had the work of witnessing to river populations in the area.

To reach these isolated places, they built a launch named *Luz de los Ríos* (Light of the Rivers). During the visit of the district and circuit overseers, it was decided to take the launch on a trial run. All went well until the roof got caught on an overhanging limb. A strong current swung the launch against a fallen tree. Like a sword, a pointed broken branch pierced the side of the boat—almost impaling the district overseer's wife! Water poured in, and the launch turned over, dumping its passengers into the swirling waters. And the district overseer and his wife could not swim! With the help of those who could, they got to land safely. But the launch completely disappeared. Days later it was located three miles downstream. All belongings, including 20 cartons of literature, had been lost.

The Bolivian Navy helped to refloat it, and after weeks of repairs, the launch was ready once more to complete its maiden voyage. The tense trip began with bad weather and engine trouble.

The first place the brothers docked, they were confronted by a group of Evangelists,

who mocked: "Your little boat is no good for this river!" An attempt to show slides there was frustrated by a defective generator. Back on the river again, the Witnesses learned that other launches had come by with loudspeakers warning of the coming "false prophets." Clearly, this was the work of the Evangelists. However, it only heightened the people's curiosity.

Although this visit ended the false propaganda from the real false prophets, the brothers felt tense, for they still had ahead of them a 21-day trip to reach Fortaleza.

Along the way, they witnessed to the chief of a remote tribe; he listened attentively. Through a Bible discourse given by one of the pioneers, a group of mourners in an isolated clearing was comforted with the true hope for the dead. An elderly man with a long white beard expressed his heartfelt appreciation, and he asked how he could subscribe to our magazine for ten years! In Fortaleza, 120 persons benefited from the Society's slide program.

How satisfied these pioneers felt to have brought the light of truth to remote places! Certainly, there is no more secure and satisfying way to use one's life than to serve the Creator of life itself, Jehovah God.—Psalm 63:3, 4.

In Our Next Issue

■ **The Greatest Issue
Facing You**

■ **What Many Reasons I Have
to Be Thankful!**

■ **Let "the Peace of God"
Guard Your Heart**

You Are Invited to the “Lovers of Freedom” District Convention

SINCE November 1989, the subject of freedom has been made prominent as never before. The peoples of Eastern European countries in particular have been enjoying more political freedom than they have had for 40 and more years.

But there is a freedom of far greater importance than any political freedom. We can read about it in God's Word, the Bible. Jesus Christ once said: "You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (John 8:32) Yes, dedicated Christians have been set free from the fear of man and from bondage to sin and death, as we read at Romans 6:18, 22. We also read that "where the spirit of Jehovah is, there is freedom." (2 Corinthians 3:17) In fact, God's Word holds out the bright prospect that "the creation itself also will be set free from enslavement to corruption and have the glorious freedom of the children of God."—Romans 8:21.

If anyone wishes to gain Christian freedom at the present time, he must put forth real effort. It is by no means simply a matter of following the course of least resistance. And to continue to enjoy this freedom takes additional effort, in view of the forces that tend to rob us of freedom: Satan the Devil, his wicked world,

and our own inherited sinful tendencies. Jehovah God has provided help by means of his inspired Word, by means of his holy spirit, and by means of his visible organization.—Luke 11:13.

To help all freedom lovers to strengthen their grip on freedom, this year's district conventions of Jehovah's Witnesses do justice to the theme "Lovers of Freedom." These conventions will be three days in length, beginning Friday morning at 10:20 and continuing until 4:00 p.m. Sunday. All who come will be spiritually refreshed and built up by stirring discourses, interesting interviews, effective demonstrations, and a striking Bible-based drama; nor should we overlook the joys of heartwarming association with friends old and new, the pleasure of joining with thousands of others in singing our Kingdom songs, and sharing in heartfelt public prayers.

May all dedicated servants of Jehovah let absolutely nothing interfere with their being on hand Friday morning when these conventions begin. And be sure to come with not only Bible and songbook but also pencil and notebook to take notes. Come, too, with a real consciousness of your spiritual need as part of a free people.—Matthew 5:3.

1991 Convention Locations

JUNE 7-9

LOS ANGELES, CA (Sign language also). Dodger Stadium, 1000 Elysian Park Ave.

JUNE 14-16

BILOXI, MS, Mississippi Coast Coliseum, 3800 W. Beach Blvd.

CICERO, IL, Hawthorne Race Track, 35th & Cicero Ave.

CORVALLIS, OR, Gill Coliseum, 600 S.W. 26th St.

DENVER, CO, McNichols Sports Arena, 1635 Clay St.

FORT WORTH, TX, Tarrant County Convention Center, 1111 Houston St.

JACKSONVILLE, FL, Memorial Coliseum, Gator Bowl Sports Complex.

KANSAS CITY, MO, Kemper Arena, 1800 Genesee St.

KNOXVILLE, TN, Thompson-Boling Assembly Center, 1600 Stadium Dr.

MACON, GA, Coliseum, 200 Coliseum Dr.

MADISON, WI, Dane County Memorial Coliseum, John Nolen Dr.

NEW HAVEN, CT, Veterans Memorial Coliseum, 275 S. Orange St.

NEW YORK, NY, Yankee Stadium, 157th St. & River Ave.

PITTSBURGH, PA, Three Rivers Stadium, 420 Stadium Cir.

PONTIAC, MI (Sign language also), Silverdome, 1200 Featherstone Rd.

ROANOKE, VA, Civic Center, 710 Williamson Rd. N.E.

WICHITA, KS, Kansas Coliseum, I-135 at 85th St. N.

JUNE 21-23

CICERO, IL (Sign language also), Hawthorne Race Track, 35th & Cicero Ave.

COLUMBIA, SC, Carolina Coliseum, Assembly & Blossom Sts.

CORVALLIS, OR, Gill Coliseum, 600 S.W. 26th St.

DENVER, CO (Sign language also), McNichols Sports Arena, 1635 Clay St.

FORT WORTH, TX (Sign language also), Tarrant County Convention Center, 1111 Houston St.

HOUSTON, TX (Sign language also), Astrodome, Loop 610 at Kirby Dr.

JACKSONVILLE, FL, Memorial Coliseum, Gator Bowl Sports Complex.

KANSAS CITY, MO, Kemper Arena, 1800 Genesee St.

LANDOVER, MD, Capital Centre, Beltway Exit 15 E. or 17.

MACON, GA (Sign language also), Coliseum, 200 Coliseum Dr.

MADISON, WI, Dane County Memorial Coliseum, John Nolen Dr.

NEW HAVEN, CT, Veterans Memorial Coliseum, 275 S. Orange St.

PITTSBURGH, PA, Three Rivers Stadium, 420 Stadium Cir.

RENO, NV, Reno-Sparks Convention Arena, 4590 S. Virginia St.

SACRAMENTO, CA, ARCO Arena, 1 Sports Pkwy.

SAINT LOUIS, MO, The Arena, 5700 Oakland Ave.

SAN DIEGO, CA, Jack Murphy Stadium, 9449 Friars Rd.

SAN FRANCISCO, CA, Cow Palace, Geneva Ave.

SOUTH BEND, IN, N.D.U. Joyce Athletic Center, Juniper Rd.

WEST PALM BEACH, FL, Auditorium, 1610 Palm Beach Lakes Blvd.

JUNE 28-30

AMARILLO, TX, Civic Center Coliseum, 3rd & Buchanan Sts.

BILLINGS, MT, MetraPark Arena, Hwy. #10.

BILOXI, MS, Mississippi Coast Coliseum, 3800 W. Beach Blvd.

CICERO, IL, Hawthorne Race Track, 35th & Cicero Ave.

COLUMBIA, SC, Carolina Coliseum, Assembly & Blossom Sts.

COLUMBUS, OH, Greater Ohio Convention Center, 400 N. High St.

- CROWNSVILLE, MD (Korean only), Jehovah's Witnesses Assembly Hall, Sunrice Beach Rd.
- FORT WORTH, TX, Tarrant County Convention Center, 1111 Houston St.
- GREENSBORO, NC, Coliseum, 1921 W. Lee St.
- JACKSONVILLE, FL, Memorial Coliseum, Gator Bowl Sports Complex.
- LANDOVER, MD (Sign language also), Capital Centre, Beltway Exit 15 E. or 17.
- LOS ANGELES, CA (Vietnamese sessions also), Dodger Stadium, 1000 Elysian Park Ave.
- MACON, GA, Coliseum, 200 Coliseum Dr.
- MADISON, WI, Dane County Memorial Coliseum, John Nolen Dr.
- NEW YORK, NY (Sign language also), Yankee Stadium, 157th St. & River Ave.
- OGDEN, UT, Dee Events Center, 4600 South 1400 E.
- PHILADELPHIA, PA, Veterans Stadium, S. Broad & Pattison Ave.
- SACRAMENTO, CA, ARCO Arena, 1 Sports Pkwy.
- SAINT LOUIS, MO, The Arena, 5700 Oakland Ave.
- SAINT PETERSBURG, FL, Bayfront Center, 400 1st St. S.
- SAN FRANCISCO, CA (Sign language also), Cow Palace, Geneva Ave.
- SOUTH BEND, IN, N.D.U. Joyce Athletic Center, Juniper Rd.
- SPRINGFIELD, MA, Civic Center, 1277 Main St.
- TUCSON, AZ, Convention Center, 260 S. Church St.
- WEST PALM BEACH, FL, Auditorium, 1610 Palm Beach Lakes Blvd.
- JULY 5-7**
- AMARILLO, TX, Civic Center Coliseum, 3rd & Buchanan Sts.
- BIRMINGHAM, AL, Civic Center Coliseum, One Civic Center Plaza.
- BROOKLYN, NY (Italian only), Jehovah's Witnesses Assembly Hall, 973 Flatbush Ave.
- CICERO, IL, Hawthorne Race Track, 35th & Cicero Ave.
- COLUMBIA, SC, Carolina Coliseum, Assembly & Blossom Sts.
- COLUMBUS, OH, Greater Ohio Convention Center, 400 N. High St.
- CORVALLIS, OR, Gill Coliseum, 600 S.W. 26th St.
- FRESNO, CA, Convention Center, 700 "M" St.
- GREENSBORO, NC, Coliseum, 1921 W. Lee St.
- JERSEY CITY, NJ (French only), Jehovah's Witnesses Assembly Hall, 2932 Kennedy Blvd.
- LANDOVER, MD, Capital Centre, Beltway Exit 15 E. or 17.
- LINCOLN, NE (Sign language also), Devaney Sports Center, 16th St. & Military Rd.
- LONG ISLAND CITY, NY (Chinese only), Jehovah's Witnesses Assembly Hall, 44-17 Greenpoint Ave.
- LOS ANGELES, CA (Korean only), Jehovah's Witnesses Assembly Hall, 20600 Ventura Blvd., Woodland Hills.
- MACON, GA, Coliseum, 200 Coliseum Dr.
- MEMPHIS, TN, Mid-South Coliseum, Mid-South Fairgrounds.
- NATICK, MA (Portuguese only), Jehovah's Witnesses Assembly Hall, 85 Bacon St.
- OGDEN, UT, Dee Events Center, 4600 South 1400 E.
- ROCHESTER, MN, Mayo Civic Center Arena, 30 2nd Ave. S.E.
- SACRAMENTO, CA, ARCO Arena, 1 Sports Pkwy.
- SAINT PETERSBURG, FL (Sign language also), Bayfront Center, 400 1st St. S.
- SAN FRANCISCO, CA, Cow Palace, Geneva Ave.
- SOUTH BEND, IN, N.D.U. Joyce Athletic Center, Juniper Rd.
- SPRINGFIELD, IL, Prairie Capital Convention Center, One Convention Center Plaza.
- SPRINGFIELD, MA, Civic Center, 1277 Main St.
- SYRACUSE, NY, Onondaga Co. War Memorial Arena, 515 Montgomery St.
- TACOMA, WA, Tacoma Dome, 2727 E. "D" St.
- TUCCSON, AZ (Sign language also), Convention Center, 260 S. Church St.
- WEST PALM BEACH, FL, Auditorium, 1610 Palm Beach Lakes Blvd.
- JULY 12-14**
- BELLEVILLE, MI (Greek only), Jehovah's Witnesses Assembly Hall, 43777 Ecorse Rd.
- BISMARCK, ND, Civic Center Arena, 601 E. Sweet Ave.
- CICERO, IL (Spanish only), Hawthorne Race Track, 35th & Cicero Ave.
- COLUMBUS, OH, Greater Ohio Convention Center, 400 N. High St.
- FORT LAUDERDALE, FL (French only), Jehovah's Witnesses Assembly Hall, 20850 Griffin Rd.
- FRESNO, CA, Convention Center, 700 "M" St.
- HAMPTON, VA, Coliseum, 1000 Coliseum Dr.
- JERSEY CITY, NJ (French only), Jehovah's Witnesses Assembly Hall, 2932 Kennedy Blvd.
- LAFAYETTE, LA, Cajundome, West Congress.
- LOS ANGELES, CA (Tagalog only), Jehovah's Witnesses Assembly Hall, 20600 Ventura Blvd., Woodland Hills.
- LOUISVILLE, KY, Coliseum, Kentucky Fair & Expo Center.
- MEMPHIS, TN, Mid-South Coliseum, Mid-South Fairgrounds.
- MOBILE, AL, Municipal Auditorium, 401 Auditorium Dr.
- NORTH FT. MYERS, FL (Spanish only), Lee Civic Center, 11831 Bayshore Rd.
- OKLAHOMA CITY, OK, Myriad, One Myriad Gardens.
- PROVIDENCE, RI, Civic Center, One LaSalle Sq.
- ROCHESTER, MN, Mayo Civic Center Arena, 30 2nd Ave. S.E.
- SAINT PETERSBURG, FL, Bayfront Center, 400 1st St. S.
- SAN FRANCISCO, CA (Spanish only), Cow Palace, Geneva Ave.
- SPRINGFIELD, MA, Civic Center, 1277 Main St.
- SYRACUSE, NY, Onondaga Co. War Memorial Arena, 515 Montgomery St.
- TACOMA, WA (Sign language also; Spanish also), Tacoma Dome, 2727 E. "D" St.
- TUCCSON, AZ, Convention Center, 260 S. Church St.
- WEST PALM BEACH, FL, Auditorium, 1610 Palm Beach Lakes Blvd.
- JULY 19-21**
- FRESNO, CA, Convention Center, 700 "M" St.
- HAMPTON, VA, Coliseum, 1000 Coliseum Dr.
- LAFAYETTE, LA, Cajundome, West Congress.
- LOS ANGELES, CA (Japanese only), Jehovah's Witnesses Assembly Hall, 20600 Ventura Blvd., Woodland Hills.
- LOUISVILLE, KY (Sign language also), Coliseum, Kentucky Fair & Expo Center.
- MEMPHIS, TN, Mid-South Coliseum, Mid-South Fairgrounds.
- NEW YORK, NY (Spanish only), Yankee Stadium, 157th St. & River Ave.
- NORTH FT. MYERS, FL (Spanish only), Lee Civic Center, 11831 Bayshore Rd.
- PROVIDENCE, RI (Sign language also), Civic Center, One LaSalle Sq.
- ROCHESTER, MN, Mayo Civic Center Arena, 30 2nd Ave. S.E.
- SAIN T PETERSBURG, FL, Bayfront Center, 400 1st St. S.
- SAN ANTONIO, TX (Spanish only), Convention Center Arena, S. Alamo & Market Sts.
- SYRACUSE, NY, Onondaga Co. War Memorial Arena, 515 Montgomery St.
- TUCCSON, AZ (Spanish only), Convention Center, 260 S. Church St.
- JULY 26-28**
- NAVAN, Navan Exhibition Centre, Trim Road.
- JULY 12-14**
- NAVAN, Navan Exhibition Centre, Trim Road.
- JULY 19-21**
- NAVAN, Navan Exhibition Centre, Trim Road.
- JULY 26-30**
- NAVAN, Navan Exhibition Centre, Trim Road.
- Canada**
- JUNE 28-30**
- OTTAWA, ONT. (Sign language also), Civic Centre Arena, Lansdowne Park, 1015 Bank St.
- OTTAWA, ONT. (Arabic only), Salom A. Civic Centre Arena, Lansdowne Park, 1015 Bank St.
- JULY 5-7**
- BRAMPTON, ONT. (Spanish only), Convention Center, 700 "M" St.
- HAMPTON, VA, Coliseum, 1000 Coliseum Dr.
- NORTH FT. MYERS, FL (Spanish only), Lee Civic Center, 11831 Bayshore Rd.
- OKLAHOMA CITY, OK, Myriad, One Myriad Gardens.
- PROVIDENCE, RI, Civic Center, One LaSalle Sq.
- ROCHESTER, MN, Mayo Civic Center Arena, 30 2nd Ave. S.E.
- SAIN T PETERSBURG, FL, Bayfront Center, 400 1st St. S.
- SAN ANTONIO, TX (Spanish only), Convention Center Arena, S. Alamo & Market Sts.
- SYRACUSE, NY, Onondaga Co. War Memorial Arena, 515 Montgomery St.
- TUCCSON, AZ (Spanish only), Convention Center, 260 S. Church St.
- JULY 5-7**
- BRAMPTON, ONT. (Spanish only), Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, Hwy. 7, 1 mile W. of Mississauga Rd., Norval.
- EDMONTON, ALTA. (Sign language also; French sessions also), Edmonton Northlands Coliseum, 75th St. & 118th Ave.
- KAMLOOPS, B.C. (Sign language also), Kamloops Exhibition Association, 479 Chilcotin Rd.
- MONTREAL, QUE. (French only, sign language also), Olympic Stadium, boul. Pie-IX & rue Sherbrooke.
- SAINT JOHN, N.B. (Sign language also), Lord Beaverbrook Hall, Main St.
- SASKATOON, SASK. (Sign language also; Ukrainian sessions also), Saskatchewan Place, 3515 Thatcher Ave.
- VANCOUVER, B.C. (Sign language also; Portuguese sessions also), Pacific Coliseum, P.N.E. Grounds, Hastings St. E. & Renfrew St.
- VANCOUVER, B.C. (Chinese only), Board Room, Pacific Coliseum, P.N.E. Grounds, Hastings St. E. & Renfrew St.
- WINDSOR, ONT. (Saint Denis Athletic and Community Centre, University of Windsor, College Ave. & Huron Church Rd.
- WINNIPEG, MAN. (Sign language also; Ukrainian/Polish sessions also), Winnipeg Convention Centre, 375 York Ave.
- JULY 12-14**
- BRAMPTON, ONT. (Portuguese only), Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, Hwy. 7, 1 mile W. of Mississauga Rd., Norval.
- CASTLEGAR, B.C., Castlegar & District Community Complex, 2101 6th Ave.
- HALIFAX, NS. (Sign language also), Halifax Forum, 290 Windsor St.
- KITIMAT, B.C., Kitimat Arena, 400 City Centre.
- MONTREAL, QUE. (Italian only), Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 12700, boul. Métropolitain Est, Pointe-aux-Trembles.
- NORTH BAY, ONT., Memorial Gardens Sports Arena, 100 Chippewa St. E.
- PRINCE GEORGE, B.C., Kin Centre, Arenas I & II, Osipka Blvd. S. & 18th Ave.
- QUEBEC CITY, QC. (French only; sign language also), Colisée, 2205, avenue du Colisée.
- TORONTO, ONT. (Korean, Ukrainian, Polish, and Vietnamese sessions also), Maple Leaf Gardens, 60 Carlton St.
- VICTORIA, B.C. (Sign language also), Esquimalt Recreation and Sports Centre, 1925 Blanchard St.
- JULY 19-21**
- BRAMPTON, ONT. (Italian only), Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, Hwy. 7, 1 mile W. of Mississauga Rd., Norval.
- HAMILTON, ONT. (Sign language also), Cops Coliseum, 101 York Blvd.
- HULL, QUE. (French only; sign language also), Hull Arena, rue Allard.
- MONTREAL, QUE. (Spanish only), Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 12700, boul. Métropolitain Est, Pointe-aux-Trembles.
- NANAIMO, B.C., Beban Park Recreation Centre, 2300 Bowen Rd.
- PENTICTON, B.C., Penticton Trade & Convention Centre, 273 Power St.
- SAIN T JOHNS, NFLD. (Sign language also), Saint John's Memorial Stadium, Lake Ave.
- SHERBROOKE, QUE. (French only), Palais des Sports, 360, rue Parc.
- JULY 26-28**
- BRAMPTON, ONT. (Greek only), Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, Hwy. 7, 1 mile W. of Mississauga Rd., Norval.
- CALGARY, ALTA. (Spanish only), Calgary Kingdom Hall Complex of Jehovah's Witnesses, 2900 14th Ave. NE.

Questions From Readers

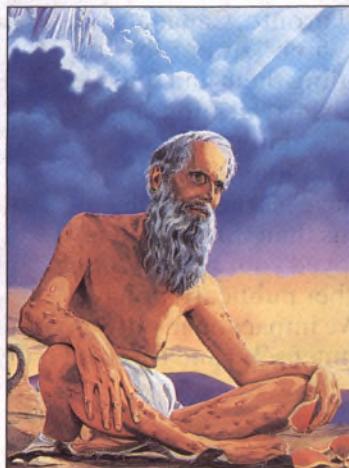
- Job 33:24 speaks of "a ransom" being found for Job, allowing him to avoid dying. Who was to be that ransom for Job?

There was no human ransom sacrifice offered for Job back then, but God did cover, or forgive, Job's error.

Satan caused Job many troubles, including "a malignant boil from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head." Job's state was so bad that his wife urged him to "curse God and die." Even Job mused whether death was better than such suffering.—Job 2:7-9; 3:11.

When it seemed that Job might die, Elihu assessed Job's precarious situation and laid the basis for hope, saying: "His flesh wastes away from sight . . . And his soul draws near to the pit, and his life to those inflicting death. If there exists for him a messenger, a spokesman, one out of a thousand, to tell to man his uprightness, then he favors him and says, 'Let him off from going down into the pit! I have found a ransom! Let his flesh become fresher than in youth.'"—Job 33:21-25.

We know that Jesus Christ gave up his perfect human life as a corresponding ransom for imperfect humans. His sacrifice balanced what Adam had lost, paying the needed price to bring about release from sin. (Romans 5:12-19; 1 Timothy 2:5, 6) However, this is not the only use of "ransom" in the Bible. The Hebrew word found at Job 33:24 basically means "cover." (Exodus 25:17) When God was dealing with ancient Israel, he had an arrangement to cover, or atone for, sins—sacrifices that covered sin, setting matters straight between humans and God.—Exodus 29:36; Leviticus 16:11, 15, 16; 17:11.



Earlier, though, God had been willing to accept sacrifices as expressions of thanks or of requests for forgiveness and approval. (Genesis 4:3, 4; 8:20, 21; 12:7; 31:54) Job understood the value of such sacrifices. We read: "He got up early in the morning and offered up burnt sacrifices according to the number of all of [his sons]; for, said Job, 'maybe my sons have sinned and have cursed God in their heart.' That is the way Job would do always." (Job 1:5) Since he tried to please God and obviously had a contrite spirit, his sacrifices had value in God's sight.—Psalm 32:1, 2; 51:17.

But Job later suffered sickness that seemed to threaten his life. He also had a wrong view of his righteousness, so he needed correction, which Elihu then provided. (Job 32:6; 33:8-12; 35:2-4) Elihu said that Job need not continue in his sad condition right down to death and the pit (Sheol, or the common grave). If Job

would repent, "a ransom" could be found.—Job 33:24-28.

We need not think that by "ransom" Elihu meant a human back then who would die in Job's behalf. In view of the sacrifices that true worshipers had been accustomed to offering, the sort of ransom to which Elihu was alluding in Job's case might have been an animal sacrifice. Interestingly, God later told Job's three critical companions: "You men must offer up a burnt sacrifice in your own behalf; and Job my servant will himself pray for you." (Job 42:8) Whatever the form of the ransom, Elihu's main point was that Job could have his error covered and experience resulting benefits.

That is what happened. Job 'repented in dust and ashes.' Then what? "Jehovah himself turned back the captive condition of Job . . . As for Jehovah, he blessed the end of Job afterward more than his beginning . . . And Job continued living after this a hundred and forty years and came to see his sons and his grandsons—four generations." Granted, that ransom did not free Job from sin, so in time he died. Yet, the prolonging of his life proves that, effectively, 'his flesh became fresher than in youth, and he returned to the days of his youthful vigor.'—Job 33:25; 42:6, 10-17.

Those blessings that came from applying a limited ransom to Job serve as a preview of the abundant blessings that will come to believing mankind in the new world. Then, the full benefit of Jesus' ransom sacrifice will be available, removing forever the disastrous effects of sin and imperfection. What reason we will have for "joyful shouting," as Elihu mentioned!—Job 33:26.

"Helpful as guides to daily living"

That is what a woman from Toronto, Canada, called the publications of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. "I enjoy reading them and find the material very informative, heartwarming, and above all very helpful as guides to daily living."

She added: "I am a university graduate, and I must shockingly admit that I have learned much more through your publications than through all my years of study. I especially enjoyed your book *Making Your Family Life Happy*. No other publications have managed to have such a positive impact on my life as yours have—they have helped me immensely; and for this I truly thank you."

She is not alone. Millions of people around the world have found the publications of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society to be a valuable source of spiritual strength and practical help in their daily lives. In fact, the Society's publications are now available in over 200 languages and dialects.

One reason for the Society's success is its emphasis on practical, everyday topics. For example, the Society's monthly magazine, *The Watchtower*, contains articles on such subjects as health, nutrition, family relationships, and personal development. It also features articles on topics such as the Bible, history, and science.

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