



WHAT WILL  
"GOD'S KINGDOM COME,"  
MEAN TO YOU?

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

## THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER"

Every watchtower has its purpose. It serves as an elevated place for a wide-awake person with sharp vision. It enables him to see far ahead into the distance and tell those below for whom he is a watchman what is drawing near, whether it is a danger against which to prepare or it is something good over which to be glad with strong faith and hope.

Because of having the name "The Watchtower" this magazine justly has to render a similar useful service to the people of all nations. This is an international magazine and makes no racial distinctions, for we are all facing a common world danger; we are all hoping for a common good.

Ever since "The Watchtower" began to be published in July of 1879 it has looked ahead into the future, always striving to aid its readers to advance in knowledge and to gain a clearer picture of the glorious new order of things that is in store for righteous mankind. No, "The Watchtower" is no inspired prophet, but it follows and explains a Book of prophecy the predictions in which have proved to be unerring and unfailing till now. "The Watchtower" is therefore under safe guidance. It may be read with confidence, for its statements may be checked against that prophetic Book.

Among the many nations of today there are hundreds of differing religions. Which one does this magazine present? Not the confused religions of Christendom, but the religion of the oldest sacred Book on earth. Which Book? The Sacred Bible of the Holy Scriptures, written by inspiration in the name of the Creator of heaven and earth, the only living and true God.

The sacred, nonpolitical purpose of "The Watchtower" is accordingly to encourage and promote study of the Holy Bible and to give our many readers the needed unsectarian help to understand that Book of true religion and infallible prophecy. Thus this magazine will be helping them to prove worthy of perfect life and happiness in God's promised new order under His everlasting kingdom of righteousness.

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"They will all be taught by Jehovah."—John 6: 45; Isaiah 54: 13

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The Bible translation used in "The Watchtower" is the New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures, 1961 edition. When other translations are used the following symbols will appear behind the citations:

- AS - American Standard Version      *Le* - Isaac Leeser's version  
AT - An American Translation      *Mo* - James Moffatt's version  
AV - Authorized Version (1611)      *Ro* - J. B. Rotherham's version  
Dy - Catholic Douay version      *RS* - Revised Standard Version  
JP - Jewish Publication Soc.      *Yg* - Robert Young's version

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Jehovah's  
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'BUT I have read the Bible,' you may say. 'As a child it was read to me, and we hear it discussed at religious services.'

However, is this sufficient?

Certainly it is a fine thing that the Bible was read to you when you were young. It indicates that your parents were endeavoring to heed the Scriptural injunction to impress God's Word on the minds of their children. (Deut. 6:4-9; Eph. 6:4) But is what you listened to long ago sufficient to equip you to live a Christian life? Is not regular Bible reading also necessary?

For example, if your child were to ask you a question involving his conduct, would you be able to give him counsel based on the authoritative Word of God? Or would you be forced to tell him only what seemed to be right in your own eyes? And what about your personal decisions? Are they supported by the Scriptures? The inspired warning that 'there is a way that seems upright before a man, but the ways of death are its end,' impresses upon one the importance of relying on what God says in his Word.—Prov. 14:12; 3:5, 6.

Also in need of consideration is the Christian responsibility to share the good things in God's Word with others. Are you

# Why YOU SHOULD READ THE BIBLE

equipped with the Bible knowledge necessary to do this? Jesus Christ himself emphasized the importance of this knowledge by saying: "This means everlasting life, their taking in knowledge of you, the only true God, and of the one whom you sent forth, Jesus Christ."—John 17:3.

Is it not apparent, therefore, that to handle the Bible effectively you must read it regularly? Truths quickly slip from mind unless they are reviewed. Even regular attendance at religious services does not replace this need to read the Bible. The Christian apostle Paul showed this when writing concerning the Beroeans. "Now the [inhabitants of Beroea] were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica," Paul wrote, "for they received the word with the greatest eagerness of mind, carefully examining the Scriptures daily as to whether these things were so."—Acts 17:11.

Notice that the Beroeans 'carefully examined the Scriptures daily,' even in addition to attending religious services. This is the course recommended by the Bible. But what is the situation today?

A reporter who attended church in the northwestern United States noted that it is quite different. He said that few persons

brought Bibles, but, instead, looked at the Bibles provided by the church, and then returned them after the service was over. The reporter asked: "Don't they need to have the Bible at home? Is the Bible just for one hour on Sunday morning?"\*

What do you think? Can the Bible guide a person's life if he is unacquainted with its teachings? How can one be sure what decisions to make if he does not know what God's requirements are? And what about one's hope for the future? Can a person have confidence in the Bible promises of everlasting life if he has not read those promises? Furthermore, will he be able to give a reason for his hope and build hope in others by sharing the good news from the Bible with his fellowman if he has not studied it carefully?

Such questions come to mind when one reads the syndicated columnist Louis Cassels' comments regarding certain church-goers. "Sixty percent were unable to name the four Gospels," he said. "Seventy-five percent could not identify Calvary as the place where Jesus was crucified. Some congregations might do better," Cassels offered. "But not many. The vast majority of Americans today are Biblical illiterates. They simply have never read the book which they profess to regard as 'the word of God.'"<sup>†</sup>

Despite this negligence, there is every reason why you should read the Bible. For it truly is the Word of God! "All Scripture is inspired of God," an apostle of Jesus Christ assures.—2 Tim. 3:16.

Do you really believe this? If so, you will make Bible reading a daily habit. God's Word will enable you to make right decisions. It will also strengthen your confidence in God's promise of everlasting life

under his righteous kingdom.—Matt. 6:9, 10.

However, for Bible reading to be of this benefit you must not read it as many persons do. Some look through the Bible to find proof for their religious beliefs instead of basing their belief on what they read. And others read the Bible, not so much to learn God's will as to cover so many pages, that they may eventually say they have read it through.

But note how God encourages the reading of the Bible: "You must in an undertone read in it day and night, in order that you may take care to do according to all that is written in it." (Josh. 1:8) Yes, while you read observe how it applies to your life. If you take care, thinking as you read and silently asking yourself questions, you will see how Bible incidents affect your own life. You will note whether you need to make adjustments in your attitude and actions so as to be pleasing to Almighty God.

The Bible was not written to be consulted as one does a dictionary, but was intended to be read. It is true that to prove their points on certain issues Jesus and his apostles gathered scriptures from various Bible books, thereby setting a proper precedent. However, at the same time, it is vital to read the Bible consecutively. This will serve to prevent you from wresting scriptures out of context.—Luke 24:27; Acts 17:2, 3.

What a rewarding treasure awaits you within the pages of the Bible! It is the finest reading there is! The divine wisdom found in its pages is "more precious than corals," the wise Proverb writer wrote. In fact, "it is a tree of life to those taking hold of it." Certainly, then, for your own welfare, you should read the Bible regularly.—Prov. 3:13-18.

\* Seattle Post-Intelligencer, April 3, 1963.

<sup>†</sup> San Mateo Times, April 15, 1961.

**T**O MORE than two-thirds of the world of mankind the words "God's kingdom come" mean nothing at all. That is because of their religion. Not all persons are of the same religion, and millions of persons even say they are godless and have no religion at all. Yet regardless of whether they care to know about the coming of God's kingdom or not, God's kingdom will come. They will have to face that government when its coming is fully realized in the near future. That is why people over all the earth need to have this vital matter called to their attention now.

<sup>2</sup> The ignorant are not the only ones who have such a need. Even most of those people who are acquainted with the words "God's kingdom come" have a similar need. Why should that be so? Because, although they call themselves Christian and religiously pray the prayer "Thy

# WHAT WILL “GOD'S KINGDOM COME” MEAN TO YOU?



*"Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."*

*-Matt. 6:9,10, Authorized Version; Douay Version.*

1. To whom do the words "God's kingdom come" mean nothing at all, but why must this matter be called to their attention now?

2. (a) What others also have a like need for having this notice, and why? (b) For what is now the time to make a decision regarding God's kingdom come?

kingdom come," they do not talk and act as if they understood what they were praying. They certainly do not talk and act in harmony with such a prayer. Ask them what the coming of God's kingdom will mean to them and to the rest of mankind, and you will get different sorts of answers, and these without any authoritative proof or backing. God's kingdom, when come, will certainly have an effect upon all mankind, either for one's everlasting good or for one's everlasting destruction. What, therefore, will God's kingdom come mean to each one of us? Naturally we should like it to mean our endless good. What can we do to make it mean such a thing to us? Now is the time to decide that it shall mean such to us. Now is the time to know what to do to gain that happy future.

<sup>3</sup> The words "God's kingdom come" are based on the prayer addressed to God in heaven, namely, "Thy kingdom come." Many persons do not notice the fact that this prayer was taught by an Asiatic. Among the three branches of the human race, the Japhetic, the Shemitic and the Hamitic, this Asiatic man was of the Shemitic branch. He traces his family line of descent back to Shem, the second of the three sons of Noah, from whom all mankind of today have descended. (Gen. 10: 21; Luke 3:23-36) Among the many families of Shemites we find the family of Hebrews, Israelites or Jews. The Asiatic teacher of the prayer for God's kingdom to come was such a Hebrew, Israelite or Jew. He was born in the town of Bethlehem in the Roman province of Judea almost two thousand years ago, in the same town where his famous ancestor had been born, David son of Jesse, who became king of Jerusalem.

3. Of what race and nationality was the teacher of the prayer "Thy kingdom come," and where was he born?

<sup>4</sup> Before ever he was born in Bethlehem, his name was decided upon by God, and so at birth he was called Jeshua by the Hebrews or Jesus by the Greeks. Later the title was added to his name, Messiah or Christ, and thus he came to be called Jesus the Messiah or Jesus Christ. He was also called Jesus the Son of David, to emphasize his title or right to the kingdom that was once held by his forefather David over the nation of Israel.—Matt. 1:1, 18-25; Mark 10:47, 48; Luke 1:28-33; 2: 4-21; John 7:42.

<sup>5</sup> In the spring of the year 31 of our Common Era, or when Jesus Christ was thirty-one years old, he taught the famous prayer known generally as the Lord's Prayer, including the request to God in heaven, "Thy kingdom come." Few persons seem to realize that this prayer was a part of his famous Sermon on the Mount. This Sermon opens up with the so-called Beatitudes or nine Happinesses, the first one of which says: "Happy are those conscious of their spiritual need, since the kingdom of the heavens belongs to them." Another statement of this Happiness says: "Happy are you poor, because yours is the kingdom of God." In that same Sermon on the Mount Jesus Christ taught what has been called the Golden Rule, in these words: "All things, therefore, that you want men to do to you, you also must likewise do to them."

<sup>6</sup> In this Sermon Jesus also said concerning our earthly needs: "Your heavenly Father knows you need all these things. Keep on, then, seeking first the kingdom and his righteousness, and all these other things will be added to you." (Matt. 5:1-4; Luke 6:20; Matt. 7:12; 6:32, 33) Jesus thus put God's kingdom ahead of all our earthly

4. How was his name given to him, and what does the meaning of his title "the Son of David" emphasize?  
 5, 6. (a) Of what was this prayer "Thy kingdom come" a part? (b) In that connection how was the thing for the coming of which we pray repeatedly emphasized, and so why do we rightly offer the prayer?

needs, as being of the highest importance. He did not say to seek first the kingdom of this country or the kingdom of that country, or the presidency of the United States of America or any other worldly office, but said to seek first God's kingdom together with God's righteousness. Very evidently, then, the heavenly kingdom of God must be of the greatest value and importance, and we rightly ought to pray for it to come, as Jesus Christ taught his true followers to do.

#### CONTRADICTION ADDED

<sup>7</sup> How, though, will God's heavenly kingdom come? When will His kingdom have come in answer to this prayer that was taught nineteen centuries ago and that has been prayed by seekers of God's kingdom ever since? Will its coming mean calamity for you or blessing for you, and what must each one do to avoid calamity?

<sup>8</sup> For us to know accurately, we must examine the matter in the light of Jesus' teachings and in the light of the whole Bible, of which his teachings are only a part. Hundreds of millions of persons have misunderstood the matter because of words that have wrongly been added to the original prayer taught by Jesus Christ. According to the earliest handwritten copies of the Holy Bible, the prayer reads as follows:

<sup>9</sup> "Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." —Matt. 6:9-13, Revised Standard Version.

<sup>10</sup> The restatement of the prayer, as found in Luke 11:2-4, reads: "Father, hal-

7, 8. What questions about its coming arise, and to know the accurate answers what must we do?

9, 10. How does the prayer read according to the earliest handwritten copies of the Holy Bible?

lowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread; and forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive every one who is indebted to us; and lead us not into temptation."—*Revised Standard Version*.

<sup>11</sup> Contradiction was brought into this prayer when some religious copier of the Holy Scriptures added to the prayer as given in the Sermon on the Mount the following words: "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen." (Matt. 6:13, *Authorized Version, Martin Luther German Version*) As a result hundreds of millions of religious people in Christendom have for centuries recited the prayer with the addition of those unauthorized words as a conclusion or doxology. Seemingly they have never stopped to think of how at the beginning of the prayer they could recite the words "Thy kingdom come" and then in the conclusion of their prayer say: "Thine is the kingdom." If the kingdom was already God's, why should they pray in the same prayer: "Thy kingdom come"?

<sup>12</sup> This shows the foolishness of adding something to God's inspired Word with the idea of trying to improve it or fill it out. Well did Proverbs 30:5, 6 warn against this, saying: "Every saying of God is refined. . . . Add nothing to his words, that he may not reprove you, and that you may not have to be proved a liar." Certainly in Jesus' day God's kingdom had not come.

<sup>13</sup> The words wrongly added to Jesus' correct prayer were evidently drawn from the words of King David addressed to God, as found in 1 Chronicles 29:11, which the American Standard Version Bible translates as follows: "Thine, O Jehovah, is the

—  
11. How was contradiction brought into the way the prayer came to be recited, and in what does that contradiction consist?

12. What foolishness, warned against in Proverbs 30:5, 6, does such an addition show?

13. From where were the added words evidently drawn?

greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Jehovah, and thou art exalted as head above all."\*

<sup>14</sup> Those words were true in the year 1037 before our Common Era, in the closing days of David as king of Jerusalem. David was the king over the nation of the twelve tribes of Israel, but he realized that he was merely the visible human representative of his God, Jehovah, who was the real King, the invisible, heavenly King over the nation of Israel. The material royal throne on which David sat for forty years was really Jehovah's throne, and King David was now, because of his old age, abdicating this throne to his young but wise son, Solomon. So King David, in this farewell speech to the congregation of Israel at Jerusalem, was confessing that the kingdom over Israel did not really belong to him or to his royal family. It actually belonged to the God whom he and all Israel then worshiped, Jehovah.

<sup>15</sup> It was Jehovah God who had established the human kingdom over the nation

\* On the conclusion added to the Lord's Prayer *The Goodspeed Parallel New Testament*, by Dr. Edgar J. Goodspeed (1943), makes the following comment, on page 76, paragraph 4:

"6:13 The doxology at the end of the Lord's Prayer does not appear in the best ancient Greek manuscripts (Aleph, B, D, Z), the Old Latin version, and the Latin Vulgate, but it was added to the Prayer very early, when it was used in public worship. A form of it was well known by the time of Chrysostom, at the end of the fourth century. It is a liturgical addition, evidently based on 1 Chron. 29:11."

Said Zion's Watch Tower as of January 15, 1898, page 31, paragraph 2: "'For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory, forever, Amen.' These words, altho found in our Common Version and in some of the Greek manuscripts, are not found in the *oldest* Greek MSS., the Sinaitic and the Vatican. These would therefore seem to have been human words added to the words of our Lord. So far as this earth is concerned, these words have not been true throughout the Gospel age; the dominion of the earth has not been the Lord's; the power of earth has not been the Lord's; and the glory of the earth has not been the Lord's...."

14. When were the words, "Thine is the kingdom, O Jehovah," true, and why did the speaker say them? 15. (a) Why was Israel's government then really a miniature kingdom of God? (b) What Scripture texts support that fact?

of Israel in the year 1117 before our Common Era. Also, it was He who caused David to be anointed as king over all twelve tribes of Israel in 1070 B.C.E. Consequently, the kingdom of the nation of Israel back in David's days was a miniature or small-scale kingdom of God on earth. In harmony with this we read in verse 23 of the same chapter of 1 Chronicles 29 what took place after David abdicated the throne to his beloved son Solomon: "And Solomon began to sit upon Jehovah's throne as king in place of David his father and to make a success of it, and all the Israelites were obedient to him." Later, when the queen of Sheba visited King Solomon at Jerusalem and saw his glory, she said: "May Jehovah your God come to be blessed, who has taken delight in you by putting you upon *his* throne as king for Jehovah your God." (2 Chron. 9:8) In correspondency with the fact that Jehovah's visible throne was at Jerusalem the prophecy of Jeremiah 3:17 says: "In that time they will call Jerusalem the throne of Jehovah; and to her all the nations must be brought together to the name of Jehovah at Jerusalem."

<sup>16</sup> Years before the abdication and death of King David Jehovah his God made a covenant or solemn contract with him that the kingship over this small-scale kingdom of God over Israel would stay in David's royal family forever. By his prophet Nathan Jehovah God said to King David: "Jehovah has told you that a house is what Jehovah will make for you. When your days come to the full, and you must lie down with your forefathers, then I shall certainly raise up your seed after you, which will come out of your inward parts; and I shall indeed firmly establish his kingdom.... And your house and your kingdom will certainly be steadfast to

16. In what manner did Jehovah promise that David would have a permanent heir in the kingdom of God?

time indefinite before you; your very throne will become one firmly established to time indefinite." (2 Sam. 7:11-16) In this manner Jehovah promised that King David would have a permanent heir to the throne in the kingdom of God. This heir would be called the Son of David.

#### INTERRUPTION

<sup>17</sup> In his own day King David could say to God: "Thine is the kingdom, O Jehovah." But the time came when there was no miniature kingdom of God on earth, no typical kingdom of God over the nation of Israel. When did that come to be? In the year 607 before our Common Era. In that year Almighty God permitted the armies of Babylon to destroy the royal city of Jerusalem where the kings of David's line sat on Jehovah's throne. He let his throne be overturned, and he had the survivors of the siege and destruction of Jerusalem deported to the distant land of Babylon. Jerusalem and the land of Judah became desolated without human inhabitant or domestic animal. With that event there ceased to be a kingdom of God on earth.—Ezek. 21:25-27.

<sup>18</sup> Seventy years later, after the exiled Israelites were restored to their homeland, there was no throne of Jehovah in Jerusalem for governors to sit upon. The typical kingdom of God was not reestablished at Jerusalem with a descendant of King David reigning in representation of God on Jehovah's throne. "The times of the Gentiles," or, "the appointed times of the nations," had set in. (Luke 21:24, AV; NW) Hence the Jewish governors at Jerusalem, who were subject to the Gentile conquerors, could not say, as King David had said, to Jehovah God: "Thine is the

kingdom." According to God's covenant with David for an everlasting kingdom, a permanent heir to the kingdom of God over Israel was yet to come. This meant that God's kingdom would be revived with this permanent heir in the throne as Jehovah's representative. No wonder the faithful Jews looked for God's kingdom to come. The question, therefore, was, How long would this interruption to the operation of God's kingdom continue? When would God's kingdom come according to His promise?

<sup>19</sup> This situation with ancient Israel continued on for centuries. Near the beginning of our Common Era Jesus the Son of David was born in Bethlehem of the land of Judea. True, when he gave his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus did say: "Do not swear at all, neither by heaven, because it is God's throne; nor by earth, because it is the footstool of his feet; nor by Jerusalem, because it is the city of the great King." (Matt. 5:34, 35) However, those words did not mean that God's kingdom was ruling at Jerusalem. Jesus said that God's throne was heaven, not a material throne for human rulers in Jerusalem. All the earth was like a mere footstool for God's feet. (Matt. 23:22) When Jesus said those words, Jerusalem and the land of Judea were part of the Roman province of Judea. The man who then sat ruling as governor was, not a Jew, not a descendant of King David, but a Roman named Pontius Pilate.—Luke 3:1.

<sup>20</sup> In the final week of his life on earth Jesus Christ rode as in a triumphal procession into Jerusalem. Enthusiastic Jews who were expecting God's kingdom to be established in Jesus accompanied him joyfully and cried out: "Save, we pray, the

17. Did God's typical kingdom over Israel continue, and what event in Israel's history proves the answer?

18. (a) After the restoration of the Jewish exiles to their homeland, why could not the governors in Jerusalem say: "Thine is the kingdom, O Jehovah"? (b) In view of that, what was the question?

19. Why did Jesus' calling Jerusalem "the city of the great King" not disprove the continuance of that situation with Israel?

20. When Jesus rode into Jerusalem, what were enthusiastic Jews expecting, and how did their outcries show this?

Son of David! Blessed is he that comes in Jehovah's name! Save him, we pray, in the heights above!" "Save, we pray you! Blessed is he that comes in Jehovah's name, even the king of Israel!" "Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!"—Matt. 21:9; John 12:13; Mark 11:10.

<sup>21</sup> Inside Jerusalem, Jesus went to the temple, but he was not anointed by the Jewish high priest to be king. He did not sit down on a throne of Jehovah in Jerusalem and reign as the visible, earthly representative of God. Five days later, or on Passover day, he stood before Governor Pontius Pilate on trial for his life. There he said: "My kingdom is no part of this world. If my kingdom were part of this world, my attendants would have fought that I should not be delivered up to the Jews. But, as it is, my kingdom is not from this source." (John 18:36) So, even in Jesus' days on earth David's words at 1 Chronicles 29:11 could not correctly be said to God by anyone at Jerusalem, namely, "Thine is the kingdom."

<sup>22</sup> For that reason, when Jesus taught his disciples to pray what is known as the Lord's Prayer, he did not add those words to the end of his prayer. Jesus knew that those words were not true. So he taught his disciples to pray for God's kingdom yet to come, which kingdom had been typically overturned in 607 B.C.E. Today Jesus' correctly taught followers do not join in with the religionists of Christendom in saying the spurious words: "Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen." They do not contradict the prayer, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." They know God's kingdom must yet come.

21. How did the situation with Israel continue so that no one at Jerusalem could correctly say: "Thine is the kingdom"?

22. So in the Lord's Prayer, for what did Jesus teach his disciples to pray, and what do they not join Christendom in reciting?

#### IN WHAT WAY?

<sup>23</sup> Now just what will God's kingdom, when come, mean to earth's people? In what way will God's kingdom come? Ask some religionist of Christendom and he will say: 'God's kingdom is fifty thousand years away, for it is to come by the conversion of the world of mankind to Christ.' But is such an answer true?

<sup>24</sup> According to page 719 of *The World Almanac* of 1963 (New York edition) the so-called Christian population on earth numbers 904,332,500. However, the United Nations Statistical Yearbook released in May of 1962 showed that the world population had passed three thousand million already in 1961 and stood at three thousand one hundred and four million, and was increasing each year by fifty-four million. An examination of the figures over the years also shows that the non-Christian population is increasing faster than the so-called Christian population. Evidently the world is not being converted to Christ, but Christendom is shrinking in comparison with the world population. It is now less than a third of all mankind.

<sup>25</sup> Of all the religious organizations on earth the Roman Catholic is the strongest organization. *The World Almanac* shows it has 550,350,000 members, which number includes newly baptized babies. The next strongest religious organization is the Mohammedan, with 433,740,000 Muslims, a non-Christian group. Next comes Hinduism of India with 335,802,500 members. After Hinduism comes Confucianism with 300,240,500. After that, in order, as far as numbers are concerned, come the Protestants, next the Buddhists, then the Eastern Orthodox Churches, then the Primitive religionists like the natives of Africa and

23. How do some religionists of Christendom say God's kingdom is to come?

24. What does *The World Almanac* by population figures show regarding the converting of the world to Christ?

25. According to the figures given, how do the religions of the world line up according to strength of numbers?

Australia, then the Shintoists, the Taoists, the Jews or Hebrews, and the Zoroastrians. Finally, *The World Almanac* gives a general group of religious persons or persons having no religion as of 552,771,700, which is more than the given number of Roman Catholics.\*

<sup>26</sup> Strong as it is numerically, and although its pope at Vatican City claims to be the Vicar of Christ ruling as King, Roman Catholicism is losing out before international communism. On December 14, 1963, at the meeting in Mexico City of about 200 Protestant and Orthodox church leaders from 48 countries, the executive secretary of the Committee on Presbyterian Cooperation in Latin America† said:

"No one holds any longer to the naïve idea" of South America as a "Catholic continent." . . . "Many Christians whose consciences have been sensitized by the preaching of the Gospel," he said, "have chosen to abandon the church and become Communist leaders."—*New York Times*, Dec. 15, 1963.‡

<sup>27</sup> As for the United States of North America, whereas it can no longer be called a Protestant country, it is far from being a Roman Catholic country. Roman Catholic prelates offer gloomy facts and figures regarding the Church's outlook in the United States.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>28</sup> If they depend upon world conversion to Christianity, the religious people of Christendom can never expect to see God's kingdom come in their day or in this generation, or, in fact, at all. Yet, though their

\* The 1963 *National Catholic Almanac*, page 375, New York edition, gives the world total of Roman Catholics at 558,220,654.

† Dr. Gonzalo Castillo-Cárdenas of Bogotá, Colombia, South America, speaking to the first conference of the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism, which Commission is a unit of the World Council of Churches.

‡ See also the news item on page 242 of this magazine. □ See *Awake!* as of October 22, 1963, page 30, column 1.

26. (a) How is Roman Catholicism faring in the face of international communism? (b) How did one clergyman recently point up this fact in regard to South America? 27. What kind of country religiously is the United States of North America today? 28. Despite the shattered hopes of Christendom, when will God's kingdom come, and why so?

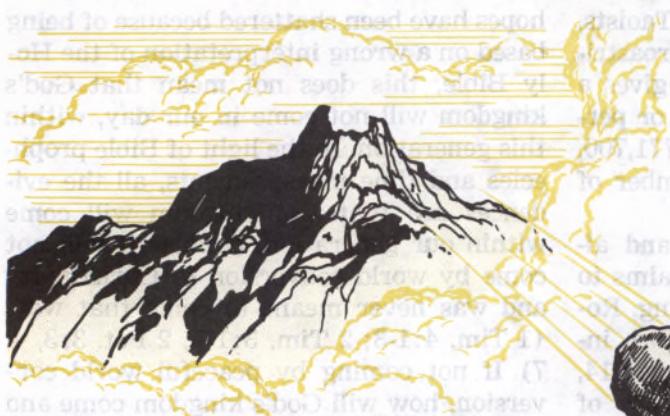
hopes have been shattered because of being based on a wrong interpretation of the Holy Bible, this does not mean that God's kingdom will not come in our day, within this generation. In the light of Bible prophecies and time measurements, all the evidences are that His kingdom will come within our generation, because it will not come by world conversion to Christianity and was never meant to come that way. (1 Tim. 4:1-3; 2 Tim. 3:1-7; 2 Pet. 3:3, 4, 7) If not coming by peaceful world conversion, how will God's kingdom come and take full control?

<sup>29</sup> If you have a copy of the Holy Bible, it will answer the question for you, for the Bible is God's inspired Book. Turn to the prophecy of Daniel, chapter seven. There we find a description of the coming of God's kingdom in the hands of one who is called the Son of man. He is Jesus Christ the Son of David, yes, the permanent heir of the everlasting kingdom promised to David's royal family. First the prophet Daniel is shown a symbolic picture of the world powers from the Babylonian World Power on down to the political system that includes the Anglo-American World Power of today.\* In the vision Daniel sees, not the peaceful conversion of those world powers to the Son of man, but their violent destruction. After seeing this, the prophet Daniel goes on to say:

<sup>30</sup> "I kept on beholding in the visions of the night, and, see there! with the clouds of the heavens someone like a son of man happened to be coming; and to the Ancient of Days he gained access, and they brought him up close even before that One. And to him there were given rulership and dignity and kingdom, that the peoples, national groups and languages should all serve even

\* See the book "*Your Will Be Done on Earth*," pages 166-187, English edition of 1958.

29, 30. (a) In the vision described in Daniel, chapter seven, what series of world powers is shown to the prophet? (b) In the vision, how is the coming of God's kingdom pictured?



him. His rulership is an indefinitely lasting rulership that will not pass away, and his kingdom one that will not be brought to ruin.”—Dan. 7:13, 14.

<sup>31</sup> Since Jesus the Son of David is there pictured as the “son of man,” the kingdom given to this son of man by God, “the Ancient of Days,” is the one for which Jesus taught his followers to pray.

<sup>32</sup> What, then, does the coming of his government into power mean for the political systems of this world? In the vision God’s angel explains to Daniel the symbol of the fourth beast and its horns as the last of the political systems that God the Judge permits on earth; after which the angel describes the violent end of this worldly political system, saying: “And the Court itself proceeded to sit, and his own rulership they finally took away, in order to annihilate him and to destroy him totally.” (Dan. 7:26) This explains the picture of this final beastly political system as given in verses eleven and twelve, which read: “I kept on beholding until the beast was killed and its body was destroyed and it was given to the burning fire. But as for the rest of the beasts, their rulerships were taken away, and there was a lengthening in

life given to them for a time and a season.” The rulerships of those other beastly political systems were taken away one after the other in times past; and the “lengthening in life given to them” is only till the fourth and final political system is violently destroyed by killing and burning, at which time they are destroyed also.

<sup>33</sup> That is what the coming of God’s kingdom, as given to the Son of man and his faithful disciples, will mean to the political systems of this world. Hence Daniel 7:27, 28 finishes up the explanation, saying: “And the kingdom and the rulership and the grandeur of the kingdoms under all the heavens were given to the people who are the holy ones of the Supreme One. Their kingdom is an indefinitely lasting kingdom, and all the rulerships will serve and obey even them.’ Up to this point is the end of the matter.”

<sup>34</sup> In this prophecy those who are spoken of as the “holy ones of the Supreme One” are the Lord Jesus Christ and all his faithful followers who inherit the heavenly kingdom with him. According to the last book of the Bible, Revelation, which makes many quotations from the book of Daniel, these followers who inherit the heavenly kingdom with the glorified Jesus Christ number only 144,000. (Rev. 7:4-8; 14:1-3) Today there are on earth only a remnant of these spiritual heirs of God’s heavenly kingdom, less than 13,000, according to statistics. But these will engage in no violence against the political systems of this world. Jehovah God the Judge will see to

31. In the vision, which kingdom is it that is given to Jesus the Son of David?

32. (a) How is the end of the last political system that God the Judge permits pictured? (b) How were the rulerships of the other symbolic beasts taken away, and a lengthening in life given to them?

33. According to Daniel 7:27, 28, to whom is the rulership under all the heavens given, and for how long?

34. (a) Who are the ones spoken of as the “holy ones of the Supreme One,” and how many of them are there? (b) Will the violent removal of the political systems of earth be accomplished with or without the aid of the spiritual remnant?

the removal of the political systems on earth by means of his heavenly Son, Jesus Christ the Son of David.

<sup>35</sup> To so-called Christians who have entertained the sweet idea of peacefully converting the world to Christianity and setting up God's kingdom by themselves in that way, the violent destruction of earth's political institutions by violence from the God of heaven may come as a horrifying thought. Yet they should also be horrified at the failure of their world conversion program. Their failure only emphasizes the fact that, in order for God's kingdom by Christ to rule all the earth, the way must be cleared by violent means from heaven. Other Bible prophecies bear out that fact.

<sup>36</sup> Turn back to Daniel's prophecy, chapter two. In that chapter Daniel sets forth the vision of the march of the world powers, all the way from the ancient Babylonian World Power, through the Roman World Power, and down to an outgrowth of that Roman World Power, the Anglo-American World Power of today, the political alliance of the British Empire and the United States of North America.\*

<sup>37</sup> This succession of world powers has been idolized, like an idolatrous image. According to God's decree set out in Daniel's prophecy, what is left today of this succession of political world powers will be destroyed by a violent act of God. It will be like when, in the vision, the stone cut out of God's mountain strikes the idolatrous image and crushes it, grinding it to powder for the violent winds to carry away beyond recovery.—Dan. 2:1-43.

\* See the book "Your Will Be Done on Earth," chapter 5, entitled "The March of World Powers," pages 104-127 of the English edition of 1958.

35. Christendom's failure at world conversion emphasizes what fact about God's kingdom?

36. In Daniel, chapter two, whose march does the vision trace?

37. How will what is left of that succession of political world powers be destroyed, and how does the vision picture this?

<sup>38</sup> Referring to that stone as symbolic of God's kingdom by Jesus the Messiah, the prophet Daniel explains: "And in the days of those kings [the present political rulers of this world] the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be brought to ruin. And the kingdom itself will not be passed on to any other people. It will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, and it itself will stand to times indefinite." (Dan. 2:44) The coming of God's Messianic kingdom here symbolized by the stone means nothing less than the fighting of the final war foretold in the last book of the Bible, "the war of the great day of God the Almighty," commonly called the Battle of Armageddon.—Rev. 16:14-16.

<sup>39</sup> Bible commentators of Christendom, like Dr. Adam Clarke of Britain in the nineteenth century, have interpreted Daniel 2:44 to mean that the stone cut out of the mountain was the Christian Gospel and that when it struck the nations it would convert them, and the rulers as well as the ruled people would become Christians until, in time, all the world of mankind would be Christian. It was thought that the great blow was



38. What does the coming of the symbolic stone against the symbolic image mean in fact?

39. How has the stone's striking the image been interpreted by Christendom's commentators, and when was the great blow understood to be given?

given to the pagan Roman Empire when, in the year 312 C.E., Emperor Constantine the Great was converted and the Roman Catholic Church with its fusion religion came to be established.\*

<sup>40</sup> But here we are, more than sixty years into the twentieth century, and the striking power of the religions of Christendom is more and more losing its force. Political rulers are no more becoming Roman or Greek Catholics or Protestants and forcing their subjects to become such with them. As reported in the *Morning News* (and also the *Times Herald*) of Dallas, Texas, of June 22, 1963, a Presbyterian clergymen<sup>t</sup> said that, not only is the religion of Christendom on trial, but "the world is laughing at us. Here in the United States is the choicest mission field for the other religions of the world." He blamed this partly on the religious ignorance of the church-goers of Christendom, and added: "We have relinquished many of our responsibilities to a pagan world." However, not only does the world laugh at the so-called Christians in their ignorance, but Christendom is staggering under the blows delivered upon it by international communism. Christendom does not want to be buried by Communism one of these days.

#### A WARNING ILLUSTRATION

<sup>41</sup> Not only is the religious hope of peacefully converting the world to Christendom's religions unscriptural, but it is unrealistic today. Even in his parable or illustration of the minas (or, pounds), recorded in Luke's Gospel, chapter nineteen,

\* See *Clarke's Commentary*, Volume 4, edition of 1836, page 3210.

<sup>t</sup> Dr. William A. Benfield, Jr., pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Charleston, West Virginia, speaking at the four-day Southern Presbyterian Men's Convention in Dallas.

40. But what can be said about the striking force of Christendom's religions today, and how is Christendom faring at the hands of international communism?

41. Is peaceful world conversion Scriptural, and, in his parable of the minas, what does Jesus Christ show about the enemies of God's kingdom?

the Lord Jesus Christ warned that the enemies of God's Messianic kingdom would be violently destroyed by action of the Messiah himself.

<sup>42</sup> Luke 19:11 tells why Jesus gave this parable, saying: "While they were listening to these things he spoke in addition an illustration, because he was near Jerusalem and they were imagining that the kingdom of God was going to display itself instantly." To the contrary, Jesus pictured that God's kingdom was then a long way off. How? In that Jesus likened himself to a nobleman with wealth, who had to travel to a distant land in order to "secure kingly power for himself" and to return as king. Measured by the speed of the means of travel in Jesus' day, the journey to the distant land followed by the return journey with kingly power would take a long time. Hence Jesus was to be gone a long time.

<sup>43</sup> However, there were opposers to the nobleman's getting such royal power. Luke 19:14 states: "But his citizens hated him and sent out a body of ambassadors after him, to say, 'We do not want this man to become king over us.'" The parable does not go into detail on how fully those citizens expressed their hatred or on how the nobleman got to the distant land to receive the kingly power. But in the parable's fulfillment most of the Jews said: 'We will not have this man Jesus Christ to rule as king over us.' In an attempt to prevent his becoming king over them, the Jews condemned him to death and handed him over to the Roman authorities of Jerusalem to be killed by slow death on a torture stake.

<sup>44</sup> How, then, did Jesus get to the "dis-

42. Why did Jesus give the parable, and how did the parable measure the time for the coming of God's kingdom?

43. What did the citizens who hated the nobleman do, and how was such hatred expressed in the fulfillment of the parable?

44. How did Jesus get to the symbolic "distant land," and how did his own people continue showing hatred for him?

tant land," that is, to heaven, which Jesus said was God's throne? On the third day after his cruel death Almighty God Jehovah raised up his noble Son from the dead and called him up to heaven on the fortieth day after that and seated the resurrected Jesus Christ at his own right hand in heaven. (Acts 2:22-36; 3:13-21) Even after Jesus Christ ascended to the "distant land" of God's heavenly presence, his own earthly people, the Jews, continued to show their hatred of him by persecuting his faithful followers. Thus they further let God know that they did not want his noble Son to become king over them.

<sup>45</sup> Nevertheless, there are not only Jewish enemies to God's kingdom under his Messiah, but also enemies in all other nations of the world of mankind. These also refuse the Kingdom message of Christ's followers and persecute them. They prefer the political rulerships by men of this world, including the United Nations organization of 113 member nations. What, then, will the coming of God's Messianic kingdom mean to such earthly enemies?

<sup>46</sup> Jesus gave the answer in the conclusion of this parable of the minas. There he has the nobleman who secured the kingly power and came back to rule say: "Moreover, these enemies of mine that did not want me to become king over them bring here and slaughter them before me." (Luke 19:27) Certainly that does not spell any peaceful conversion of them to true Christianity. It means a violent destruction. There was a typical fulfillment of this in the year 70 C.E., when the unconverted Jews who had rebelled against the Roman Caesar were besieged in their capital city of Jerusalem and finally, after a horrible siege, the city was destroyed. It is

45. Where, also, are other haters of God's kingdom found, and how do they show hatred?

46. In the parable, how did Jesus show how the kingdom's coming will affect its enemies, and what typical fulfillment of this was there?

reported that 1,100,000 rebellious Jews were made to perish, and 97,000 of the survivors were carried away to become slaves in various parts of the Roman Empire. —Luke 19:41-44; 21:20-24.

<sup>47</sup> However, God's Messianic kingdom did not come in that year 70. Today true Christians are still praying the words of the Lord's Prayer to God: "Let your kingdom come. Let your will take place, as in heaven, also upon earth." The Bible time schedule and the fulfillment of Bible prophecy in world conditions and events since 1914 give proof that the coming of God's kingdom as described in the above prophecies is near. The violent destruction that its coming will mean to its enemies on earth will be vaster and more terrible than the destruction of Jerusalem and the slaughter of the unconverted Jews by the Romans nineteen hundred years ago.

<sup>48</sup> How little, therefore, the people of Christendom realize what they are praying for when they recite in their churches: "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven"! Little do they appreciate that they are praying for something violent at God's hands, for the destruction of the present world system of things, yes, for the destruction even of Christendom, the chief backer of the United Nations organization and the possessor of vast stockpiles of atomic and hydrogen bombs and other weapons of mass slaughter. This is what the coming of God's Messianic kingdom will signify to its enemies both inside and outside of Christendom.

<sup>49</sup> It was not without meaning that Jesus, in his prophecy on the end of this worldly system of things on earth, said:

47. Despite that event of 70 C.E., for what do Christians still pray, and what will fulfillment of the prayer mean in comparison with what happened in 70 C.E.?

48. What do the people of Christendom not appreciate as to the meaning of what they are praying for in the Lord's Prayer?

49. In his prophecy on the end of this worldly system, with whose days did he compare the days of the Son of man, and in what respects?

"Just as the days of Noah were, so the presence of the Son of man will be. For as they were in those days before the flood, eating and drinking, men marrying and women being given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark; and they took no note until the flood came and swept them all away, so the presence of the Son of man will be. Keep on the watch, therefore, because you do not know on what day your Lord is coming."—Matt. 24:37-39, 42.

<sup>50</sup> That flood of Noah's day was a violent operation of natural forces under God's control. It swept over the whole earth, destroying all the multitudes of people and animals outside the ark in which Noah and his family and many animal specimens survived. The human population of the earth today is over three thousand million, and so what a slaughter, what a destruction there will be when, in our day when God's kingdom comes, it will be as it was in Noah's day at the coming of the flood!

<sup>51</sup> But does the coming of God's kingdom as the rightful government of all the earth mean only destruction? For the enemies of God's Messianic kingdom, yes! On the other hand, for the lovers of God's kingdom, who seek first God's kingdom and his righteousness, there will be happiness, blessing, deliverance, salvation. At the flood in Noah's day there was the preservation of him and his sons Japheth, Shem and Ham and the four wives, eight human souls in all. After a full solar year inside the ark they came out onto a purified earth and started anew their worship of Jehovah God. Their survival under God's care resulted in life for all of us today on earth. (Gen. 7:1 to 9:19) Since Jesus predicted that, as it was in Noah's days, so

50. What kind of happening was the flood of Noah's day, and what does this portend for earth's population of today?

51. What will the coming of God's kingdom mean for its lovers, and what does the likeness of the days of the Son of man to the days of Noah mean for them?

it will be in the days of the Messianic Son of man, there will be survivors of the violent destruction of this system of things, which system is the enemy of God's kingdom.

<sup>52</sup> In his prophecy on the end of this system of things Jesus said that the tribulation would reach a grand climax of trouble surpassing anything that mankind had before experienced. He said: "Then there will be great tribulation such as has not occurred since the world's beginning until now, no, nor will occur again. In fact, unless those days were cut short, no flesh would be saved; but on account of the chosen ones those days will be cut short." (Matt. 24:21, 22) Hence there will be survivors of the worldly system's end to correspond with Noah and his family.

#### FAITHFUL SERVANTS

<sup>53</sup> Such survivors will include the ones whom Jesus called "the chosen ones," those who are pictured in his parable of the minas by the faithful slaves to whom the nobleman gave minas before leaving for the distant land to secure kingly power. One of the ten slaves mentioned did not obey the nobleman's orders: "Do business till I come." The nine other slaves did profitable business with their mina apiece; the one lazy, unfaithful slave did not. He kept his one mina laid away in a cloth. He earned no increase for his noble master. What would his master's return as king mean to this unprofitable slave, especially when he handed back just the sum of money that he had received—nothing lost, but nothing gained? Would it mean a blessing or a curse? His own course decided!

<sup>54</sup> His noble master, now king, called him

52. How did Jesus indicate this survival in his prophecy concerning the final tribulation?

53. (a) How were the "chosen ones" who survive pictured in the parable of the minas? (b) What questions arise as to the one slave who did not do business with his lord's mina?

54. In the parable, what did the king's coming mean for this unprofitable slave?

wicked. He ordered the mina to be taken away from him, for he had not worked for his master's kingdom. He was not for the king and so was classed with the citizens who hated and were against the king. He was punished along with those enemy citizens who were slaughtered at the king's command. (Luke 19:13, 20-27) In one of Jesus' other parables similar to this one, the good-for-nothing slave was thrown out of the master's house "into the darkness outside," there to weep and gnash his teeth along with all others out there. (Matt. 25:24-30) The king's coming meant no joy for him!

<sup>55</sup> In the parable, the nine other slaves made a profit for the kingdom by doing business with their mina apiece. Their kingly master pronounced them good slaves and put them in charge of cities throughout his realm. They did not deserve to be slaughtered with the citizen enemies of the king. For them the king's coming meant blessing and life. (Luke 19:15-19, 24-26) Will the coming of God's Messianic kingdom mean something similar for us?

<sup>56</sup> When Jesus Christ, as pictured by the man of noble birth, left this earth for the heavenly realm, he left behind him valuables in the hands of his followers pictured by the slaves who got a mina apiece with which to do business. These slaves pictured not just the twelve apostles of Jesus Christ nor just all his disciples of that time, but also his faithful followers of today, dedicated, baptized believers whom God has called to be joint heirs with the Messianic King in the heavenly kingdom.—Rom. 8:14-17.

<sup>57</sup> A remnant of these joint heirs are still alive on earth, actively increasing the val-

able things of God's Messianic kingdom by doing as Jesus said, at Matthew 24:14: "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come." They have now been joined by hundreds of thousands of persons who have heard this good news of God's kingdom and who have forsaken the haters of God's kingdom. They have made proof of their love of God's kingdom by also taking up the preaching of it and the gathering of still other lovers of righteous government onto its side. As in the case of the remnant of Kingdom heirs, they will receive the king's approval. They will be ushered, not into the heavenly kingdom as joint heirs with Jesus the Messiah, but into a "new earth," an earth purified by the slaughter of all the enemies of God's kingdom. That is what the coming of God's kingdom will mean for them.—Rev. 14:1-5; 7:4-17; 21:1-5.

<sup>58</sup> Now is the time for us to make a decision as we all unavoidably face the question, What will "God's kingdom come" mean to you? It has to mean one of two things, either slaughter with the enemies and ignorers of that righteous divine government or life, peace, happiness and increased privileges with that kingdom. The long time between when the Kingdom Heir Jesus Christ went away to the "distant land" nineteen centuries ago and the coming of God's kingdom with the Messiah on the throne is now far gone. Jesus foretold that the Kingdom would come suddenly for the executing of divine judgment toward friends and enemies of that heavenly government. So it is a dangerous time for us in which to be living! But if we sincerely desire God's kingdom come to mean blessing to us, now is also an opportune time of uncertain length for us to get out

55. For the slaves who did business with their mina apiece, what did the king's coming mean?

56. Whom do the slaves with whom the Lord left the minas picture?

57. (a) How many of those Kingdom joint heirs are still on earth, and what are they doing with the symbolic mina? (b) By whom have they been joined, and what will the coming of God's kingdom mean for these?

58. As regards the coming of God's kingdom, why is this a dangerous time in which to be living, but what opportunity does it also present us?

from among the foes of God's kingdom, so as not to perish with them.

<sup>59</sup> The present is a time also of great privilege. On a scale grander than ever before Jesus' prophecy is being fulfilled, inasmuch as this good news of God's kingdom is now being preached all over the earth in at least 194 lands in 162 languages, to the inhabitants of the earth without regard for their race, color or present religion. (Matt. 24:14) Let us make the news of God's kingdom *good* news for ourselves by accepting the news as true and putting ourselves on the side of God's kingdom and then preaching the news to still others, that they may likewise make it good news for themselves. Let us thus help them also to survive the "day of vengeance on the part of our God." (Isa. 61:1, 2) God's kingdom in the hands of the Permanent Heir of King David is forever, and we can enjoy that princely rule of the Son of David forever by how we decide now.

<sup>60</sup> "For," says the prophecy of Isaiah 9:6, 7 to the people of Jehovah God, "there has been a child born to us, there has been a son given to us; and the princely rule will come to be upon his shoulder. And his name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. To the abundance of the princely rule and to peace there will be no end,

59. Why is the present a time of great privilege, and how can the Kingdom news be made good news for one? 60. How does Isaiah 9:6, 7 indicate that we can enjoy the princely rule of the Son of David forever?

upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom in order to establish it firmly and to sustain it by means of justice and by means of righteousness, from now on and to time indefinite. The very zeal of Jehovah of armies will do this."

<sup>61</sup> Think of living on earth under the princely rule of this Son who was born nineteen centuries ago in Bethlehem of Judea. Glorified now in heaven, he will live up to the titles that Jehovah God confers upon him, namely, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. His princely rule will have no end. His peace for his subjects will have no end. In fact, his government will be firmly established and sustained perpetually by justice and righteousness. Under his rule what a place this earth will be!

<sup>62</sup> The coming of the kingdom that Jehovah God establishes with his Prince of Peace on the heavenly throne can mean eternal peace for you. The thing to do is to take the course now that gains for us the goodwill of Jehovah God. Then we can indeed feel and experience for ourselves the grand meaning of the chant of the host of angels at the human birth of the Son of God, "Glory in the heights above to God, and upon earth peace among men of good will." (Luke 2:13, 14; Isa. 61:1, 2) May you, our readers, make the coming of God's kingdom by Christ mean peace to you.

61. How about the peace and the durability of his government?

62. By doing what can we feel and experience the grand meaning of the angelic chant of Luke 2:13, 14?

### "A Decisive Hour"

- Reflecting the fact that the Roman Catholic Church is declining in influence in South America, rather than converting all the world of mankind to Christ, the New York Times of February 28, 1964, carried this news item from Rome: "Pope Paul VI has appealed for more priests for Latin America where the Roman Catholic Church is 'experiencing a decisive hour in its existence.'" Continuing with his remarks, the pope spoke of "the needs, the dangers" with which the church is confronted in South America and said that these are things with which the bishops whom he was addressing were well acquainted.

# Impressed by What They Saw

◆ Recently a lady telephoned the receptionist at the Watch Tower Society's headquarters in Brooklyn, New York. She asked: "Would you please tell me something about Jehovah's witnesses and their beliefs. I am of the Jewish faith but I feel the need of spiritual strength. I have heard about your large assemblies and I notice how people are flocking to your organization. I would like to know what you have to attract so many people. I have lived in this neighborhood [a few blocks from the Society's headquarters] for twenty-two years, and I have watched you grow from nothing to a flourishing organization. Your people have called on me regularly as often as once a week, and my reply has always been 'I'm not interested.' Now I have come to the point in my life where I feel I want to know more about Jehovah's witnesses."

Since it was difficult to explain the teachings of Jehovah's witnesses with telephones ringing, the Bethel Home receptionist made arrangements to visit this lady the following Sunday. The woman told the Witness of how she had been attending various churches and always came away feeling weaker than before she went. When she asked one Protestant minister for help, his reply was, "Well, Mrs. P—, I can't come over and hold your hand, but if you really want something to do you can answer the church telephone for two hours a week." This was very disheartening to her, although she did say she never felt at home in church as she could not accept Jesus as Almighty God himself, and so much of "Christianity" had pagan background. Now her question was, "What must I do to become affiliated with you people?" Arrangements were made for a Bible study; she took the book *From Paradise Lost to Paradise Regained* and the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* and attended the public talk at the Kingdom Hall that same Sunday. She is now attending the meetings regularly and enjoying a weekly Bible study. Her comment about the witnesses of Jehovah who study with her is: "They are truly shepherding me." This illustrates one of the rich rewards of diligently seeking to feed the "little sheep," though it may mean calling back year after year, even as often as once a week, to tell others about God's kingdom.—John 21:17.

◆ One of Jehovah's witnesses in New Jersey relates how she aided an interested woman who had taken the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* and the book *From Paradise Lost to Paradise Regained*: "I invited her to a talk at the Kingdom Hall; she came and enjoyed it so much that she started attending all the meetings. I asked her if she would like to go along with me on the Bible studies I conducted; she agreed. She later asked me when she could start taking part in the door-to-door work. About two months after she first participated in the field ministry I invited her to visit the Watch Tower Society's factory in Brooklyn. She took a day off from work. I have a letter expressing what she thought about the visit. It says in part:

"Today I have seen men and women working and living together in the harmony and peace of Paradise that is promised to us in the Scriptures. Can there be such a Paradise in this world as it is today? You may ask that question over and over, time and time again. But we in the New World society know the answer. I have seen it myself today for the first time. I was invited to visit the Watch Tower factory where the literature is printed to tell the people of Jehovah's teachings. What I have seen was something beyond my wildest dreams of what people can accomplish under Jehovah's guidance and blessings. A visitor such as I was would be amazed at the order and neatness of the place, and to think that each worker is a minister of Jehovah. Truly it is like the mighty hand of Jehovah writing His Word to nations all over the land. If I had any doubt in my mind about being a Witness, after what I have experienced today it has flown so fleetingly that I am eager more so now than ever to be dedicated to Jehovah so I can become a minister of his Word also."

In other places, too—in Europe, Africa, South America and the Orient—the Watch Tower Society has printing plants where Bible literature is published. The 1,461 ordained ministers who have volunteered to work in these plants and in the Society's branch offices around the world all count it a privilege to serve in this way to advance the interests of God's kingdom.

**R**E GARD-  
LESS of  
the direction in  
which you may  
travel—east, west,  
north or south—  
you will find peo-  
ple performing acts  
of worship to a  
higher power. Mil-  
lions of persons liv-  
ing in widely sepa-  
rated places in the  
earth sincerely be-  
lieve that their form  
of worship is good.  
They are confident  
that it will win  
the favor of their  
deity or deities, and  
eventually lead to eternal rewards.

So devout are many worshipers of East-  
ern lands they will interrupt important  
business sessions when their hour of  
prayer approaches. At appointed times  
each day they lay out their rug and pros-  
trate themselves upon it in prayer toward  
their holy city of Mecca. However, despite  
their belief that Allah is the one true God,  
many persons in the same lands are just  
as devout in pursuing other forms of wor-  
ship. Some, for example, never retire at  
night without saying prayers before an im-  
age of Buddha, which is prominently dis-  
played in their home.

Worship in many African tribes is some-  
what different, although with the similar  
end in view of obtaining the favor of pow-  
ers higher than themselves. Religious cere-  
monies are centered around the witch doc-  
tor, who, it is hoped, can appease the  
invisible spirits, believed by the people to  
be the dead who have passed beyond.

In the Western lands of Christendom  
there is a marked similarity in the man-  
ner of worship. If you enter the great ca-



thedrals in the  
larger cities of  
France, Italy or the  
United States, or  
visit the humbler  
places of worship in  
almost any part of  
Christendom, you  
will find people  
upon their knees  
worshiping before  
images, no, not of  
Buddha, but of Je-  
sus, Mary, Joseph  
and innumerable  
“saints.” These  
worshippers are like-  
wise interested in  
pleasing God so as  
to merit his favor  
and the blessing of a future reward.

But to what is it that people throughout  
the world expect their various forms of  
worship to lead them? This varies a great  
deal, depending upon the religion prac-  
ticed, and the locality and education of the  
people. Hindus and Buddhists hope to at-  
tain the goal referred to as nirvana, which,  
however, people understand differently. To  
some nirvana means a life of joy and hap-  
piness in another world, while others view  
it as a difficult-to-explain state beyond con-  
scious existence.

Many Africans refer to the “other  
world” or “up yonder,” where departed  
souls are believed to go. In their minds this  
evidently is not far away because they be-  
lieve that the departed regularly return  
and exercise great influence over the liv-  
ing. On the other hand, Moslems generally  
envision “heaven” as a beautiful oasis or  
garden, with shady trees, running streams  
and all the facilities for rest, comfort and  
enjoyment. And many in Christendom en-  
tertain slightly different hopes of happi-  
ness in what they also refer to as heaven.

**THE BOOK OF TRUE WORSHIP**

However, regardless of what form of religion you now practice, you will want to know about the Kingdom hope that the Creator of mankind holds out to those that worship him in the way he approves. Yes, this Great Spirit *does* communicate with man today; no, not by means of a witch doctor or a religious clergyman, but through the pages of the oldest book in existence, a book that even records information about the first man and his creation by God. This is an Oriental book originating in and being written entirely by men from Eastern lands. This famous book, which contains the inspired writings of some forty Orientals, is generally called today the Holy Bible, or simply the Scriptures.

In addition to its great antiquity the Bible from earliest times has realized the greatest distribution of any writings in existence. During the past five hundred years billions of copies have been printed—far more than of any other book. Equally remarkable is the fact that the Bible has been translated into 1,202 different languages, so that it is available to more than 90 percent of earth's population in their own tongue. Is not such a large distribution and wide circulation what you would expect of the Book that is inspired by Almighty God?

But what particularly stamps this Book as being of Divine authorship are its prophecies that have consistently proved reliable. Humans are not always able to accurately foretell the weather twenty-four hours in advance, yet the Holy Bible foretold ever so many events centuries and even millenniums before they actually occurred. No other book claiming to be of Divine authorship has been able to do this, which is evidence that the Bible is the book that God is using to communicate with men today.

Why, consider for a moment how the Holy Bible recorded in advance the rise and fall of World Powers that have dominated earth's affairs. Under inspiration of God, the Hebrew prophet Isaiah foretold in the eighth century B.C.E. that Cyrus the Persian would serve as a liberator of the captive Israelites from Babylon. God even gave details of the conquest. Nearly two hundred years later Cyrus marched into Babylon, exactly as foretold. (Isa. 44: 26-45:3) The prophet Daniel, writing under inspiration of God, also recorded in advance the rise of the Medo-Persian World Power. More than that, in unmistakable terms, he told about the coming to prominence of the next World Power, Greece, its conquest of Medo-Persia, and, in time, its dissolution into four smaller empires with the death of its conquering king, Alexander the Great.—Dan. 8:1-8, 20-22.

Perhaps even more amazing are the fulfillments of scores of prophecies relating to the promised Messiah, the one appointed by God as deliverer to all mankind. He was to be born of the Israelite tribe of Judah in Bethlehem. (Gen. 49:10; Mic. 5:2; Matt. 1:2-16; 2:1, 5, 6) He was to be despised and counted among transgressors. (Isa. 53: 3, 12; Luke 22:63; 23:32, 33) At his death not a bone of his body was to be broken, and his executioners were to cast lots for his garments. (Ps. 34:20; 22:18; John 19: 33, 36; Matt. 27:35) Every one of these prophecies and, some have calculated, at least three hundred more were remarkably fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Not only that, the Bible foretold the very things happening in our day. (2 Tim. 3:1-5) Yes, you certainly can trust in the reliability of the Holy Bible!

**WORSHIP OF THE TRUE GOD**

This Holy Book, the Bible, clearly describes the type of worship that is pleasing to Almighty God. By rendering this wor-

ship you will come in line for the everlasting blessings that God provides by means of his kingdom. For a limited number of 144,000, these blessings will be enjoyed in heaven as rulers with Jesus Christ, while for the vast majority of obedient mankind they will be enjoyed as subjects of that heavenly kingdom on an earth restored to paradise conditions.—Rev. 14:1-3; Ps. 37:29, 34.

But in order to be led to this kingdom of God you must first of all recognize who the true God is. His own Book, the Bible, informs us: "You, whose name is Jehovah, you alone are the Most High over all the earth." "God is a Spirit, and those worshiping him must worship with spirit and truth." "I am Jehovah. That is my name; and to no one else shall I give my own glory, neither my praise to graven images."—Ps. 83:18; John 4:24; Isa. 42:8.

Yes, the name of the true God, the Most High One over all the earth, is JEHOVAH. This great God Jehovah is no lifeless image, but is a mighty invisible Spirit Person, and he does not approve of images even as visual aids in our worship. Therefore, to worship him acceptably you must not bow before unintelligent images of wood, stone or metal, but, rather, you must live your life in harmony with the truth set forth in His Word, the Bible.—Ex. 20:4, 5; Lev. 26:1; Isa. 44:14-20; 46:5-7.

If you will stop to reason on the matter, you will see how valueless material images are. Observe that they are powerless to walk about or give instruction. Take a supposedly holy image, throw it into a river or into a blazing fire. Is it able to swim about like a man, or does it leap out of the flames to save itself from being consumed? If this image cannot protect itself, how will it protect you when trouble arises?

Look at those images made by the hands of men. How lifeless they are! Note what the living God, Jehovah, says about them:

"A mouth they have, but they cannot speak; eyes they have, but they cannot see; ears they have, but they cannot hear. A nose they have, but they cannot smell. Hands are theirs, but they cannot feel. Feet are theirs, but they cannot walk; they utter no sound with their throat." Therefore, how possibly could they be the true God? They cannot be, and, for that reason, God says: "Those making them will become just like them, all those who are trusting in them."—Ps. 115:4-8.

#### WHAT TRUE WORSHIP INCLUDES

Rather than including adoration to images, worship that leads to the kingdom of God must recognize Jesus the Messiah, the one Jehovah God sent to earth to open the way for us to gain eternal life and the one designated by God as king of his kingdom. The authoritative Bible says: "There is no salvation in anyone else, for there is not another name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must get saved."—Acts 4:12; Matt. 20:28.

Worship that leads to the kingdom of God not only includes recognizing the true God Jehovah and accepting his Son Jesus Christ, but also involves practicing right works. Just possessing the Word of God is not enough. You must live by what it says. The nation of Israel provides an example. They had the inspired Scriptures, but when the promised Messiah came in the person of Jesus, that nation's religious leaders persecuted him and finally had him killed. Because of their failing to bring forth the fruits of righteousness, Jesus said to them: "This is why I say to you, The kingdom of God will be taken from you and be given to a nation producing its fruits."—Matt. 21:42, 43.

Take notice of why the worship of those Jews did not lead to the kingdom of God. It was because they did not produce the righteous fruits qualifying them to live in

God's kingdom. Yes, in order to gain the blessings of that Kingdom rule one must practice right works.

When Jesus Christ was upon the earth he showed that this necessitated bringing forth the fruitage of love. Shortly before his betrayal and death he forcefully impressed this on his followers, saying: "I am giving you a new commandment, that you love one another; just as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love among yourselves." Indeed, such love has become so rare that it is a distinguishing mark of true worshipers.—John 13:34, 35; 1 John 4:20; 3:15.

The worship that leads to the kingdom of God also has other fruits. As shown by the Bible book of Galatians, it includes "joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, mildness, self-control." To be able to cultivate this fruitage of God's spirit one must put off the works of the flesh, which "are fornication, uncleanness, loose conduct, idolatry, practice of spiritualism, hatreds, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, contentions, divisions, sects, envies, drunken bouts, revelries, and things like these." The Bible warns "that those who practice such things will not inherit God's kingdom."—Gal. 5:19-23.

Another thing that is distinctive about the worship that leads to the kingdom of God is that it focuses attention on that kingdom, rather than urging support of the present system of things with its politics and militarism. Yet today on every hand and in every land we see religious organizations making common cause with the governments of this world and blessing their use of military might. This is as true

of Eastern religions as it is of professed Christianity of the Western world, generally known as Christendom.—John 15:19; Isa. 2:2-4.

Jesus Christ, however, while instructing his followers to be law-abiding, said of the heavenly government to which God had anointed him as king: "My kingdom is no part of this world." For that reason Jesus said that his disciples 'were no part of the world, just as he was no part of the world.'—John 18:36; 17:16; Matt. 22:21.

Jesus' first-century followers appreciated this fact. In evidence of this, the disciple

James said that pure worship included keeping "oneself without spot from the world."—Jas. 1:27.

So, rather than accepting man's view that human government, particularly the world peace organization, the United Nations, is the 'best hope for peace,' worshippers of Jehovah accept God's view of matters and look to Jesus Christ as the Prince of Peace and the kingdom of God as man's only hope for lasting peace. They are outspoken advocates of that kingdom, preaching about it publicly and from house to house as Jesus himself did when he was on earth. This preaching activity is part of their worship—worship that leads to the kingdom of God.—Isa. 9:6; Matt. 4:17.

With a view to your eternal salvation, it is vital that you, too, regardless of the worship that you may have practiced up until now, listen to what the Creator of man says on this matter of worship. Conform your worship to his requirements. Live your life in harmony with his inspired Word. Put your faith in his kingdom, and make known that Kingdom good news to others. Only in this way will your worship lead to the kingdom of God.

#### COMING IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- Fortify Yourselves for Future Activity.
- Building a Firm Foundation in Christ.
- Modesty Is for Everyone.
- The Bible—Is It a "White Man's Book"?
- The Beginning of a Bible Mystery.
- Use of One's Resources in a Godly Way.

# WHAT HOLDS YOU BACK

from

# TRUE WORSHIP?

**D**O YOU love God? 'Of course I do,' you may say. 'It is my desire to be pleasing to him.' That certainly is the proper attitude to have. But anyone can say with his lips that he loves God, yet does that alone prove he really does?

You know that it does not. Even the Son of God, Jesus Christ, said that people would 'draw near to God with their lips, although their hearts were far removed from him.' Love for God is not shown by words alone, but by actions in harmony with those words. It is just as one of Jesus' twelve apostles explained: "This is what the love of God means, that we observe his commandments."—Matt. 15:8; 1 John 5:3.

Thus true worship is the rendering of service to God according to the requirements that he sets down in his written Word, the Bible. This admittedly is not an easy thing to render in this present evil world where the majority of people are more concerned with pleasing themselves than God. In fact, circumstances of one nature or another hold back many persons who know what is right from rendering true worship to God. Are you such a person? If so, it would be wise for you to examine your claim that you love God. Certainly it would be displeasing in his sight if your expressions were mere lip service.

For some time now you may have been receiving this journal *The Watchtower*,

and perhaps visiting ministers of Jehovah's witnesses have offered to study the Bible with you in your home. You know that they teach God's Word. But do you hold back from having a regular home Bible study with them because of fear? Are you afraid of what others might think?

In the first century there were those who held back from true worship because of fear of what others would think of them. Some of them believed that Jesus was the promised Messiah. They "actually put faith in him," the Bible says, "but because of the Pharisees they would not confess him." Yes, they were afraid of losing the favor of the influential religious Pharisees, "for they loved the glory of men more than even the glory of God." How unwise it is to be like those men and allow fear to hold you back from true worship!—John 12:42, 43.

When opposition arises, it tests your love. It shows whether you really do love God, or whether you will compromise to avoid ridicule. Jesus illustrated how some are affected by opposition. Bible truth sown upon their hearts, he said, is like seed sown on rocky soil that sprouts quickly, only to be scorched by the hot sun. "They believe for a season," he explained, "but in a season of testing they fall away."—Luke 8:13; Matt. 13:5, 6, 20, 21.

This testing can take various forms and come from different directions. Perhaps a

clergyman, neighbors or business associates learn that Jehovah's witnesses are calling to study the Bible with you in your home. How terrible they make that seem! They cannot prove from the Bible that what you are learning is wrong, so they resort to ridicule. But this is not surprising. The Bible itself informs us that when some men reported to the priests that they had never heard a man teach like Jesus, those priests answered: "You have not been misled also, have you? Not one of the rulers or of the Pharisees has put faith in him, has he?" These verbal intimidations were designed to cow the men to prevent them from investigating further. 'Those people that listen to Jesus do not know the Law. They are accursed, ignorant people,' the Pharisees claimed. (John 7:45-49) Will similar intimidation prevent you from continuing to examine Bible truths with Jehovah's witnesses?

It is obvious that Bible truth is not popular. The majority of people prefer to cling to their religious traditions, and are unwilling to examine them in the light of the Scriptures. Therefore, Jesus said that Bible truth would have the effect of a sword on many families, causing "division, with a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a young wife against her mother-in-law."—Matt. 10:35.

But in circumstances where parents forbid their children to study the Bible, or husbands demand that their wives cease attending Bible study meetings, what should one do? Are not children commanded to be obedient to their parents, and wives to be in subjection to their husbands? That is true, but observe that children are instructed to 'be obedient to their parents *in union with the Lord*.' Therefore, if the requirements of parents are in conflict with what the Lord requires, children are under obligation to obey God rather than their parents in those respects. The

situation is similar with wives. The Bible says that one should "obey God as ruler rather than men," and that is true even if that man happens to be one's husband.—Eph. 6:1; Acts 5:29.

Jesus indicated that this was the proper course when he said: "He that has greater affection for father or mother than for me is not worthy of me; and he that has greater affection for son or daughter than for me is not worthy of me." Who means more to you? whom will you obey? are the questions that Jesus raises. Are you holding back from studying the Bible because of fear of displeasing a father, a mother, wife or husband? Do you fear to displease them more than you desire the true worship of God? If so, your love for God is weak, and, for that reason, Jesus said, you are at present unworthy of him.—Matt. 10:37.

If you really feel that you love your family, yet fear of their disapproval holds you back from true worship, you need to be more honest with yourself. If a man was ruining his health because of drink, would it really be loving of his wife to indulge his weakness and even get drunk herself simply because he urged her to "have a good time" with him? Of course not! Then, if you know that the eternal salvation of your family depends on their coming to know and worship Jehovah God, are you showing real love for them by agreeing to abandon true worship yourself? Obviously not; because, while each one in the family must personally decide whether he is going to serve the true God, anyone has a better opportunity to make the right choice if someone living in the home is a faithful servant of God. Real love for the family is shown by being willing to put up with disapproval, or even abuse, so that those unbelieving family members may have the best possible opportunity to learn the truths from God's Word and come in line for the everlasting blessings that Jehovah

God holds out to those who serve him.  
—1 Pet. 3:1-6.

If you have real love for God, you will not be ashamed to study his Word and speak freely about it. If you love your family, you will not hold back from setting a right example for them out of fear of what they may say. Keep in mind what the apostle John said: "There is no fear in love, but perfect love throws fear outside, because fear exercises a restraint. Indeed, he that is under fear has not been made perfect in love." And if the going gets hard, remember what the faithful apostles Peter and John said when they were ordered to quit their service to God: "Whether it is righteous in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, judge for yourselves. But as for us, we cannot stop speaking about the things we have seen and heard."—1 John 4:18; Acts 4:19, 20.

#### CONQUERING FEAR WITH LOVE

By cultivating a genuine love for God you too can break the shackles of fear that hold so many persons back from true worship. The apostle John emphasized how all-important this love of God is in this strong language: "He that says: 'I have come to know him,' and yet is not observing his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in this person. But whoever does observe his word, truthfully in this person the love of God has been made perfect."

—1 John 2:4, 5.

Do you claim to know and love God? If so, how important it is that you observe his commandments! Otherwise the Bible says you are a liar and the truth is not in you. The Scriptures give no extenuating circumstances that nullify this requirement to observe God's commands. True worship is the obeying of God's Word, whereas willful failure to obey leads to his disapproval.

If you really love God you will endeavor to observe his commandments regardless of the consequences.

A person is not born with this love, neither does it come automatically with physical growth. It must be cultivated through acquaintance with God and the loving things he has done in behalf of mankind. This necessitates studying the Bible diligently. By doing so you will find what the apostle John said to be true, that "the love of God was made manifest in our case, because God sent forth his only-begotten Son into the world that we might gain life through him." Do you *really* believe that God sent his dearly beloved Son to earth as a human creature to provide a ransom sacrifice for us? If so, you no doubt have already "come to know and have believed the love that God has in our case."—1 John 4:7-10, 14-16; John 3:16.

When you grow to appreciate this loving provision that God has made of his Son, opening to obedient mankind the door to everlasting life in a righteous new order, your love for him will become so strong that it will burst any barrier holding you back from true worship. This love can truly throw outside fear of clergymen, parents, husband, wife, friends, neighbors or whoever it may be that is trying to prevent you from taking in knowledge of and serving Jehovah God.

#### OVERCOMING HUMAN WEAKNESSES

This love for God can also prevent the weakness of your own flesh from holding you back from true worship. It will open your eyes to see the importance and the seriousness of learning about Jehovah's provisions for life and living in harmony with them. Just think of it! To those who will obey Him, God has opened the way to everlasting life! Does not appreciation for

that stir you to show your gratitude by doing what is pleasing in his sight?

Certainly you are not showing appreciation if you treat God's Word and his instructions indifferently. When your employer or some other person of authority speaks, you listen attentively, getting instructions straight so as to do what he wants. Is that not so? Well, then, how much more should you be interested in pleasing the Supreme Sovereign of the universe, Jehovah God! Do you think that he will be pleased with you if you indifferently put off studying his Word?

Perhaps you used to have a weekly Bible study in your home. What caused you to discontinue it? Are you too tired at night to listen to God's Word? Is it because watching television or doing something to please yourself is more important to you? Did you decide that serving God demanded too much, that giving up worldly habits and ways condemned by God's Word was too great a sacrifice?

But, honestly, would you not surmount these obstacles to please someone that you truly loved? Certainly you would! How tired would a young man have to be for that tiredness to prevent him from seeing the woman he loved? You can be sure that he would not even allow overtime work or a favorite television program to interfere with his spending some time with her.

Well, then, if you truly love God and his Son Jesus Christ, you will not allow such things to prevent you from studying the Bible and obeying the instructions therein. "If you love me," Jesus said, "you will observe my commandments."—John 14:15.

#### ASSUMING RESPONSIBILITIES

Observing the commandments of Jesus and his Father Jehovah means that you will assume responsibility as a mature Christian man or woman. You will not only listen to the Word of God, having a regular Bible study in your home, but you will also 'become a doer of the word.' (Jas. 1: 22-25) The truth that you learn will have a beneficial effect on your life, motivating you to do good works that will be a praise to Almighty God.

Yet some hold back. Why? Because they want to avoid the responsibility. Is this true in your case? Do you study the Bible in your home with Jehovah's witnesses, but fail to put into practice what you hear? If so, stir yourself to activity. Do not remain babes spiritually who, the apostle Paul said, "need milk, not solid food." But, rather, 'through use train your perceptive powers to distinguish both right and wrong.' Yes, heed the apostolic encouragement to "press on to maturity, not laying a foundation again."—Heb. 5:12-6:3.

Is it not apparent that the true worship of God requires activity? So it should be evident, then, that a weekly Bible study in your home is not an end in itself. Rather, it is to equip you to serve God, enabling you to worship Him in the way he approves. This worship not only involves living a moral life, but it means taking an active part in sharing with yet other persons the life-giving information you have received. This requires effort, but, chief of all, it requires love. For remember: "This is what the love of God means, that we observe his commandments."—1 John 5:3.

#### "EVERY CHRISTIAN'S OBLIGATION"

*A Handbook of Christian Theology* observes concerning early Christians: "In the little company of Jesus and his friends there was no division into clergy and laity . . . the disciples, who might look from here like laymen, were really the preachers . . . There were leaders and teachers and special spokesmen, of course. But they did no more than show or set the direction of every Christian's obligation."

# Proclaimers of GOD'S KINGDOM

IMMEDIATELY prior to his ascension into heaven Jesus Christ indelibly impressed upon the minds of his disciples their responsibility to bear witness to others. He made clear to them that preaching about God's kingdom was an all-essential part of true worship. "You will receive power when the holy spirit arrives upon you," he promised, "and you will be witnesses of me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the most distant part of the earth."—Acts 1:8; Matt. 28:19, 20.

But to bear witness about God's kingdom in an enemy world would not be an easy task. Jesus knew this. He had warned his disciples that, "if they have persecuted me, they will persecute you also." (John 15:20) So how could his followers endure this worldwide opposition and still care properly for those sheeplike persons that responded favorably to their preaching? They could do so only if they had intense love for God and the one he appointed as master of the "sheep," Jesus Christ.

Notice how Jesus emphasized the part love plays in doing this preaching. The occasion was a morning following his resurrection. Seven of his disciples were gathered on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, where they had just finished breakfast. Just some days before, his apostle, Simon Peter, had denied Jesus during a moment of weakness. So before them all the resurrected Jesus asked: "Simon son of John,



do you love me more than these?" He said to him: "Yes, Lord, you know I have affection for you." He said to him: "Feed my lambs."—John 21:15.

Jesus realized that Peter was truly sorry, but he wanted to impress upon him and the other disciples the importance of preaching and caring for the sheeplike persons that listened. So he asked the second time: "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He said to him: "Yes, Lord, you know I have affection for you." He said to him: "Shepherd my little sheep."—John 21:16.

How could Jesus have stressed more strongly that it was their responsibility to look after the spiritual interests of others? Actually Jesus was using Peter as a sounding board, to impress the importance of preaching, not only upon his disciples there present, but also upon all his followers living today. Do you love the master Jesus? If so, you must prove it by doing the will of his Father. "Not everyone saying to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter into the kingdom of the heavens," Jesus said, "but the one *doing the will of my Father* who is in the heavens will."—Matt. 7:21.

Jesus left no doubt in the minds of those

disciples on the shore of Galilee that morning what the will of God was. It was for them to care for the "sheep"! This meant they must preach. So as to fix this in their minds Jesus asked Peter for the *third* time: "Do you have affection for me?" As you can well imagine, "Peter became grieved that he said to him the third time: 'Do you have affection for me?' So he said to him: 'Lord, you know all things; *you are aware* that I have affection for you.' Jesus said to him: 'Feed my little sheep.'" —John 21:17.

After reading this Bible account, is there any doubt in your mind that Jesus wanted Peter and all the disciples to continue the Kingdom preaching that he had started? Does it not also indicate that it is your Christian responsibility to assist sheeplike persons to learn about God's kingdom? Jesus said that, just prior to the end of this wicked system of things, "this good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations." (Matt. 24:14) Since the evidence points to the fact that we are now living in the time of the end, will you share in this proclamation of God's kingdom?

#### QUALIFYING TO SHARE

Perhaps your first reaction is that you are incapable of explaining to others about the "good news of the kingdom." If that is so, take courage! "Do not be afraid," Jehovah comforts, "for I am with you. . . . I will really help you." Time and time again God has fulfilled this promise and has helped his servants to carry out their assignments. He will help you too, but you must prove your desire to do the will of God by making an effort.—Isa. 41:10.

So if your problem is that you feel inadequate and ill-prepared to do this Kingdom preaching, you should ask for help. Turn to God in prayer and ask for knowledge and understanding. "Keep on asking,"

Jesus said, "and it will be given you." The inspired Bible writer said that if "you keep seeking for it as for silver, and as for hid treasures you keep searching for it, in that case you will understand the fear of Jehovah, and you will find the very knowledge of God."—Matt. 7:7; Prov. 2:4, 5.

This means that, in keeping with your prayers, you will make Bible study a habit, studying with the purpose in mind of helping others to learn about God's kingdom. Therefore, as you study you will ask yourself questions: When did God first make arrangements for a Kingdom? What type of government is it? Whom has God appointed as king of his kingdom? Is the Kingdom heavenly or earthly? Who will be its subjects? When will it cleanse the earth of all wickedness? What is required to gain life under that kingdom?

To become better acquainted with the answers to such questions, most persons find that they need a home Bible study with one familiar with the Scriptural teachings regarding the Kingdom. Do not hesitate to ask Jehovah's witnesses to study with you, for they are happy to help those who desire to become proclaimers of God's kingdom. They do not charge for this service. Jesus Christ recommended such Bible discussion when he said: "Where there are two or three gathered together in my name, there I am in their midst."—Matt. 18:20.

But perhaps you already have a weekly Bible study with Jehovah's witnesses, and still do not feel qualified to preach. Then the thing to do is to continue the Bible study in your home, because it is just one of the vital steps in equipping you in course of time to approach the people and speak with them as did Jesus and his apostles. The Bible informs us that Jesus also spent much time instructing his apostles on how to do the preaching, and that it was as a result of this extensive training program

that they became qualified to go "from house to house . . . declaring the good news."—Acts 5:42; 20:20; Matt. 10:5-11; 1; Luke 8:1.

In addition to instruction in a home Bible study, you can also receive training free of charge at the Service Meeting and Theocratic Ministry School conducted weekly, perhaps in your own community, at the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's witnesses. The Service Meeting is designed to give instruction on how to introduce the Kingdom message to people, how to stimulate their interest in God's Word and how to make return visits and conduct Bible studies with them in their homes. At the Theocratic Ministry School practical training is received in public speaking. Over a period of weeks each student is given opportunity to give a prepared six- or seven-minute talk before the congregation, and then is given counsel for improvement by a qualified minister. If you regularly attend these meetings and take an active part in them, you will become well equipped to share in proclaiming God's kingdom to others. And when you are ready to start witnessing to others from house to house, a mature minister will work along with you to help you to get started.

However, the ability to explain Bible truths is not all that is necessary to qualify you to share in the Kingdom proclamation. You must also bring your life into conformity with Scriptural requirements relative to proper morals. The Bible is very explicit: "Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men kept for unnatural purposes, nor men who lie with men, nor thieves, nor greedy persons, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit God's kingdom." Neither are persons of such kind welcomed to serve as proclaimers of God's kingdom. To qualify, one must be living a morally clean life, in

harmony with the requirements set down in the Bible.—1 Cor. 6:9, 10.

#### WHAT IS INVOLVED

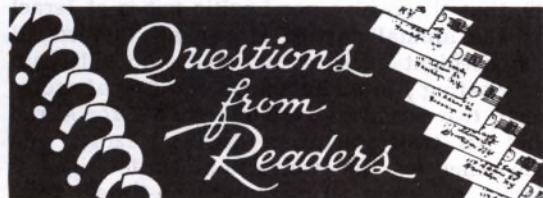
Do not conclude that there is too much involved to become a proclaimer of God's kingdom. Even though you may be a mother with children to care for, or a family head with a household to support, you also can share in assisting sheeplike persons to learn about God's kingdom. First of all, there are the members of your own household to consider. (1 Tim. 5:8) You will want to make sure that these understand what the Scriptures teach relative to the Kingdom. It was due to the early instruction received from his grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice that the youngster Timothy, referred to in the Bible, grew up to be such a fine young man of faith. Your goal should be to train your own children as well as Timothy was trained.—2 Tim. 1:5; 3:14, 15.

Because of caring for your Scriptural responsibilities to provide for members of your own household, you may find that your time is limited to assist those outside your own household. This is understandable. However, Jehovah's witnesses who have family responsibilities try to spend at least ten hours each month speaking with others about God's kingdom, conducting Bible studies in their homes if possible. Of course, those who are in position to devote more time to the ministry do so, and some spend 100 to 150 hours a month directly in the ministry. Each one must examine his own circumstances and then arrange his affairs so as to render acceptable service to God.—Rom. 12:1.

While a life centered around the worship of God is a very active one, it is also a very rich and satisfying life if you have a proper motive in serving. You will not

be happy if your purpose is merely to put in so many hours to appear righteous before others. But if you are a proclaimer of God's kingdom because you love God and

are sincerely interested in helping people to gain the knowledge that is necessary for their salvation, how happy you will be! —Matt. 22:37-39.



● In *The Watchtower* of September 1, 1963, page 540, "the Christ" or anointed one of Hebrews 11:26 is applied to Moses. How can this be when Moses was not anointed with an anointing oil as were the high priests and the kings of ancient Israel?—G. G., U.S.A.

Hebrews 11:26 reads: "He [Moses] esteemed the reproach of the Christ [anointed one] as riches greater than the treasures of Egypt; for he looked intently toward the payment of the reward." It is true that Moses was not anointed with any literal oil such as was used in anointing the high priest and the kings of Israel. (Ex. 30:22-30; Lev. 8:12; 1 Sam. 10:1; 16:13) However, an anointing is an appointing to office and so it may be said that one who had been chosen or appointed by God was anointed, even though he was not anointed with any literal anointing oil.

Further, neither Jesus nor his followers were or are anointed with any literal oil and yet the Scriptures speak of them as having been anointed: "Jesus who was from Nazareth, how God anointed him with holy spirit and power." "He who guarantees that you and we belong to Christ and he who has anointed us is God." These have been anointed with God's holy spirit.—Acts 10:38; 2 Cor. 1:21.

In this connection note what Jehovah caused to be written regarding the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob: "He did not allow any human to defraud them, but on their account he reproved kings, saying: 'Do not you men touch my anointed ones, and to my prophets do nothing bad.'" Certainly neither Abraham, Isaac nor Jacob were anointed with literal anointing oil and yet they are here spoken of as Jehovah's anointed ones. They were, however, his chosen, appointed ones and they did have Jehovah's spirit upon them.—Ps. 105:14, 15.

Thus also we note that Jehovah told Elijah to anoint Elisha, Jehu and Hazael: "Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus; and you must come in and anoint Hazael as king over Syria. And Jehu the grandson of Nimshi you should anoint as king over Israel; and Elisha the son of Shaphat from Abel-meholah you should anoint as prophet in place of you." (1 Ki. 19:15, 16) The Scriptural record goes on to show that one of the sons of the prophets associated with Elisha did anoint Jehu with literal oil to be king over Israel, the ten-tribe kingdom, but there is no record of Elijah, nor anyone else for that matter, as anointing either Elisha or Hazael. Their notification of their appointment or duties served in effect as an anointing.—2 Ki. 2:9-14; 8:13; 9:1-10.

So also with Moses. He may be said to have been Jehovah's anointed one or Christ from the time of his receiving his commission at the burning bush. This anointing or appointment he considered as greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt. It was not necessary for him to be anointed with literal oil to be Jehovah's anointed one.—Ex. 3:10-4:17.

● Who are those that "sit on thrones" as referred to at Luke 22:30, and who are represented by the "twelve tribes of Israel"?—J. G., West Germany.

Jesus Christ told his faithful apostles: "You are the ones that have stuck with me in my trials; and I make a covenant with you, just as my Father has made a covenant with me, for a kingdom, that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones to judge the twelve tribes of Israel." (Luke 22:28-30) Jesus Christ was here speaking directly to his eleven faithful apostles; earlier he had spoken to his twelve apostles in a similar way. (Matt. 19:28) He could do this since, as it turned out, there were twelve faithful apostles; and these twelve naturally occupy twelve thrones in the kingdom of the heavens.

But now, in the final outworking of God's purpose, do only the twelve faithful apostles occupy thrones along with Jesus Christ? When

we examine Jesus' words elsewhere, when he is not speaking directly to his apostles, do we find evidence of a greater number who sit on thrones? According to Revelation 14:1 and 20:6, the final number of those who "will rule as kings with him [Jesus Christ] for the thousand years" is far more than twelve, namely, 144,000. Are the 143,988, aside from the twelve apostles of the Lamb, also to sit on thrones? Do not kings have thrones, and are not all the 144,000 kings? Yes, and Jesus promises to each of the faithful 144,000 the right of throne-ship: "To the one that conquers I will grant to sit down with me on my throne." (Rev. 3:21) So Luke 22:28-30 must be viewed in a larger sense, in the light of other scriptures, which lead to this conclusion: Those who sit on thrones to judge the "twelve tribes of Israel" include not just the twelve apostles but also all those taken into the covenant for the Kingdom that Jesus spoke of in Luke 22:28-30. Since all the 144,000 anointed Christians are taken into the covenant for the Kingdom, all of them are to sit on thrones to judge the "twelve tribes of Israel."

Then who are represented by the "twelve tribes of Israel" over whom Jesus Christ and his associate kings rule and whom they judge? Certainly it would not be limited to the literal twelve tribes of Israel who by now have lost all their tribal distinctions. According to the apostle Paul, the judging by those who receive the heavenly kingdom embraces a world of mankind: "Do you not know that the holy ones will judge the world?" (1 Cor. 6:2) Thus it is reasonable to conclude that the "twelve tribes

of Israel," mentioned at Luke 22:30, refer to the world of mankind that will be judged by Jesus Christ and the members of his congregational body who will serve as kings and priests and judges with him. In harmony with this view, the book *You May Survive Armageddon into God's New World* pointed out, on page 39, that the twelve non-Levitic tribes of Israel on the annual day of atonement typified all the obedient ones of mankind who will gain everlasting life on earth. On the day of atonement two sacrifices were offered, one for Aaron and his tribe, picturing spiritual Israel, and the other for the twelve non-Levitic tribes of Israel, picturing all mankind who benefit from the ransom sacrifice of Jesus Christ with everlasting life on earth. This distinction, noted at Leviticus chapter 16, is also seen from the words of the apostle John regarding Jesus Christ: "He is a propitiatory sacrifice for our sins, yet not for ours only but also for the whole world's."—1 John 2:2.

Those of the world of mankind who benefit from Christ's sacrifice include the "great crowd" of "other sheep" who will be survivors of God's war of Har-Magedon. But the "twelve tribes of Israel" of Luke 22:30 who are to be judged by those sitting on heavenly thrones will be made up of all those on earth in the post-Armageddon new system of things. The "twelve tribes of Israel," then, include not just the "great crowd" of today who will survive the war of Har-Magedon into God's righteous new order of things but also all resurrected mankind.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### FIELD MINISTRY

By speaking the truth of God's Word, the Bible, Christians show themselves to be at unity, and at the same time they aid others to share the benefits of such unity. During April Jehovah's witnesses will continue to do this by offering to all persons a year's subscription for *The Watchtower* for \$1, with three Bible-study booklets free for new subscribers.

- "WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS
- May 24: What Will "God's Kingdom Come" Mean to You?, ¶1-30. Page 229.
- May 31: What Will "God's Kingdom Come" Mean to You?, ¶31-62. Page 236.