

The **WATCHTOWER**

Announcing
**JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM**

MARCH 15, 1951

Semimonthly

**STABILITY AND PERMANENCE
DURING WORLD CHANGE**

—
EARLY HELP FOR SURVIVING
THE WORLD'S END

—
PRAISE JAH! YOU WHO ATTEND
THE MEMORIAL

—
EARLY CHRISTIANS NOT COMMUNISTIC

—
TIME BETTER THAN MONEY

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

THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER"

Literal towers in Bible times were elevated vantage points from which watchmen could observe happenings, warn of danger, or announce good news. Our magazine figuratively occupies such a vantage point, for it is founded on the very pinnacle of wisdom, God's Word. That elevates it above racial, national and political propagandas and prejudices, frees it from selfish bias. It is not bound by any traditional creed, but its message advances as the light on God's purposes and works increases.—Habakkuk 2:1-3.

It sees things Scripturally. When it observes this generation afflicted with greed, delinquency, hypocrisy, atheism, war, famine, pestilence, perplexity and fear, and persecution of unpopular minorities, it does not parrot the old fable about history repeating itself. Informed by Bible prophecy, it sees in these things the sign of the world's time of the end. But with bright hope it also sees opening up for us just beyond these woes the portals of a new world.

Thus viewed, "The Watchtower" stands as a watchman atop a tower, alert to what is going on, awake to note signs of danger, faithful to point out the way of escape. It announces Jehovah's kingdom established by Christ's enthronement in heaven, feeds his kingdom joint-heirs with spiritual food, cheers men of good will with glorious prospects of eternal life in a paradise earth, comforts us with the resurrection promise for the dead.

It is not dogmatic, but has a confident ring in its voice, because it is based on God's Word. It does not privately interpret prophecy, but calls attention to physical facts, sets them alongside prophecy, and you see for yourself how well the two match, how accurately Jehovah interprets his own prophecy. In the interests of our salvation, it keeps sharp and faithful focus on Bible truth, and views religious news generally.

'Be watchful in these perilous times,' God admonishes. So keep on the watch by regularly reading "The Watchtower".



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

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AS — American Standard Version	LXX — The Septuagint Version
AT — An American Translation	Mo — James Moffatt's version
Da — J. N. Darby's version	NW — New World Translation
Dy — Catholic Douay version	Ro — J. B. Rotherham's version
ED — The Emphatic Diaglott	RS — Revised Standard Version
Le — Isaac Leeser's version	Yg — Robert Young's version

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

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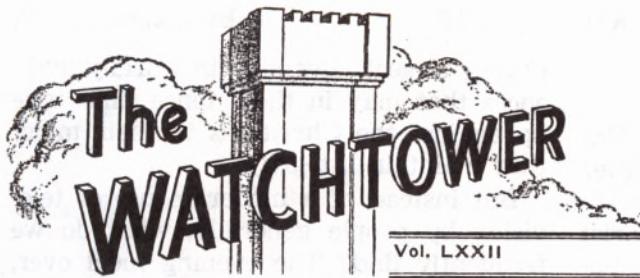
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JEHOVAH'S
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TIME BETTER THAN MONEY

“**T**IME is money,” says the popular slogan. But time is better than money. When it is traded for wisdom rather than wages its value becomes priceless. “Choose instruction rather than silver, and knowledge rather than rare gold; for wisdom is better than rubies, no treasure is equal to her.” Time spent in study to gain such wisdom is better than time used to make money, for while wealth may offer limited security now, the right knowledge can safeguard one’s very life at Armageddon: “Wisdom like wealth is a defence, but knowledge does more good than money, it safeguards a man’s life.”—Prov. 8:10, 11; Eccl. 7:12, Mo.

A lifetime spent accumulating wealth is a lifetime wasted. Money hoarded up, unused for good works, is a witness against its greedy possessor: “Come, now, you rich men, weep, howling over your calamities which are coming upon you. Your riches have rotted, and your outer garments have become moth-eaten. Your gold and silver are corroded, and their rust will be as a witness against you and will eat your fleshy parts. Something like fire is what you have stored up in the last days. Look! the wages due the workers who harvested your fields but which are held up by you, keep crying out, and the calls . . . have entered into the ears of Jehovah of hosts.”—Jas. 5:1-4, NW.

Will their money defend them from divine wrath at Armageddon? Never, for “neither their silver nor their gold will be

able to rescue them. On the day of the wrath of the LORD, and in the fire of his zeal, all the earth shall be consumed; for a complete destruction, indeed a frightful one, will he make of all the inhabitants of the earth”. Just before the destruction that was typical of Armageddon came upon Jerusalem Jehovah’s prophet said: “Their silver shall they fling into the streets, and their gold shall become to them as an unclean thing; for their silver and their gold shall not be able to save them on the day of the LORD’S wrath.” (Zeph. 1:18; Ezek. 7:19, AT) For Christians it is true, “The love of money is a root of all sorts of injurious things, and by reaching out for this love some have been led astray from the faith and have stabbed themselves all over with many pains.”—1 Tim. 6:10, NW.

How different the results when time is used to gain wisdom instead of money! Concerning the worth of wisdom it is written: “How happy is the man who finds wisdom, the man who gains understanding! For her income is better than income of silver, and her revenue than gold. She is more precious than corals, and none of your heart’s desires can compare with her. Long life is in her right hand, in her left are riches and honor. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to those who grasp her, and happy is every one who holds her fast.” (Prov. 3:13-18, AT) When we take in knowledge of God and Christ and give it out by preaching to others, it

means everlasting life in Jehovah's new world.—John 17:3; Rom. 10:10, NW.

Time is especially precious now. Not because the laborer's time draws higher wages than heretofore, but because time to take in knowledge of Jehovah and Christ is running out. When Christ was enthroned, in 1914, great tribulation was started against Satan and his wicked world organization. If it had then proceeded to completion, no flesh would have been saved. But for the sake of human flesh that tribulation was shortened or cut short, to allow a period of time for men to take in and give out knowledge of the established heavenly kingdom, before that tribulation enters its climax of Armageddon. (Matt. 24:21, 22) This time period, known as the last days of Satan's delinquent old world, will not stretch beyond this present generation. The precious time grows short.

Jehovah provides this period of time for man's good, for man to study His Word, for man to see the foretold visible sign of Christ's second presence and conform himself to the requirements of the Kingdom. But Satan opposes this wise use of time. He floods in woes to divert human efforts, and drives frustrated masses into various ways of escape from reality. Because of the mounting failures in world economics and politics, disheartened persons drown their worries in easy delinquencies or an endless run of entertainments.

To illustrate, consider television. It is a marvel of human ingenuity in putting to work invisible forces of the universe, and if used to best advantage could be a real boon to mankind. But many low-quality programs and much immoderate use combine to undermine its value. Nevertheless, even now its moderate use in viewing the better programs may offer a measure of relaxing diversion. Used with wise limitation, it can provide relaxation for Christians right in their homes, without their

having to seek diversion in worldly audiences that may in these tense times rise up against the Christians in their midst that maintain integrity.

But instead of a moderate use of television by people generally, what do we frequently find? The evening meal over, the family rush for their seats before the television screen, there to sit for hours, till bedtime. No time for family conversation. No time for study. No time to serve God. Only time for television. Just time to sit before the screen and soak up propaganda and entertainment. So absorbed are they that they may refuse to leave their seats before the television for an hour a week, to share in a home Bible study.

But will television deliver them at Armageddon? Will their little god of the living room shelter them from Jehovah's wrath? Time consumed on it might have been used to study, to transform their mind, to make it over, to gain godly wisdom, which is not to be compared to rubies, silver, gold, money or television; but instead they will be "destroyed for lack of knowledge". (Hos. 4:6) The marvelous invention has been misused by them till it has become a satanic snare to capture their mind, to keep their eye glued to a television screen, not allowing them time to see the sign of the second presence of Christ or to mentally discern the import of such sign and learn what they should do to successfully meet the crisis.

Certainly the time of this special period allowed by Jehovah in these last days is better than money, and to waste this time is worse than wasting money. It is wasting the opportunity for endless life in a new world wherein men will "long enjoy the work of their hands". And surely in that new world blessed by Jehovah the work of men's hands that will be long enjoyed will far surpass the present inventions of this dying old world under Satan.



DKNESS now covers the nations, and thick darkness the people. A time of woeful trouble it is. An age of overwhelming distress. A period of confusion and perplexity. Even the so-called wise and enlightened leaders, the "bright lights" of this world, seem to be in a fog. Their luminosity is no greater than fireflies in a forest. Have you ever tried following fireflies in a pitch-black night when lost? Not the least bit of help. So it is now: those following the blind, groping leaders fumble, stumble and fall. The situation has grown desperate. Fear has seized hold of the mighty men, and the whole benighted world is near nervous prostration.

But do you know this condition was long ago predicted? And do you know it was also foretold that a light-beam of hope would penetrate this darkness? Listen, Jehovah God speaks: "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of Jehovah is risen upon thee. For, behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the peoples; but Jehovah will arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee."—Isa. 60:1, 2, AS.

To whom do you think Jehovah is here speaking? Why, to his name-people, of course; to those whom he has called "out of darkness into his wonderful light", concerning whom he says: "You are the light of the world." (1 Pet. 2:9; Matt. 5:14-16, NW) Beginning with 1914 and World War I this darkness upon the nations began closing in and each year since then it has grown thicker and thicker. But to those devoted to the Lord upon his coming to the temple in 1918, the command went forth to arise and shine, for Jehovah's glorious light was about to rise upon them. There were in 1918, according to our records, some 3,868 praisers of Jehovah ready to reflect the temple flashes of light by publishing and making known to others that the Gentile times had ended and God's kingdom was at hand.

That small remnant of light bearers were due for an increase in numbers, as stated in the prophecy. "Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee." Spiritual sons and daughters of Zion, the prophecy declared, would come from far and would unite in reflecting this light; but that was not all. Even "the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee". (Isa. 60:4, 5) Exactly as foretold, the seas of people alienated from God and supporting the Devil's organization yielded up great crowds of good-will persons out of every nation, tribe, people and tongue, who in turn became excellent reflectors of Jehovah's brightness and glory. (Rev. 7:9, 10, NW) From 1918 to 1941 the number of Jehovah's witnesses reporting jumped from 3,868 to 90,759!

No question about it, the prophecy of Isaiah, chapter 60, was in the course of fulfillment. But it is significant to note that *The Watchtower*, in its issue of October 1, 1942, pointed out that there was every

reason to look for an even greater expansion. On pages 297, 298 of that issue we read: "There may, however, be still larger results to the fulfillment of the prophecy, and well may we so expect. By God's grace the work is not yet finished and his witnesses refuse to quit as long as the Lord provides work, blessed work. This is suggested in the prophet's next exclamation: 'Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?' . . . This is a cloud of witnesses, witnessing to the power and glory and presence of the Lord as a literal cloud in the sky does. . . . In the land of the prophet Isaiah the doves fly in such thick flocks that they are like a cloud that fairly darkens the earth beneath. This figure, therefore, denotes yet a great ingathering of active witnesses for the Kingdom, who shall in the short time remaining before Armageddon fly with the speed of doves to the entrance that Jehovah has provided to the refuge of safety."

SPECTACULAR EXPANSION AND PROSPERITY

Now, nine years later, look! The 1951 *Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses* shows that the cloud of active light-reflectors has increased from an average of 90,759 to 328,572. More than 260 per cent expansion, with a peak of 373,430 on the wing at one time! What a tremendous ingathering of these birds of peace! For the last three years the increase has been 49,000 each year! They consecrated their very lives, their time and energy, their mental and physical powers—these they devoted to Jehovah's service and the praise of his name and the enrichment and prosperity of the theocratic organization, Zion.—Isa. 60:6-9.

And now, in this second half of the twentieth century, what are we to expect? Is the full number now obtained that will come out of mental darkness, forsake the

old world, and take their stand on Jehovah's side? No, not at all! Hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, will yet come, as foretold: "Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought." (Isa. 60:11) Day and night the ingathering continues without letup. And let all the world take note of this fact: every man-made organization that will not turn to serving Jehovah and submit to his reigning king Christ Jesus will shortly be destroyed at Armageddon. Let the master builders of the United Nations, that polyglot tower of confusion, also take note of this warning from Jehovah in the next verse: "For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted."—Isa. 60:12.

Many other prophecies likewise tell of this expansion of Jehovah's praise at this end of the world. For example, in chapter 54 of Isaiah it says that God's maternal organization, "our mother," would be expanded with the influx of so many children that the figurative tent cords would have to be stretched out to the very limits. Down through the years the Watch Tower Society has spread out until today its sixty-three branch offices have "tent stakes" located in 115 countries, islands, provinces and different territorial divisions of the nations. So this is another reason why Jehovah's witnesses are singing as commanded.—Isa. 54:1-5; Gal. 4:26, NW.

Just lift up your eyes and look, Zechariah says, for the expansion is like a magnificent city, without walls or limitations, reaching out on every side to take in new fields with their flocks of beasts and crowds of peace-loving people. (Zech. 2:1-5) Jesus too tells of the expansion that takes place when the "little flock" destined to reign with him in the heavens has been comple-

ed and only a remnant of such remain on earth at this end of the world. "I have other sheep, which are not of this fold," Jesus says, "those also I must bring, and they will listen to my voice, and they will become one flock."—John 10:16, NW.

The apostle John had a revelation of this happy time when Jehovah's praises would be sung by the voices of this good-will throng. "And I heard what was as a voice of a great crowd and as a sound of many waters and as a sound of heavy thunders. They said: 'Praise Jah, you people, because Jehovah our God, the Almighty, has begun to rule as king. Let us rejoice and be overjoyed, and let us give him the glory.' (Rev. 19:6, 7, NW) The hearing of this anthem has far-reaching consequences.

THUNDEROUS PRAISE AT MEMORIAL SEASON

Jehovah now rules as king! The great crowd supporting his reign is rapidly growing greater. Hence the shout of praise already sounding in thunderous volume is constantly increasing as we draw nearer the battle of Armageddon. In fact, *The Watchtower*, January 1, 1951, has suggested striving for a 34 per cent increase in the number joining together in the chorus during the 1951 Memorial season. That would mean over 500,000 witnesses shouting forth the fact that Jehovah "has begun to rule as king"! This is not at all impossible, for last year 511,203 persons assembled together to celebrate the Lord's evening meal.

Let everyone, therefore, who attends the Memorial this year on March 23 make sure that it is not just an annual observance, a religious tradition, or a conscience-soothing formality with him. Let everyone in attendance—the old and the young, the healthy and the infirm, the spiritually mature and the newly interested—make sure they each have a personal share in

the organized field service, echoing Jehovah's heart-cheering praises for both friends and strangers to hear.

Yes, the world crisis is much greater than a year ago. The darkness has thickened; the anxieties, perils and woes on the world are more desperate. But these are only reasons why the torchlight for Jehovah's righteous rule now borne by His faithful witnesses burns more brightly. It is not an exaggeration to say that these witnesses are the only people in this sad and frightened world that are really joyful of heart, for they are the only ones that see and follow the divine beam of light leading toward God's new world of righteousness. Amid a people bound hand and foot in the shackles of ignorance, Jehovah's witnesses are the only ones enjoying the precious freedom obtained by a knowledge of the truth. (John 8:32) But they are not selfish in this. They wish all men would accept the truth, break their shackles, come out of darkness and follow the healing rays of light that come from the life-giving Jehovah. (1 Tim. 2:3, 4, NW) This is the enlightening message they bear, and what a privilege and joy it is to do so!

How many more will come out and join in this song of praise to Jehovah before Armageddon we do not know—hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions. We do know that the prophecy says that "ten men, from nations of every language", will grab hold of Jehovah's anointed witnesses because they have heard that God is with them. (Zech. 8:23, AT) But for these good-will persons to hear it means that every one of Jehovah's witnesses must now speak out, publish and proclaim the message far and wide. So shout, you Memorial-attenders, all of you in your hundreds of thousands! If you do, we will unquestionably far surpass the 500,000 mark.

Early Christians Not Communistic

THE cold war of words is a heated battle for your mind. Its invasion forces converge upon the target from all possible directions. "Voices" of nations penetrate foreign lands, only to be jammed and countered by retaliatory blasts. By sustained round-the-clock bombing with words the propagandists seek to subjugate the public mind, to mold public opinion to fit their selfish interests. Accusations and denials, hot charges and hotter countercharges, smears and slurs, personal digs and name-calling, telling of half-truths and suppressing of whole truths—all such tactics are marshaled to assail your mind and take it by storm.

The political force that now crusades so zealously for the mind of the masses is communism. This wily user of propaganda knows all the tricks, including the ruse of selling an idea on merits other than its own by having testimonials for it from highly respected sources. When trying to make political converts of persons in Christendom who supposedly respect the Bible some communists frequently quote the Bible. They argue that the early Christians were communists, and quote Acts 2:44, 45 as proof: "All that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need." Like so many politicians who quote the Bible for selfish purposes, these communists have no understanding of the scriptures they repeat.

We need to have the setting in mind. It is late spring of A.D. 33. That agonizing Passover day on which Christ Jesus had been impaled on the torture stake was now seven weeks past. In those weeks he had been

raised from the dead, seen by hundreds of his disciples, and ascended into heaven an incorruptible spirit creature, leaving behind the promise that he would soon pour out upon his followers the holy spirit. Now, fifty-one days after Passover, Jerusalem was crowded by multitudes of Jews. They had come from near and far, to celebrate the feast of weeks, the day of Pentecost. It was one of the three feasts of the year that all Jewish males were to observe in Jerusalem.—Deut. 16:1-16.

Jesus' followers were there also, about one hundred and twenty in number. On this day of Pentecost A.D. 33 they were assembled together. Suddenly a noise like that of a rushing wind filled the meeting place, tongues as if of fire became visible over them, the holy spirit filled them, and they started speaking in different tongues! The commotion attracted the religious Jews from many nations, Jews who were present in Jerusalem at this time of Pentecost. These Jews who spoke many different languages were "bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in his own language". In answer to their astonished questionings the apostle Peter explained that it all came about in fulfillment of Joel's prophecy concerning the outpouring of holy spirit, and he preached so convincingly to them that "those who embraced his word heartily were baptized, and on that day about three thousand souls were added".—Acts 2:1-41, NW.

During the days that followed "all those who became believers were together in having all things in common, and they went to selling their possessions and properties and to distributing the proceeds to all just as anyone would have the need. And day after day they were in constant attendance at the temple with one accord, and they took their meals in private homes and partook of nourishment with great rejoicing and sincerity of heart, praising God and finding acceptance with all the people. At the same time Jehovah continued to join to them daily those being saved".—Acts 2:44-47, NW.

At the public religious feasts in Jerusalem there had always been a sort of community of goods. Houses or beds were loaned freely by their owners. Other necessary things were willingly shared during the limited period of the feast, especially with visitors from distant places. However, in the case of these Christians this generosity went much farther, even to the selling of possessions to provide funds to care for the poor and needy. The situation was unusual. Many among the three thousand souls added on the day of Pentecost were from distant parts. They had come to Jerusalem for the feast of weeks, but because of the miraculous things that had occurred they remained in Jerusalem much longer than they had anticipated. They had made no provisions for this unexpected, extended stay. Yet they stayed, for now their chief concern was to gain further understanding concerning this new faith that they had embraced, to be edified, to fellowship with other Christians, to preach to others, to assist in building up and organizing the

early church. Additionally, other converts were poor, and needed brotherly help.

The Christians who were better off in material goods desired to share with their less fortunate brothers, especially in view of the unusual circumstances. That none might suffer want, goods were sold to supply the needs. If Christian brothers would not come to the assistance of the poor ones, who would? The orthodox Jews looked down on the Christians and rather than help them conspired to persecute them. Under religious pressure the Romans had killed their Leader; they hated His followers. So logically it was the materially blessed Christians that gave willingly to aid their poorer brothers. They properly showed indifference to worldly goods, not placing trust in them, but sharing them out of affection and Christian love. They knew Jerusalem would eventually fall, and its coming desolation and Judea's ruin made them realize the futility of material wealth as a deliverer. Moreover, they wished to honor the Lord with their substance, make friends by wise use of the mammon of unrighteousness. So it was for all these reasons, and not because of any requirement or commandment or doctrinal precept, that these early Christians set up a relief arrangement among themselves, and were thereby enabled to continue for a time in a sort of extended convention. It was for getting the early church off to a good start. It was only a temporary arrangement to meet the unusual circumstances of those days; but even it was in no sense of the word a complete pooling of all the possessions of all the Christians.



Concerning this same general period of time it states, at Acts 4:32, 34, 35; 5:1-4, NW: "Moreover, the multitude of those who had believed had one heart and soul, and not even one would say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common. In fact, there was not one in need among them; for all those who were possessors of fields or houses would sell them and bring the values of the things sold and they would deposit them at the feet of the apostles. In turn, distribution would be made to each one just as he would have the need. However, a certain man, Ananias by name, together with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession and secretly held back some of the price, his wife also knowing about it, and he brought just a part and deposited it at the feet of the apostles. But Peter said: 'Ananias, to what end has Satan emboldened you to play false to the holy spirit and to hold back secretly some of the price of the field? As long as it remained with you did it not remain yours, and after it was sold did it not continue in your control? Why was it that you purposed such a deed as this in your heart? You have played false, not to men, but to God.' "

Those who did sell their possessions and give the proceeds to the apostles for distribution would certainly gain some notice and recognition because of this act of Christian love, as is evidenced by the special mention of the Levite Joseph Barnabas, at Acts 4:36, 37. This very recognition of them as exemplary contributors indicates that their giving was wholly voluntary, and not the result of any seizure of property in accord with some inflexible, communistic edict. Further showing the completely voluntary nature of the giving is the case of Ananias and Sapphira. Unlike the other contributors, the motive of these two was impure. Apparently they coveted the reputation of giving all, but

were too selfish to earn it. So they conspired together, sold a possession, and while pretending to give all deposited only a part of the price of the field at the feet of the apostles. Through a special gift of knowledge by the spirit, Peter discerned their duplicity and exposed them, and Jehovah executed them for their hypocritical, showy, false front.

But the point here to notice is Peter's words to Ananias: "As long as it remained with you did it not remain yours, and after it was sold did it not continue in your control?" The property was theirs. They did not have to sell it. And if they wanted to sell it and keep the price for themselves, they were free to do so. They were under no compulsion in the matter. This action of the early Christians in selling their goods and giving the entire proceeds into a common fund for relief work was entirely voluntary. It was Ananias and Sapphira's false pose of giving all to gain a reputation for generosity that brought down upon them Jehovah's wrath.—Acts 5:4-10.

The 'having of things in common', as spoken of at Acts chapters 2 and 4, was confined to Jerusalem. There is no indication that it was practiced by Christian groups beyond the Jerusalem vicinity. Jerusalem was where mutual assistance was so urgent, for there was the stronghold of the scribes and Pharisees and temple priests, there was the hard core of opposition. The amazing increases of the Jerusalem Christians following Pentecost so roused clerical ire that a violent campaign of persecution was touched off, spearheaded by the stoning of Stephen. It was "on that day great persecution arose against the congregation which was in Jerusalem; all except the apostles were scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria". It was well that prior to this the Christians had sold possessions to

aid one another; it kept their goods from falling as loot to the persecutors that scattered them.—Acts 8:1, NW.

When this particular burst of persecution spent itself and the Christian congregation openly functioned again in Jerusalem, there is no record that any 'holding of things in common' was resumed. The early church had weathered a rough storm, and was stronger for it. The need for such emergency measures seemed past. In fact, just before the satanic wave of persecution broke over them, it seems that these more drastic relief measures were tapering off and giving way to the principles more generally set forth in the Scriptures, such as relief for the bereaved or fatherless and widows. This is indicated at Acts 6:1-4. Since this text also is sometimes construed as supporting communism, we quote it for analysis:

"Now in these days, when the disciples were increasing, a murmuring arose on the part of the Greek-speaking Jews against the Hebrew-speaking Jews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution. So the twelve called the multitude of the disciples to them and said: 'It is not pleasing for us to abandon the word of God to distribute food to tables. So, brothers, search out for yourselves seven certified men from among you, full of spirit and wisdom, that we may appoint them over this necessary business; but we shall devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.'" (NW) The suggested course was followed and the matter promptly cared for.

This cannot be construed to mean that the early Christians set up community eating centers or operated "soup kitchens" where all assembled to take their meals. Acts 2:46 plainly states that "they took their meals in private homes". (NW) Please note, also, that their homes were private, and not viewed as the property

of the entire congregation. The daily distribution referred to in Acts 6:1-4 was a relief work whereby the tables of the poor were properly and impartially supplied. The text deals specifically with widows, who would likely be persons without other means of support. It was to such destitute ones that foodstuffs were distributed, and not a case of the entire body of Christians pooling everything and then all drawing on this common store of goods for their daily needs.

RELIEF WORK A REQUIREMENT

Jehovah's Word expresses concern for widows, and decrees retribution upon any who oppress them. (Ex. 22:22-24; Deut. 14:28, 29; 26:12; Ps. 68:5; 146:9; Zech. 7:9, 10; Mal. 3:1-5) He commands that they be honored, which would include their support if necessary. Jesus showed that this included support when he clashed with the scribes and Pharisees over their traditions. He pointed out that God's Word commanded honor for one's father and mother, but that their tradition allowed them to slide out from under the responsibility of giving their parents material support. In this way he linked honor with material support, and that to fail to support parents who needed it was the same as failing to obey the command to honor them. (Matt. 15:1-6, NW) Paul showed this same understanding of the expression "honor" when some thirty years later he wrote to Timothy on how to deal with those in the congregation who were actually widows, that is, those without means of support. He said:

"Honor widows that are actually widows. Now the woman who is actually a widow and left destitute has put her hope in God and persists in supplications and prayers night and day. Let a widow be put on the list who has become not less than sixty years old, a wife of one hus-

band, having a witness borne to her for right works, if she reared children, if she entertained strangers, if she washed the feet of holy ones, if she relieved those in tribulation, if she diligently followed every good work." (1 Tim. 5:3, 5, 9, 10, NW) This indicates that those widows too old to earn their own living and without relatives to support them, yet who were worthy, theocratic women, should be on the list for congregational relief work.

In no sense was this communism. If widows could be privately cared for, they were not to be put on the list for congregational support. Each household was responsible to provide for its own. Godly devotion would require children to honor their parents by material support, duly compensating their parents, who had reared them and provided for them while they were growing to maturity, until they were no longer helpless, until they were able to support themselves. Hence Paul wrote: "But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let these learn first to practice godly devotion in their own household and to keep paying a due compensation to their parents and grandparents, for this is acceptable in God's sight. Certainly if anyone does not provide for those who are his own, and especially for those who are members of his household, he has disowned the faith and is worse than a person without faith. If any believing woman has widows, let her relieve them, and let the congregation not be under the burden. Then it can relieve those who are actually widows." (1 Tim. 5:4, 8, 16, NW) Nor were young widows to burden the congregation with their needs. They could either work, or, better yet, remarry.—1 Tim. 5:11-15.

The early Christians did not try to erase the political evils or social inequalities of their time, not by communistic teaching nor by religious precept. If the permanent

Christian rule had been for all things to be held in common, there would have been no rich or poor. There would have been no need to take contributions from those with money to aid others who were poor and needy, as Paul did. (Acts 24:17; Rom. 15:26; 1 Cor. 16:1-4; 2 Cor. 8:1-15; 9:1-15) More than twenty-five years after Pentecost no form of communism had equalized Christians in a material sense, for the disciple James cautioned against class distinctions between rich and poor, and warned those intent on heaping up material wealth, as did Paul also. (1 Tim. 6:7-10; Jas. 1:27; 2:1-9; 5:1-6) The rich were alerted to the deceitfulness of riches, and were to lovingly share with needy brothers, not under compulsion or with grumbling, but cheerfully, as evidence of their faith, viewing such giving as more of a blessing than receiving.—Acts 20:35; Rom. 12:13; 2 Cor. 9:7; Jas. 2:14-20; 1 Pet. 4:9.

As for Paul personally, he gave himself over to the service of the Christian congregations, yet he never sought support for himself from any communal fund. (Acts 18:1-4; 20:33-35; 2 Cor. 11:9; 1 Thess. 2:9; 2 Thess. 3:7-9) Nor did Paul show communistic tendencies by trying to upset the existing social order of slavery, but recommended that Christian slaves be obedient to their masters in a fleshly sense, and even more so when the masters were themselves Christian brothers.—Eph. 6:5; Col. 3:22; 1 Tim. 6:1, 2; Titus 2:9, 10.

All the foregoing makes it clear that early Christians were championing neither communism nor capitalism. They were theocratic, for God rule, for preaching the gospel above all else. Social and political evils they left for correction by Jehovah God, in his way, in his time, through his kingdom. Hence any communist who loads his propaganda gun with scriptures is loading it with blanks.

Peter

Apostle with the Keys

WHAT changes occurred! From unknown fisherman to prominent apostle of Jesus Christ! From fisher of fish to fisher of men! What a transformation in the life of this man Simon whose surname was even changed to Peter! His whole career, including his desires, motives, ambitions and outlook on life, was radically altered. Unspeakable blessings, favors and privileges came his way. The unlettered and ordinary man became a confounder of this world's wise men and the possessor of miraculous powers of life and death. In addition, he was entrusted with special keys of knowledge to unlock sacred secrets of God. So study the life, personality, disposition and propensities of this man Peter and it will aid you in transforming your own self from this old world of sin and death to the new world of righteousness and life.

Hidden as it is in the shadows of obscurity, little is known of Simon's early life. Some think he was between 30 and 40 years old when he became a disciple of Christ. His father's name was Jonah. Simon Bar-Jonah's home town was Bethsaida, on the northern shore of Galilee. There he engaged in the fishing business with his brother Andrew and the two sons of Zebedee, James and John. Simon was a married man and in nearby Capernaum his mother-in-law lived in a rather large home.—Matt. 8:14; 16:17, NW; John 1:44.

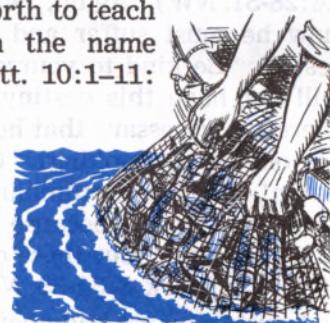
The occupation of fishing, though perhaps a humble one, was by no means servile, nor was it incompatible with a mind of high intellect and culture. Education

was compulsory for all Jewish lads, so while Simon did not attend special rabbinical schools to obtain letters or degrees in theology, yet he had a good knowledge of the all-important things in life, namely, the holy scriptures that set forth Jehovah's dealings with his chosen people, and especially His precious promises concerning the coming Messiah.

We are therefore not surprised when first introduced to Simon to find him one of John the Baptist's disciples prepared to receive Christ. In the fall of A.D. 29 when John cried out, "See, the Lamb of God!" Peter was among the first to accept him, and it was then that Christ first told Simon: "You will be called Cephas" (which is translated Peter). (John 1:35-44, NW) Six months later Christ extended to him and his companions the invitation: "Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men," and immediately Peter abandoned everything and took up the ministry. (Matt. 4:18-20; Mark 1:16-18; Luke 5:1-11, NW) Accepting that call to full-time service marked the beginning of an entirely new and most joyful and blessed period in Peter's life.—Matt. 19:27-29.

DISCIPLE EXTRAORDINARY

Just consider a few of Peter's wonderful privileges. As one of the twelve apostles he was given authority "over unclean spirits" to cure "every kind of disease", and was sent forth to teach and preach in the name of Christ. (Matt. 10:1-11; 1; Mark 3:16; Luke 6:13, 14, NW) So, many times he was the first to speak in the name of the



others; as, for example, "Jesus said to the twelve: 'You do not want to go also, do you?' Simon Peter answered him: 'Master, Whom shall we go away to? You have sayings of everlasting life.'" (Matt. 15:15; 18:21; Mark 11:21; Luke 8:45; 12:41; John 6:67, 68, NW) Peter was one of the three apostles who witnessed the raising of Jairus' daughter, who observed the transfiguration scene in the mountain, who was taken aside to witness Jesus' agony in Gethsemane. (Matt. 17:1-6; 26:36-45; Mark 5:35-37) Peter and John were the ones dispatched to prepare for the last passover. (Luke 22:7-13) It was Peter that was sent to catch the fish having the 68-cent silver coin for the temple tax.—Matt. 17:24-27, NW.

It was also Peter's happy privilege, by divine revelation, to identify Jesus as "the Christ, the Son of the living God". He was then given two symbolic "keys" which he used later on to unlock knowledge for both Jews and Gentiles concerning the heavenly kingdom, and his use of these keys was confirmed beforehand in heaven. —Matt. 16:13-20, NW.

And so for three years Christ taught and trained Peter in the way that leads to life, even disciplining and rebuking him when he erred. When walking upon the water, Peter began to sink and Jesus reproved him, saying: "You with little faith, why did you give way to doubt?" (Matt. 14:28-31, NW) Again, when Jesus told how he must suffer and die, Peter protested: "Be kind to yourself, Master; you will not have this destiny at all." It was therefore necessary that he be rebuked for his old-world thinking: "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumblingblock to me," Jesus told him, "because you think, not God's thoughts, but those of men."—Matt. 16:21-23; Mark 8:31-33, NW.

Jesus' ministry had about ended. It was the last night. Only a few hours remained.

So, the passover finished, Jesus proceeded to wash the apostles' feet, notwithstanding Peter's objection at first. (John 13:3-11) The account then reads: "Jesus said to them: 'All of you will be stumbled in connection with me on this night.' But Peter protested that even if all the others stumbled, yet he would never fall. He was pretty sure of himself. Nevertheless, Jesus replied: "On this night, before a cock crows, you will disown me three times." —Matt. 26:31-35, NW.

Not long thereafter when the mobsters came to seize Christ, Peter whipped out his sword and slashed off one of their ears. Peter thought he was out to prove he was willing to die for his Master, but instead he was out of order. (John 18:10, 11, NW) If Peter wanted to prove his integrity he would have a threefold opportunity shortly, down in the courtyard of the high priest. Three times, and most vehemently, Peter there denied he ever knew Christ; but the crowing of the cock brought him to his senses, and he went out and wept in bitter repentance.—Matt. 26:69-75.

Shortly after Christ's resurrection Peter visited the empty tomb, puzzled and bewildered, for he did not understand what had occurred. (Luke 24:1-12; John 20:1-10; 1 Cor. 15:3-8) Not until Jesus materialized and explained matters to the disciples did they fully appreciate the resurrection of Christ. On one such occasion Jesus asked Peter whether he loved Him. "Yes, Master, you know I have affection for you," answered Peter. Three times Jesus asked the question, and each time when Peter assured the Lord that he truly loved him, Jesus commanded that he prove it by feeding the Lord's "young lambs" and "little sheep".—John 21:1-17, NW.

APOSTOLIC CAREER FULL OF ACTIVITY

All of this training and disciplining was not given to Peter for no purpose. He had

much work ahead of him. He was one of those who had been told by Christ, "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, NW) The extra responsibility of apostleship also rested upon the husky shoulders of this "fisher of men", and in this capacity Peter arranged that another should be chosen to take the place of wicked Judas.—Acts 1:15-26.

And then there were those keys of knowledge entrusted to Peter. The first was used at Pentecost. A great noise like the rushing of the wind, tongues of fire upon the heads of those assembled, then a startled and bewildered multitude of many nationalities gathering to hear the gospel in their own languages—what was the meaning of all this? Peter stood up and with the first "key" skillfully unlocked their understanding, calling out: "Repent, and let each one of you be baptized," and "Get saved from this crooked generation". The door of opportunity thus opened, about 3,000 Jews entered and were baptized.—Acts 2:1-41, NW.

Fired with holy spirit Peter used his miraculous gifts of healing and powers of perception to convince others that Jehovah is God and his Chief Agent and Dispenser of life is the resurrected Christ. Boldly he preached and worked wonders in the public places, curing every kind of disease, the lame too, and even raising the dead. (Acts 3:1-16; 5:12-16; 9:32-42) Threats, arrests, floggings and persecution by the envious and wicked clergy class did not stop him. When commanded not to preach, Peter told the religious court: "Whether it is righteous in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, make your decision. But as for us, we cannot stop speaking about the things we have seen and heard." "We must obey God as ruler rather than men." (Acts 4:19;

5:29, NW) Among the congregation, too, Peter was no less zealous in discharging his responsibilities, as, for instance, in the case of Ananias and Sapphira. (Acts 5:1-11) Again, when Peter and John were sent as servants to the brothers in Samaria that they might receive holy spirit, and a misguided Simon tried to obtain the apostolic powers with bribery, Peter declared: "May your silver perish with you."—Acts 8:14-20, NW.

It was now high time for Gentile nations to learn of Jehovah's way of salvation; so the apostle entrusted with the "keys" was called upon to use the second one and open the way. He did so, and Cornelius, the Roman soldier, and his household were the first non-Jews to enter the high calling to the heavenly kingdom. (Acts 10:1-11:18) Shortly thereafter Peter was imprisoned by Herod, and he would have been put to death had not Jehovah's angel miraculously set him free. (Acts 12:1-17) Peter's work was not yet finished.

Except when called in off the road due to a question concerning circumcision of non-Jews, it seems Peter spent most of the remainder of his life among Jewish communities outside Jerusalem. (Acts 15:1-21; Gal. 2:7-9) There is not a particle of evidence, however, that he ever reached Rome, but we do know that in Babylon he wrote two letters shortly before he died. (1 Pet. 5:13) In them he makes it plain that Christ, not Peter, is the "foundation cornerstone" of the church. (1 Pet. 2:4-6) Nowhere does he claim primacy or infallibility, nor does he speak of a successor to whom he gave his "keys". Contrariwise, Peter was theocratic, and a good example for all Christians in meekness, humility and repentance, and in zeal and devotion to the interests of the new world.

STABILITY AND PERMANENCE

During World Change

*"Seeing that we are to receive
a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us continue
to have undeserved kindness, through which we may acceptably
render God sacred service with godly fear and awe."—Hebrews 12:28, NW.*

GOD is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." At a time of great crisis in the typical kingdom of God the Hebrew poet gave vent to these inspiring words of Psalm 46:1, and they were written and preserved for just such a crisis as exists today in the lives of those who watch, pray and hope for the real kingdom of God. If you are one of such persons, then you must take these words to heart and must live by them, firmly convinced that God is your refuge and strength.

¹ You cannot afford to proceed according to the nations of this world. Remember that Satan the Devil is the "god of this system of things"; that "all the gods of the peoples are idols", and that "the things which the nations sacrifice they sacrifice to demons, and not to God". The inspired Scriptures so inform us. (2 Cor. 4:4, NW; Ps. 96:5, AS; 1 Cor. 10:20, NW) The demons and the "ruler of the demons", Satan the Devil, are the invisible tormentors, oppressors and troublemakers for the people. They scheme to drive the people away from God and into destruction at his hands. To rid the holy realms of heaven of their harmful influence war in heaven was necessary after God's kingdom by Christ was set up there in 1914. The demons and their

ruler have been hurled down to the earth, and what this was foretold to mean for earthlings has come true: "Woe for the earth and for the sea, because the Devil has come down to you, having great anger, knowing he has a short period of time." (Rev. 12:1-12, NW) The Devil and his demons are responsible for the woe and turmoil on land and sea. There is no protection, stability and permanence under the demons, not even for their friends, servants and worshipers. They are malicious, fiendish and unloving, and they cannot protect their worshipers and devotees from God's righteous wrath. They could not do so at the time he loosed the global deluge against the world of violence in Noah's day. They will not be able to offer protection to the nations, or even escape execution themselves, at the "war of the great day of God the Almighty", at Armageddon, where their world ends.

² Unwittingly it is the schemes of these demonic gods of the nations that the rulers and their peoples are carrying out. If you make the living and true God your refuge, you cannot have any part with the demons, the false gods. You must serve the purpose of the true God and you must tell others what his purpose is. In this time of world opposition to him you must prove God is your refuge and strength by

1. For what time was Psalm 46:1 written? Who must conform to it?

2. Can we afford to proceed according to worldly nations? Because of what unseen factors?

3. In order to prove what can we not have any part with the false gods of the nations?

believing and acting in harmony with his testimony: "Ye are my witnesses, saith Jehovah, and my servant whom I have chosen; that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am Jehovah; and besides me there is no saviour. I have declared, and I have saved, and I have showed; and there was no strange god among you: therefore ye are my witnesses, saith Jehovah, and I am God. Yea, since the day was I am he; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who can hinder it?"—Isa. 43:10-13, AS.

⁴ Again and again Jehovah has proved himself a secure refuge for his witnesses on earth. His all-seeing eyes range through the whole earth to locate those who are devoted to him that he might show his strength in their behalf. (2 Chron. 16:9) What a God he is! Before him all the false gods must shortly bow in defeat at Armageddon. "For Jehovah is a great God, and a great King above all gods." He is to be feared, rather than the totalitarian aggressors bent on world conquest for enthroning their political gods and form of religion everywhere. "For great is Jehovah, and greatly to be praised: he is to be feared above all gods." Those who make him their refuge and who trust in his strength credit him with godship and say: "For thou, Jehovah, art most high above all the earth: thou art exalted far above all gods." (Pss. 95:3; 96:4; 97:9, AS) Because he supplies secret strength to his witnesses, they have been able to endure the most determined and fiendish persecution from human agents of the false gods. Greedy dictators craving world empire have punished those who would not join in idolizing them. But when these dictators

4. What kind of God has Jehovah proved himself to be toward us?

went down, Jehovah's witnesses have lived on and have found fresh strength to renew their witnessing to the "God of gods". Today they gratefully exclaim: "Oh give thanks unto Jehovah; for he is good; for his lovingkindness endureth for ever. Oh give thanks unto the God of gods; for his lovingkindness endureth for ever."—Ps. 136:1, 2, AS.

"A VERY PRESENT HELP"

⁵ It appears to be human nature for people, when helpless in trouble, to appeal to their gods for aid and deliverance. For instance, in spite of the 1950 Holy Year, the world's difficulties worsened to an alarming degree. So the pope of Vatican City in his encyclical of December 6 called on the Catholic world to engage in a novena of prayer for peace. Addressing the college of cardinals five days later, the pope called for a "general accord of intentions of all human hearts which, with the aid of God, may cause all the dangers which are threatening peace to disappear throughout the world". (N. Y. Times, Dec. 12, 1950) But prayers to God are vain the intentions of which are contrary to his will. As James 4:2, 3 (Dy) says: "You contend and war, and you have not, because you ask not. You ask, and receive not; because you ask amiss: that you may consume it on your concupiscences." It is not God's will at this time to establish world peace in order for the nations to return to normal. If he restored peace, the nations would only consume its benefits upon their concupiscences and selfish desires, showing they are "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God".

⁶ The timetables of God's Word set this period down as a time marked for international troubles, when there would be "on the earth anguish of nations, not know-

5, 6. Because of the worsening trouble, in what prayers do the Catholic Hierarchy indulge? Why will God not answer such prayers?

ing the way out because of the roaring of the sea and its agitation, while men become faint out of fear and expectation of the things coming upon the inhabited earth". For Christendom it was to be a time when "we looked for peace, but no good came; and for a time of health [by means of holy years, etc.], and behold trouble!" (Luke 21:25, 26, NW; Jer. 8:15) This is not the time for God to make peace for the nations of this world. So the efforts of the pope and his hierarchy to try their hand and pose as a mediator between the communist bloc and the democratic bloc will prove unavailing. Neither Catholics nor Protestants need expect help from God through them.

⁷ Making God our refuge and relying on his strength means for us to accept the trouble his Word has forewarned us of and, while this trouble rages about us and against us, to look to him to be our "very present help". That expression in the original Hebrew Bible is such that translators differ in the way they render it: "A well-proved help in trouble." (AT) "We shall find him very near." (Mo) "A help in distresses, soon found." (Ro) "A help in distresses most willingly found."—Ro. Pss.

⁸ Ah yes, to God's true people he has let himself be found exceedingly a help in trouble. Once, in the days of King Jehoshaphat, the combined forces of the nations of Moab, Ammon and Mount Seir marched to the assault upon Jerusalem. God's trusting people called upon him at his temple in that city. Then, for his own name's sake, he showed himself most willing to be found their helper. Before ever the overwhelming enemy forces reached the holy city Jehovah God worked their destruction. It was not necessary for his people to fight in that battle. They merely

sang his praises and looked on and saw the "salvation of Jehovah with you". So great was the self-slaughter of the wicked aggressors that the Israelites were three days in collecting the spoil from their carcasses.—2 Chron. 20:1-30, AS.

⁹ King Asa, too, found Jehovah God a ready help in trouble when his forces faced an Ethiopian army, one million men strong with three hundred chariots, under Zera their commander. King Asa cried out: "Jehovah, there is none besides thee to help, between the mighty and him that hath no strength: help us, O Jehovah our God; for we rely on thee, and in thy name are we come against this multitude. O Jehovah, thou art our God; let not man prevail against thee." God answered this proper prayer with the needed help, and the outnumbered Israelites were enabled to rout the foe, not one of whom was let remain alive. The secret of this deliverance was laid bare by the prophet Azariah: "Jehovah is with you, while ye are with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you." (2 Chron. 14:9 to 15:2, AS) Then, in the days of King Hezekiah, the forces of the Assyrian empire builder, King Sennacherib, threatened Jerusalem, railed at its God Jehovah, and demanded an unconditional surrender. From the midst of Jerusalem the prophet Isaiah hurled back an uncompromising message and King Hezekiah and all the city took refuge under Jehovah's invisible protection and strength. That very night the boastful Assyrian's army was knocked out of combat strength as Jehovah's angel with one blow felled 185,000 warriors. Next morning King Sennacherib got on his way back to Assyria and to eventual assassination. At the worst of the situation how soon and how willingly Jehovah God let himself be found and proved himself to be a help in trouble!—Isa. 37:14-38.

7. What, then, does making God our refuge and strength in trouble mean?

8, 9. How did God prove himself to Israel a "very present help"?

REASON FOR FEARLESSNESS

¹⁰ The instruction these examples of divine help contain should not now be lost upon us. They were recorded for the benefit of God's people now "upon whom the accomplished ends of the systems of things have arrived". (1 Cor. 10:11, NW) Counting from the end of the "appointed times of the nations" in 1914, we are 37 years into the "time of the end" of this world. (Luke 21:24, NW; Dan. 12:4) During these crucial years Jehovah's witnesses have sought shelter and strength in him, and they can confess for themselves that he is a "well-proved help in trouble". If it were not for this, they would not be here today nor increasing in numbers. But we are entering the most serious and trialsome years of this "time of the end". The final conflict of Armageddon draws near. So let us not forget that Jehovah God does not change any more than his Word changes. (Mal. 3:6, AS) His strength is displayed amid our weakness. No trouble can grow so severe in the future that he cannot help us through it, if we abide trustfully in him as our refuge and do not look to this world for help by a compromise with the world which is God's enemy. Why should Jehovah's witnesses care if the whole world is against them, disbelieves their testimony, hates and persecutes them? The whole world was also against Noah and the seven who entered the ark with him and made Jehovah their refuge and strength. Yet when God let loose the elemental forces of nature, that world of the ungodly went under into destruction, but Noah and his ark companions survived the Flood.

¹¹ We are strengthened by our own recent experiences as well as by the record of God's Word. So now we should have

such faith in our divine refuge as to take into our own mouths what the psalmist next says and really mean it: "Therefore will we not fear, though the earth do change, and though the mountains be shaken into the heart of the seas; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains tremble with the swelling thereof. Selah."—Ps. 46:2, 3, AS.

¹² Here the psalmist is not necessarily using figurative speech and speaking of the symbolic earth, mountains, seas and waters. Of course, the symbolic earth today is changing as from a political earthquake, and the land is roaring with the terrifying sounds of one earthquake shock after another accompanied by blood-curdling howling of the people and dogs. Political governments which seemed like ancient mountains dominating and stabilizing the earth have been shaken to their roots and have toppled into the midst of the seas of peoples now in revolt against long-accepted political, commercial and religious systems and ideologies. The so-called "colored races" of the world have roused themselves and become agitated by winds of revolutionary doctrine and by earthquakes on the ocean floor. Fear of the "yellow peril", which was already expressed in the last century, is now being revived. Especially so in the light of the tactics the yellow races are following in the Korean theater of war. Resorting to what they call *jen hai* or the "human sea", they let loose tides of humans from their reservoir of hundreds of millions of people. By sheer force of numbers and brute strength they sweep along and overwhelm all military obstructions and barriers, regardless of the cheap human lives sacrificed. "Ah," says God's prophet, "the uproar of many peoples, that roar like the roaring of the seas; and the rushing of

10. Hence, facing now most trialsome years, what must we not forget?

11. In what should we now have faith, to make Psalm 46:2, 3 our own?

12, 13. What could the psalmist, if using figurative speech, be here understood to mean?

nations, that rush like the rushing of mighty waters! The nations shall rush like the rushing of many waters.”—Isa. 17:12, 13, AS.

¹³ As these human seas, lashed by fears, resentment and ancient grievances, roar and as the waters foam and bring up mire and filth, those political mountains that still remain are trembling and taking measures to guarantee their stability and permanence. Why, even the Vatican City, which claims to be founded on Peter as its rock, does not feel stable any more nor assured of its permanence. It contemplates flight, not to Jehovah God as a refuge and shelter, but to the shores of governments with the strongest arm of flesh and armed to the teeth. To worldly minds the swelling of the indignant, passion-driven waters of humanity is terrifying to observe. Seeing nothing permanent and stable any longer in human society, many are hopelessly resigning themselves to be engulfed in the rising tide.

¹⁴ Amidst all this world upheaval and change, those who have taken refuge in Jehovah God need not fear and be unsettled. We know all this was foretold in his prophecy. It is the sign of the consummation of this system of things, yes, the sign of the unseen presence of his Son Jesus Christ in Kingdom power and authority. We know that his theocratic government is now set up in the heavens and is the only stable government in the universe and the only permanent one. Its power and influence are now exercised toward this earth, and this is what is making the “god of this world”, Satan the Devil, and his demons stir up earthly society and drive all mankind in a mad course opposed to God’s rightful rule of the earth and leading to destruction at his hand. But there are those of us who

14. Amid the world change, why should the heirs of the Kingdom not fear or be unsettled?

hope to share with Jesus Christ in that government of the new world with its new earth and heavens. These remember how Jehovah shook the literal earth at Mount Sinai and they now say confidently: “At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, saying: ‘Yet once more I will set not only the earth but also the heaven in commotion.’ Now the expression ‘Yet once more’ signifies the removal of the things being shaken as things that have been made, in order that the things not being shaken may remain. Wherefore, seeing that we are to receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us continue to have undeserved kindness, through which we may acceptably render God sacred service with godly fear and awe.”—Heb. 12:26-28, NW.

¹⁵ Be the above as it may, Psalm 46 seems to refer to a real earthly cataclysm. To make his point strong, the psalmist says that, even if such a literal cataclysm should take place on earth and the face of the globe should change amid the frightful commotion, yet he would not fear. Nor would he need to fear, for he is safely sheltered and is upheld by a strength that is not his own human strength but is from Almighty God. As the cataclysm of nature roared and raged at the end of the antediluvian world, how free from fear Noah and his family must have felt! Not just because they were sheltered in the ark they had built, but because they were trusting in the great God Jehovah for true shelter. He would not harm them with the deluge with which he destroyed the ungodly, scoffing world. As it was in Noah’s day, so it will be in these days of the invisible presence of the Son of man in Kingdom power.

¹⁶ As we get closer to the battle of Armageddon, “the war of the great day of

15. But to what does Psalm 46:2, 3 really refer to show the degree of fearlessness of the psalmist?

16. Why need we not fear at such a future cataclysm?

God the Almighty," we do not know what cataclysmic forces will be operated by Jehovah God to overwhelm this world and blot it out. The political, military, commercial and religious elements of this world are certain to quake with fear at the sights and sounds and to grow frantic at the sure prospect of destruction for themselves. We under God's kingdom shelter need not fear. We may naturally be frightened, as Moses was at Mount Sinai, but we shall not share the world's fear. (Heb. 12:21) We know God is controlling the forces of destruction and we know at whom he is directing them, not at us but at his enemies, our enemies. We have made him our refuge and shelter, and he will safely shield us, passing us over just as his destroying angel passed over all the homes in Egypt marked with the blood of the passover lamb.

¹⁷ His act of destroying the old world is the "strange act", the act of God, for which we have been looking, yes, praying. Our hope and trust are not misplaced in any things created by man's ingenuity, because we know they are doomed and will pass away with this old world. We have long witnessed and suffered amid this old world and now it will pass away from us because we are not of it. But we ourselves shall not pass away with it, for we are of the new world of righteousness. We belong to God's theocratic organization under his kingdom. His visible organization will not pass away, but is as stable and permanent as his kingdom. Therefore, come what remarkable, violent changes may in the earth's physical appearance at the end of Satan's world, we will not fear.

17. Why shall we not pass away with this world then?

EARLY HELP for Surviving the World's End

THE world capitals are all full of tension in the world's crisis. They are the scenes of conferences of frightened statesmen, motivated to action by the extreme urgency of the threatening situation. Alarm fills the capitals and they are moved to assume greater powers over the lives and destinies of the people. Uneasiness pervades them all. They have nothing substantial to assure them of good in the immediate future. In none of them is there any real, deep-down gladness, not even in the capital of the United Nations, nor in the religio-political capital, Vatican City.

² One city, though, is enjoying a refresh-

ment and a gladness that the world does not know and cannot understand. It is the new world city toward which the true Christians have been traveling for the past nineteen centuries, God's capital of the universe. Now it has established its power over our earth. This is the city which the apostle means when he writes: "But you have approached a mount Zion and a city of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem, and myriads of angels, in general assembly, and the congregation of the firstborn who have been enrolled in the heavens, and



1. What is the state of world capitals, and why?
2. What city, though, is enjoying refreshment and gladness, and how was it foreshadowed?

God the Judge of all, and the spiritual lives of righteous ones who have been made perfect, and Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and the blood of sprinkling which speaks in a better way than Abel's blood." (Heb. 12:22-24, NW) Jerusalem on earth was once the symbol of the heavenly Jerusalem, in the days when faithful kings of the lineage of David sat on the "throne of Jehovah" on one of its mountains called "Mount Zion". By establishing his temple there God placed his name Jehovah at that city, and so the city foreshadowed God's capital organization of the universe. Christ Jesus and his faithful congregation of joint heirs glorified make up that capital organization.

³ In 1914 Christ Jesus, the Chief Son in God's organization, was enthroned and thus brought forth to active Kingdom authority. He reigns at his heavenly Father's right hand, and the ancient prophecy addressed to him now applies: "Jehovah will send forth the rod of thy strength out of Zion: Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies." (Ps. 110:1, 2, AS) So now there is unusual gladness in the heavenly Zion. It is no wonder, then, that Jehovah's witnesses on earth who represent his kingdom are also glad. They may be spread all over the earth for the purpose of giving a pre-Armageddon witness before the world ends, but they are bound together in unbreakable unity by a theocratic organization under the King Christ Jesus. It matters not that they are in the midst of their enemies. They know their King is now ruling in the midst of these enemies and will shortly dash them to pieces like striking a potter's vessels with an iron rod. They do not mourn over the end of this world which the handwriting on the wall announces to the nations. They rejoice with the holy hosts of heaven over the

bringing of God's kingdom to birth to rule the righteous new world. So the source of their joy and gladness is a secret to this world, and it makes all the nations marvel that no world woe dries it up.

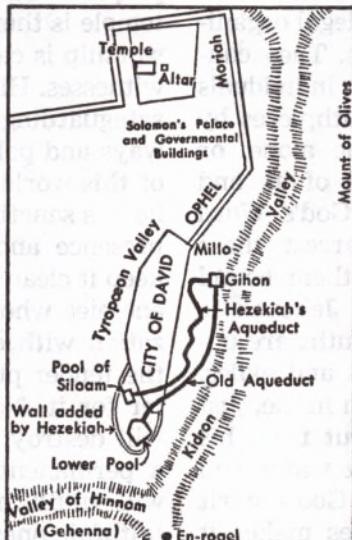
⁴ The psalmist discloses the source of the irrepressible gladness of Jehovah's witnesses: "There is a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High." (Ps. 46:4, AS) This river is vital to the life of the visible organization of God's people, for it means life-giving refreshment to them. It is a river of divine blessings to them, a river of truths about his kingdom long ago promised and now set up. Along with this river goes the joyful privilege of spreading its Kingdom truths to all who seek good government, security and lasting peace. Today the American nation is facing a serious shortage in its water resources. The latest Water Resources Report reveals there are serious wastes in the nation's precious water supply. In the face of increasing water needs it constitutes a national peril. However, Jehovah's witnesses are not wasting the precious waters of Kingdom truth and are not wasting the precious opportunities of reviving the spiritually parched people of good will. Forth from the throne of God and of his reigning King at his right hand the life-giving river of truth flows, in fulfillment of the vision given to the apostle John, who described it in these words: "And he showed me a river of water of life, clear as crystal, flowing out from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of its broad way. And on this side of the river and on that side there were trees of life producing twelve crops of fruits, yielding their fruits each month. And the leaves of the trees were for the curing of the nations."—Rev. 22:1, 2, NW.

3. Why, then, is there unity among the widespread witnesses of Jehovah, and also unusual gladness?

4. What does Psalm 46:4 disclose to be the source of their irrepressible gladness?

⁵ We have no fear of a shortage of this life-giving water of Kingdom truth, for it flows from an inexhaustible source through Jehovah's theocratic organization. Our enemies, among whom we find ourselves, would like to cut off this water supply from us, but we keep in mind that Jehovah's King now rules in the midst of such enemies. The King of the "city of God", Jesus Christ, was prefigured by King Hezekiah who once throned on Mount Zion at Jerusalem. Sennacherib, the emperor of Assyria, flooding the land with his hordes of aggression, threatened to besiege the city of God and starve it out until Jehovah's people in it were obliged to "eat their own excrement and to drink their own urine". (Isa. 36:12, AT) But there was a perennial well outside of Jerusalem's eastern wall, the well of Gihon. Long before Hezekiah's time an aqueduct had conducted its waters through a tunnel in the rock into the midst of the city. But King Hezekiah saw the peril to the water supply of the city of God. He was not going to let the aggressive Assyrian imperialists seize the vital water source and cut it off from the city. So he bored a more westerly water-tunnel through the rock and covered over the well of Gihon beyond enemy detection.

⁶ Concerning this, 2 Chronicles 32:30 reports: "This same Hezekiah also stopped [concealed] the upper spring of the waters of Gihon, and brought them straight down [by a tunnel] on the west side of the city of David." (AS) Even the apocryphal book of Ecclesiasticus makes men-



tion of this: "Ezechias fortified his city, and brought in water into the midst thereof, and he digged a rock with iron, and made a well for water." (Eccl. 48:19, Dy) Thus the life-sustaining waters were conducted to the upper pool or Pool of Shiloah (Siloam) and were made secure against the enemy seizure.* These are doubtless the "waters of Shiloah" which Isaiah's prophecy (8:6, 7) sets in contrast with the "waters of the river, strong and many, even the king of Assyria, and all his glory". Though the waters of that great Assyrian river of imperial expansion flooded the land of King Hezekiah to the neck, they did not succeed in cutting off the waters of Shiloah from Jerusalem. These softly flowing waters continued to gladden the besieged city.

GLADDENED, BUT NOT MOVED

⁷ Christ Jesus proves he is ruling in the midst of his enemies by safeguarding the river of Bible truths at its source in heaven. His ruling power keeps it continually flowing to his faithful sheep on earth in the theocratic organization. You do not see the present-day Jewish-Arab city of Jerusalem made glad by these waters of this divine

river, nor Vatican City nor any other of the world capitals. These refuse such waters but rejoice in conspiracies and alliances for digging wells to receive and retain the waters of human philosophy, social ideologies and religious traditions. The witnesses of Jehovah are the ones

* See the colored map of Jerusalem opposite page 97 in the book "Equipped for Every Good Work", published by the Watch Tower Society.

7. Who refuse such water? What do they try to do to it, and how?

5, 6. (a) Why do we have no fear of a shortage of this water? (b) How was the safeguarding of this water foreshadowed in Hezekiah's day?

made glad by the river of truth. They constitute the visible organization that now increases its gladness by drinking from the never-failing streams of this river of truth from God's Word. Vatican City and other totalitarian world capitals would like to cut off these waters and create a water famine among them and force them to forsake the theocratic organization. They attempt to do this by putting Jehovah's witnesses under ban and by dissolving branches of the Watch Tower Bible & Tract Society with which they co-operate and then forbidding the Watch Tower publications to be imported, exported and circulated.

⁸ Let such totalitarian foes of God's kingdom ban and dissolve the legal organization and seize its properties. They cannot stop consecrated Christian individuals from acting as Jehovah's mouthpieces by preaching with just the Bible alone, or even without it if deprived of it and limited to the knowledge of God's Word in their hearts. Let them arrest these faithful Christians and hold them bound in prison. The Word of God Jehovah is not bound as long as their mouths are unsealed among fellow prisoners and exiles. Jesus said: "He that puts faith in me, just as the Scripture has said, 'Out from his inmost part streams of living water will flow.'" (John 7: 38, 39, NW) God's spirit upon his consecrated witnesses makes it that way. And let the enemies know too that there are underground rivers and that the course of the waters of Shiloah was covered over and flowed underground and via tunnel into the midst of the city of God. Just so, if need be, the river of Kingdom truth can flow by underground movement. Unnoticed by the King's enemies, it reaches those who are thirsting for the refreshing waters from the Bible. Hence it

8. Why cannot such measures really stop the water's flow?

is that the "river of water of life, clear as crystal, flowing out from the throne of God and of the Lamb", continues on its irresistible course and the prophecy is fulfilled: "The spirit and the bride keep on saying, 'Come!' And let anyone hearing say, 'Come!' And let anyone thirsting come; let anyone that wishes take life's water free."—Rev. 22:17, NW.

⁹ The city of God, gladdened by the streams of his Kingdom river, is declared to be "the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High". That means that the Supreme One of the universe dwells there and has sanctified the place with his holy presence. He has put his name upon the people in that theocratic organization. His temple is there, which means that his pure worship is carried on there by his devoted witnesses. His worship is a safety to them, safeguarding them against all the false ways and policies into which the religions of this world are leading the people. Since he has sanctified the organization with his presence and name, he is determined to keep it clean and pure. No wonder that the enemies who touch his theocratic organization with evil intent are as if touching the tender pupil of his eye. They will suffer for it. No creature, demon or human, will destroy His clean organization. It is a permanent thing. The Most High God will fulfill his promise to preserve the faithful ones within it. Therefore the psalmist rightly says: "God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God will help her, and that right early."—Ps. 46:5, AS.

¹⁰ The divine presence in the midst of the organization produces a sense of security among those in it. They know it is the right organization to stay united with, for

9. What does calling the city of God "the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High" mean for it?

10. What does the divine presence produce in those in the organization? So in what structure is their trust?

it will never be moved and made to totter, stagger and fall to ruin. This does not mean that material buildings occupied and used by members of the organization may not be seized, invaded, expropriated and destroyed by the foe. Remember that "the Most High does not dwell in houses made with hands; just as the prophet says: 'The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. What kind of house will you build for me? Jehovah says.'" (Acts 7:48, 49, NW) But the Most High does dwell in his theocratic organization, whether its members on earth are housed or not. So our trust is not even in buildings devoted to his service. It is his theocratic organization, therefore, that will never be moved by enemy assaults and caused to collapse, for God's presence within it makes it permanent though all the world round about it ends. "Trust ye in Jehovah for ever; for in Jehovah, even Jehovah, is an everlasting rock." (Isa. 26:4, AS) Founded on this rock, his theocratic organization will last forever. So those who trust in him will last forever, because they take him at his word and seek refuge with his organization.

HOW SOON IS "EARLY"?

¹¹ The situation in this world is certain to worsen. Extreme measures have already been taken against Jehovah's organized people in many lands. Other lands may resort to totalitarian measures or may be dragged into subjection under totalitarian imperialists and similar measures be taken against his organized witnesses there. Under Satan's instigation the nations may be induced to go to great lengths against these ministers of good news. Satan will use his mobilization of the world to the utmost to interfere with our freedom of action, speech, assembly and worship. The outlook

may grow very dark. It might appear that the worst has been reached and the visible part of the city of God is certain to be moved and dealt a staggering knock-out blow. But in such an expectation the gloating enemy will be disappointed. God lives and has not forsaken or been driven from his organization. He reigns by his King Jesus Christ in its midst, and he will help his beloved theocratic organization, "and that right early."

¹² This does not mean early in the test of the trust, integrity and faithfulness of his people toward God. No, there must be a full test of the unswerving devotion of his theocratic organization to him. The wicked intent and malice of the enemy must be allowed to bare itself, and the situation must become such as to show that all human help is unavailable and unable to save. How, then, is God's help of his organization "right early"? Because it is early in the bright new day for his people. As other translations read: "At the dawn of morning" (AS, margin); "by the turnings of the morning" (Ro); "at the approach of the morning" (Ro. Pss.); "when morning comes" (Mo); "at break of dawn." (AT) How appropriate!

¹³ How often in past history of God's people it has been at dawn that the deliverance of them has been realized! It was "when the morning arose" that the angels hurried Lot and his wife and daughters out of Sodom to escape the deluge of fire and sulphur upon the corrupt city. When the Egyptian forces were driving through the Red sea after the fleeing Israelites, it was at the morning watch or watch of daybreak that Jehovah looked through the pillar of fire and the cloud and began troubling the pursuers. Finally he collapsed the walls of sea water in upon them, "when the morning appeared." (Gen.

11. In the worsening trouble ahead, what effort and expectation of the enemies will be disappointed? Why?

12. Why does "right early" not mean early in the test?
13. How is this illustrated in past history of God's people?

19:15-28; Ex. 14:24-31) It was "early in the morning" that the people of Jerusalem rose according to the arrangement of King Jehoshaphat and they marched forth singing Jehovah's praises; and when this singing began Jehovah confused the united armies of Moab, Ammon and Mount Seir and caused them to annihilate one another. When the Assyrian hordes under the Assyrian conqueror Sennacherib menaced the life and independence of Jerusalem, Jehovah's angel stole through the night and killed 185,000 in the invading army. When King Hezekiah and his besieged people rose "early in the morning", it was to learn that all those thousands of the enemy had been mowed down and the aggressor was in disgraceful retreat back to Assyria. (2 Chron. 20:20-29; 2 Ki. 19:35-37) Also, it was "very early on the first day of the week", or "when it was growing light", that the great earthquake occurred and the stone was rolled away from the door of the tomb to indicate that the resurrection of Jesus Christ had taken place. (Mark 16:2 and Matt. 28:1, NW) In every case deliverance was "right early".

¹⁶¹⁴ So too it will be for the deliverance of the visible organization of God's people. Outwardly, with the forces of darkness massing and pressing in upon them, how dark the depths of night might appear for them! But his complete deliverance of them at the height of the battle of Armageddon will usher in a new day for them. It will be the early part or morning of eternal day for them. So shouts of joy are certain to come with this morning.—Ps. 30:5.

THE HOSTILE FORCES DISSOLVED

¹⁵ Full deliverance for us, then, means the end of this world. Here, then, is what we must face with courage: "The nations raged, the kingdoms were moved: he ut-

14. How will it be "early" for them at Armageddon? 15. Against whom are the nations in reality raging? How so?

tered his voice, the earth melted. Jehovah of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge." (Ps. 46:6, 7, AS) Fight hot and cold wars between themselves the nations may. Actually it is against Jehovah's kingdom and against his ambassadors on earth, Jehovah's witnesses, that the nations are raging. They are now militarized as never before over the supreme issue of world domination. Their determination is either to divide domination between two national blocs of opposed ideologies or to have one bloc as victor hog the whole domination. There is no idea of letting God have it as the Creator and Universal Sovereign. They have their own charter of the United Nations; they have their own treaties of alliance within the framework of the United Nations. They have no regard for the unchangeable covenant which God made with his Son Jesus Christ for the absolute government of the righteous new world. So prayers by their religious clergy for His kingdom are sheer hypocrisy and are for God to adopt the political governments of selfish, ambitious men as his kingdom. By their own militarization and the emergency measures which they take the nations are pressed into opposing the good news of God's kingdom which his witnesses proclaim world-wide.—Rev. 11:15-18.

¹⁶ But the rage of the nations which the Devil has designed to stagger Jehovah's visible organization will not make it totter. Instead of terrifying us into disorganization and dissolution, the rage of the nations urges us to organize still more tightly with the help of God's spirit. We see in such rage of the nations a clear sign of the coming end of this world, and it gives greater boldness to proclaim the good news of the Kingdom. The kingdoms of this world are the ones that are moved and made to stagger, a thing which arous-

16. But who are the ones that are moved and staggered? So what actions do they resort to?

es fears of their toppling into the seas of the revolutionary masses. From a peace-time economy they change to a militant arrangement against God's incoming kingdom. They are mobilized for defending their national sovereignty against him. They are being speeded by unseen demon influences to take their battle positions at Armageddon to preserve their own way of life, not God's way. Challenging the divine power, they assault the organization, the neutral position, the missionary activities and the message of Jehovah's witnesses, not believing that his organized people have a living God who sees, who cares and who can act.

¹⁷ The day and hour draw near when he will utter his voice. It will be in tones and language that this violent world will understand. It will not be peace talk to them. He will call for a sword of execution against them. See his Warrior King Jesus Christ wield it! What a display of elemental forces follows which will be beyond the control of world militarists and the scientists with their laboratory equipment! Jehovah is not frightened by the roar of the embattled nations. His own thunderous command for their destruction will sound above their din and will terrify them. "The earth melted." Human society under worldly rulers then dissolves in fear. It is found to have no solidity. Growing weak and disorganized, it liquefies in terror.

¹⁸ In the dissolution process the hand of every selfish man outside God's organization will be turned against his neighbor, and they will fight one another's interests, just as when the Midianite invaders were panic-stricken by the strategem of Gideon and his three hundred in the dead of night. You would think you were seeing the forces of Moab, Ammon and Mount Seir fighting themselves once again. The

symbolic "ten kings" of the beastly political system will turn upon the harlot of Babylonish religion with which they committed spiritual fornication and will eat her fleshy parts and burn her refuse with fire. The political beast of world domination and the false-prophet system which made such deceptive political predictions will be pitched alive into destruction symbolized by the fiery lake burning with sulphur. No political machine will hold, no ideological group will keep together, no international compact will have any strength, no United Nations or mutual defense alliance will prove binding.—Rev. 17:1-18.

¹⁹ Ah, but those in the theocratic organization will remain solid and, unmoved upon their "everlasting rock", will cry out then as they are crying out now: "Jehovah of hosts is with us; a lofty retreat for us is the God of Jacob." (Ps. 46:7, Ro. Pss.) This Almighty One with his heavenly armies is on our side. So who can be against us and win? His hosts or armies are not imaginary "men from Mars" invading our earth, but are mighty angels like the one with whom he wiped out all the flower of Egypt, her firstborn of man and beast; and like the angel who dealt stealthy death to 185,000 of Sennacherib's slumbering camp. Jehovah's beloved Son Jesus Christ is prophetically called "Immanuel", and his name means "With us is God" or "God is on our side". In symbol that God is with us, his Immanuel is with us, which means that the "prince of the host of Jehovah" is with us, with all that host.—Josh. 5:14, AS.

²⁰ He now has at his disposal those twelve legions of angels, for the aid of which he refused to call on the night of his betrayal in Gethsemane. Like Jesus then, we do not now ask for these legions

17, 18. How will God utter his voice? With what effect on the earth?

19, 20. What does it mean for "Jehovah of hosts" to be with us?

of angels to intervene in a violent way for us before the divine time. Yet we know they surround us with their protection. "The angel of Jehovah encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." (Ps. 34:7, AS) We know that at present they are "spirits for public service" whom God sends forth to minister to his Kingdom heirs and their companions of good will. (Heb. 1:14, NW) Take courage, then, even though you seem standing alone. Jehovah of hosts is with each one of his people upon whom his name is called, because they stick on his side and proclaim his name.

OUR REFUGE AND LOFTY RETREAT

²¹ Jehovah loved Jacob rather than his older twin-brother Esau. He bestowed the birthright to the great Abrahamic promise upon Jacob and changed his name to Israel. We may be sure that he loves his spiritual Israel today, those who are Israelites inwardly by faith in Jehovah and in his promised Seed Jesus Christ. And now their good-will companions are beloved with them. Having the God of Jacob as our lofty retreat, there is no need for us to organize refuge farms in isolated places, retire to ourselves there and quit the field of activity as Kingdom publishers. Trust in the great God of Jacob is not demonstrated by hiding in seclusion but is demonstrated by courageously going forth onto the field of action and spreading his message of life. "Jehovah preserveth the faithful." (Ps. 31:23, AS) Retreating into him as our high tower means to keep in unity with him wherever we may be in the line of duty. That way we stay inside the organization of his theocratic people who are scattered all over the earth. By carrying out organization instructions as contained in God's Word, we work like our

fellow witnesses everywhere else. Unitedly we publish the name and government of Jehovah, bidding all life-seekers to take refuge under Him.

²² Wonderful it will be to realize the third and last stanza of Psalm 46. It takes the viewpoint of a survivor after the world calamity of Armageddon: "Come view the doings of Jehovah, who hath set desolations in the earth: causing wars to cease unto the end of the earth, the bow he breaketh and cutteth asunder the spear, waggons he burneth with fire." (Ps. 46:8, 9, Ro. Pss.) This invitation, uttered by those within the visible organization of Jehovah God, positively assures us there will be survivors on earth after Armageddon will have swept away this old world with the broom of destruction and cleansed the earth for the righteous new world. The survivors will be informed and will know it is Jehovah by his mighty Warrior Jesus Christ who has set the then visible desolations in the earth. Such desolations will not have destroyed the earth or ruined it beyond restoration to a paradise state like the garden of Eden. They will only have 'brought to ruin those ruining the earth'. (Rev. 11:18, NW) God will not destroy his footstool, the earth, but will glorify it under the kingdom of his Christ. Thus it is Jehovah by Christ who ends all forms of war on the earth by destroying all the warmongers, 'scattering the peoples that delight in war' and demolishing their terrible weapons of war.—Ps. 68:30.

²³ Who among men will be the ones to survive the world's end at Armageddon and pass into the new world of lasting peace and security? It will be those who heed the command of the Most High God at Psalm 46:10 (AS): "Be still [Give in, Mo; Desist, Ro. Pss.], and know that I am

21. How do we show the God of Jacob is a lofty retreat for us?

22. What assurance does Psalm 46:8, 9 give of survival? And who will make lasting peace, and how?

23. Who among men will be the ones to survive the world's end?

God: I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth." This advice corresponds with that given at Psalm 2:10-12 (AS): "Now therefore be wise, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve Jehovah with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the son, lest he be angry, and ye perish in the way, for his wrath will soon be kindled. Blessed are all they that take refuge in him." After decades of testimony we may not now expect political and religious rulers to appreciate and follow this advice and learn to know that Jehovah is God in a way that means salvation to them. But we may look for individuals of all nations to desist from all acts against Jehovah and his theocratic organization and to give in, be still and learn to know him and do good to Christ's brothers. This means everlasting life.

²⁴ It is here at the earth, now a hotbed of rebellion and devil worship, that Jehovah must be exalted forever. Those who in this time of world crisis exalt Jehovah can shout out with assurance the closing words of Psalm 46: "Jehovah of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah."—Ps. 46:11, AS.

²⁵ This is our confession publicly when war scares and alarms and national fears drive people into non-theocratic man-made organizations for cover and defense. They lack faith and disregard the divine promises and follow instead worldly wisdom, ideologies and religions. We dare not fear their fear. We may not now resort to human refuges and become like the faithless

people of this world. We must make known that Jehovah of hosts is the God of victory and is with us and is our secure retreat. This we will do, not by bragging about our organization, but by taking him at his Word and displaying our confidence in him. He is with us if we are with him, not becoming part of this doomed world or indulging in friendship with it, but adhering unwaveringly to his organization and expanding his pure worship. By our course of action as well as by our words we must demonstrate that our trust is not in weapons of carnal warfare but that we are fighting on Jehovah's side with the spiritual armor from him. It helps to build up the confidence of all the scattered sheep in Jehovah the Great Shepherd when we ourselves show no worldly fear but manifest unshakable reliance upon him. We must vigorously help those other sheep now to find the one safe refuge and enter into it.

²⁶ Our Christian obligation now is to be fearless in Jehovah God's service, under the shadow of his mighty hand. He encourages us not to droop our hands out of fear, but to keep them busy in the constructive work of Bible education among people of good will. So keep calm and go on peacefully about your work as his ministers of good news. As never before, make the time count now, for the time in which he is showing patience and may yet be found is short. He will never forsake his faithful ones, but will help us, "and that right early."

24, 25. What do those now exalting Jehovah shout out, and how do they prove it?

26. What now is it our Christian obligation to be and do?



Prometheus Represented as Tied to a Stake

The Watchtower Society, publishers of the "New World Translation", received a letter questioning a statement in the appendix that the Greek hero Prometheus was represented as tied to a stake. The Society's answer is here published.

December 1, 1950

Dear Sir:

Answering yours of November 14 which poses a challenge that the popular Greek hero Prometheus "was represented as tied to a stake or 'stauros'".

Just as you have heard, the *Americana Encyclopedia* in its article on "Prometheus Bound", the tragedy by the Greek poet Aeschylus, also represents Prometheus clamped to a rock in the Caucasus by forging. However, we should like to refer you to the book *The History of the Devil and the Idea of Evil from the Earliest Times to the Present Day*, by Dr. Paul Carus, and published in Chicago by The Open Court Publishing Co. in 1900. On page 210 it gives the illustration of a man tied to a stake, under which illustration it says: "Prometheus tied by Zeus to the stake (or cross) and exposed to the Eagle: Rescue by Hercules (A vase found at Chiusi, now in Berlin. Baumeister, D.d.cl.A., p. 1410)." On this page Dr. Carus says:

"In spite of the strong admixture of foreign mythology, Hercules has become the national hero of Greece, and the Greek idea of salvation has found in him the most typical expression, which has been most beautifully worked out by Aeschylus in a grand tragedy which represents Prometheus (the fore-thinker) as struggling and suffering mankind, tied to the pole of misery by Zeus as a punishment for the sin of having brought the bliss of light and fire down to the earth. But at last



the divine saviour, Hercules, arrives, and, killing the eagle that lacerates the liver of the bold hero, sets him free. Prometheus and Hercules are combined into one person in the Christian Saviour, Jesus Christ. The similarity of the story of Golgotha with the myth of Prometheus is not purely accidental. For observe that in some of the older pictures, as, for instance, in the vase of [page 211] Chiusi (see illustration on page 210), Prometheus is not chained to a rock but tied to a pole, that is, to a σταυρός or cross, and Greek authors frequently use expressions such as the verb ἀνασκολοπίζεσθαι (Aeschylus) and ἀνασταυρώσθαι (Lucian) which mean 'to be crucified.'

On pages 217, 218 Dr. Carus says: "Plato, who, perhaps under the impression of Aeschylus's conception of the tragic fate of Prometheus, says of the perfect man who would rather be than appear just: 'They will tell you that the just man who is thought unjust will be scourged, racked, bound; will have his eyes burnt out; and, at last, after suffering every kind of evil, he will be hung up at the pale.' The strangest thing about this passage is that the word ἀνασκινδυλευθήσεται, which means 'he will be hung up at the stake', or 'fixed on a pale', is an older synonym of the New Testament term σταυρόειν, commonly translated 'to crucify'."

The above agrees with the *New World Translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures* in its Appendix, page 769, in saying that the instrument upon which Jesus was nailed was a stake without a crossbeam, and not the religiously represented "cross"; and that the Greek word used for that instrument in ancient time meant a "stake" and not the conventional religious cross.

Sincerely yours,

WATCHTOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY

Questions from Readers

- In the past we regarded "religion" as anything that was against God's will. Now many brothers are using the expressions "true religion" and "false religion" to make a distinction. Is this advisable?—D. D., California.

The brothers are correct in using the qualifying adjectives "true" and "false" respecting religion, so as not to be misunderstood, especially by those outside the organization. In the past we have had to do so much needless explanation and extricating of ourselves from embarrassing positions by not being specific on this. The footnotes of the *New World Translation* show the early use by Latin-speaking Christians of the term *religio* as the equivalent of the Greek term *thres-kei'a*. It simply means "form of worship", of which there can be a true and a false kind. Study over the footnotes in the *New World Translation* on the texts at Acts 26:5, Colossians 2:18 and James 1:26, 27, and see how the footnote renderings allow for the use of the term "religion" or "religious", though the texts themselves use the expressions "form of worship" or "formal worshiper". Hence it is well to make clear our use of the term "religion" by qualifying it as "true" or "false", if the context or setting does not do this sufficiently.

- Will there be a period of time between the ending of Armageddon and the beginning of the 1000-year reign of Christ?—R. S., Pennsylvania.

There is no Scriptural basis for arguing that there will be any period of time between Armageddon's ending and Millennium's beginning. Rather, the Scriptures show that there will be no period of time. In describing that battle of God Almighty the Bible says concerning its climactic end: "And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven with the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. And he seized the dragon, the original serpent, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. And he hurled him into the abyss and shut it and sealed it over him, that he might not mislead the nations any more until the thousand years were ended. After

these things he must be let loose for a little while." Then the account discusses the joint heirs with Christ, the church or bride class, and continues: "They will be priests of God and of the Christ, and will rule as kings with him for the thousand years. Now as soon as the thousand years have been ended, Satan will be let loose out of his prison, and he will go out to mislead those nations in the four quarters of the earth."—Rev. 19:11 to 20:8, NW.

The casting of Satan into the abyss will mean the end of Armageddon, the finish of opposition to Christ's kingdom reign. Then will begin Christ's unhindered reign with his joint heirs for a thousand years. Note the facts given in the scriptures quoted that rule out the possibility of there being any period of time separating Armageddon's end and the beginning of the millennium. Satan is bound in the death state for a thousand years, then is loosed for a little season. Christ and his church reign for a thousand years, after which the Devil is loosed to mislead for a time before his complete and final destruction in Gehenna. If there were a period of a few years separating the end of Armageddon marked by Satan's casting into the abyss and the beginning of the thousand-year reign, then Satan would have to remain bound longer than a thousand years in order for his final appearance to come after the end of the millennium. So if he is to be bound for exactly a thousand years, and if he is to be bound during the thousand years of Christ's reign, then these two periods must run concurrently, starting and ending together.

- In our company of Jehovah's witnesses there are some who go to motion picture shows, football games, etc., for entertainment, and there are others who do not go and who criticize those who do. Is it wrong to indulge in such recreation?—R. H., Florida.

It is up to each one as to what kind of entertainment he wants and can safely enjoy. If he exercises good judgment and seeks education or mental relief and relaxation and not the indulgence of passion, then his judgment should be respected by others, and they should not misjudge or condemn him. Each one will be responsible to Jehovah regarding what entertainment he indulges in, and the effects of his wisdom or unwise in seeking entertainment will eventually disclose itself. So let each one mind his own private affairs in this regard, and quit being hypercritical, and all unite in the service of preaching the Kingdom gospel before the end comes.

● When I was in an orthodox church the minister forbade picture shows, and I vowed never to go to one. Since I have now come into the truth, am I still bound by that vow, and would it be wrong to go to a show occasionally? —H. M., Canada.

Respecting your vow in a denominational religious system: If you now discern that you were misled by clergy influence and acted upon a misunderstanding and without being consecrated to God, then your conscience may allow you to view that vow as something that you forsook when you turned from the political, commercial, falsely religious world and devoted yourself to the living and true God. However, vows taken when one has come into the truth and made in sincerity before God are not to be taken lightly.—Eccl. 5:2, 4-6.

As to the matter of shows, the Society does not establish any rules and regulations to gov-

ern its ministers on the matter of attending shows, athletic events, etc. We leave that up to each individual's conscience as to whether to attend such things or not, and if they do attend, then the exercise of their sound judgment. Each one has to determine for himself why he wants to go to such things and how they will affect him spiritually or put him in a perilous position where he ought not to be, and then he must take personal responsibility for his course of action and for what happens as a consequence. But it is not our province to criticize another person's course, which he thinks reasonable and in which he has exercised discrimination and careful selection. So we must leave the matter up to you, neither encouraging nor discouraging you about going. What you do becomes your responsibility before God, and you must be watchful to see what results from the course you take, and whether to continue in it or discontinue it.

1951 DISTRICT ASSEMBLIES

Dates and locations of the North American district assemblies for 1951 are as follows

Chicago, Ill.	May 18-20
Dallas, Texas (White & Col.)	May 18-20
Minneapolis, Minn.	May 18-20
Denver, Colo.	May 25-27
Atlantic City, N. J.	June 1-3
San Francisco, Calif.	June 1-3
Atlanta, Ga.	June 8-10
Atlanta, Ga. (Col.)	June 8-10
Toronto, Ont., Canada	May 18-20
Montreal, Que., Canada	May 25-27
Winnipeg, Man., Canada	May 25-27
St. John, N.B., Canada	June 1-3
Vancouver, B.C., Canada	June 1-3
Edmonton, Alta., Canada	June 8-10

Plan now to attend. Watch for further announcements.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES

Week of April 22: Stability and Permanence

During World Change; and Early Help for

Surviving the World's End, ¶ 1-4.

Week of April 29: Early Help for Surviving

the World's End, ¶ 5-26.