

# The WATCHTOWER

*Sounding Forth*

**GOOD NEWS  
in  
All the Earth**

NOVEMBER 15, 1976

**ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM**

# The WATCHTOWER

November 15, 1976  
Vol. 97, Number 22

A watchtower enables a person to see far into the distance and announce to others what is coming. Can a magazine serve similarly in our day? Yes, from its first issue (July 1879) onward, *The Watchtower*, published by Jehovah's Witnesses, has done just that.

How can it benefit you? Consider: Do you long for a better world, one of true justice and free from sorrow, hatred and war? Do you want to live at a time when genuine peace and love prevail among people of all races? Then this magazine can aid you. Using God's Word, the Bible, as its authority, it points out the clear evidence that the present wicked system of things will soon end, destroyed by God. But it also announces the coming in of a righteous new order. There, under the rule of God's kingdom, his heavenly government, people will enjoy life forever in true peace, health and happiness on a paradise earth.

Faithfulness to the Word of God lifts *The Watchtower* above the contradicting religious teachings and philosophies of men. It stays strictly neutral as regards political affairs. It wholeheartedly upholds the highest moral standard—that of man's Maker, Jehovah God. From this source, it shows solutions to the problems of daily life.

We know that many sincere persons would appreciate a discussion of these things in their own home with a qualified person. One of Jehovah's Witnesses will be glad to call on you free of charge. To arrange for this, simply write the publishers of this magazine or contact Jehovah's Witnesses locally.

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# How far should Kindness extend?

KINDNESS is a quality that we appreciate in others. Particularly is this so when the kindness is directed toward us. And even when we do something wrong we hope that we will be shown kindness.

Jehovah God counts the quality of kindness as highly important. "His loving-kindness is to me infinite," says the Bible, repeatedly. (Ps. 136) God's Son, Jesus Christ, knew him better than anyone else. Jesus counseled his disciples to imitate God, who "is kind toward even the unthankful and wicked."—Luke 6:35.

It is entirely appropriate, then, that God sets kindness as a fundamental requirement for those who wish to have His favor. He says to the one professing to serve him: "He has told you, O earthling man, what is good. And what is Jehovah asking back from you but to exercise justice and to *love kindness* and to be modest in walking with your God?"—Mic. 6:8.

In dealing with people, aggravating situations can develop that put a strain on kindness. This is especially true when we are confronted by our enemies. But on this point, Jesus said: "Continue to love your enemies and to pray for those persecuting you; that you may prove yourselves sons of your Father who is in the heavens."—Matt. 5:44, 45.

To love our enemies and to treat them with kindness is probably the most difficult of all the duties of the Christian. And, more than a duty, it must be done *from the heart*. "If your enemy is hungry, feed him," and, "when your enemy falls, do not rejoice; and when he is caused to stumble, may your heart not be joyful"—these are

principles that must be heartfelt in the Christian.—Rom. 12:20; Prov. 24:17.

This does not mean that a Christian cannot reprove another, reasoning with him about his mistake or the badness of his doings. He might even 'reprove with severity,' to convince the individual and to save him from the consequences of continuing in a bad way.—Titus 1:13.

We have the example of Jesus Christ. He was straightforward with his enemies. But he never gave them unkind treatment nor did he threaten to bring personal reprisals against them for their attacks on him. When he was on earth he did not judge individuals, or express personal condemnation of them. He spoke only the judgments of his Father.—John 5:30.

For instance, when he was talking to his bitterest enemies, the scribes and the Pharisees, he exposed them for what they were, for God revealed their heart attitude to him. He warned them of God's judgment as expressed in the Scriptures. Rather than saying, 'I'm God's Son and I'll see to it that you land in Gehenna,' he put, instead, the warning question to them: "How are you to flee from the judgment of Gehenna?" (Matt. 23:33) They could do so individually only by a change of their disastrous course.

When Jesus underwent the greatest unkindness at the hands of the Jews and the Roman soldiers—he was treated far worse than a slave—"he did not go reviling in return. When he was suffering, he did not go threatening." (1 Pet. 2:23; Matt. 27:

27-31) The disciple Stephen, the first Christian martyr, followed this pattern as he was being stoned to death by the Jews, praying: "Jehovah, do not charge this sin against them."—Acts 7:60.

Those who profess to be Christians want to watch that their kindness may not be less than the kindness and generosity sometimes shown by persons who do not claim to be servants of God. In the world there are people who act according to the kindness that is part of the human make-up created by God. But because of human imperfection that quality is dimmed. Therefore the Christian must strive to be sure that he is not found lacking in this vital quality.

Consider how, in the days of the apostles, the people on the island of Malta put to shame many who professed to serve God. These people of Malta, including the principal man of the island, received the apostle Paul and his shipwrecked companions, about 276 persons in all, and showed "extraordinary human kindness." They took care of the castaways for three months. And Luke, who was one of the shipwrecked party, tells us that when another boat was available, these kind islanders "honored us with many gifts and, when we were setting sail, they loaded us with things for our needs."—Acts 28:1, 2, 10, 11; 27:37.

What a condemnation the kindness of these people was of those people in the cities of Israel who actually heard the Son of God and saw his miracles, yet showed him the greatest unkindness and indignity!

Likewise, today we see and read about acts of extraordinary human kindness that may, by contrast, reveal less kindness on the part of some who profess to be dedicated servants of God. No doubt God takes note of such human kindness, if it is really expressed from the heart, and will extend to these people the opportunity of learning more about himself and his own superb

qualities. Jehovah's Witnesses will kindly help all such persons whose heart God opens to a desire to know about him.

Is there ever a time when unkindness is appropriate? Does it ever accomplish good? No. 'But,' someone may ask, 'what about dealing with those who deviate from God's righteous principles, or those who even manifest a stubborn, rebellious, unrepentant spirit? Should we be kind to such persons?'

Those who make a mistake will be helped much more by kindness than by unkindness, which is actually a form of cruelty. Why should any of us, who at all times want and even need kindness from others, judge our fellowman as unworthy of kind, courteous treatment? He has enough burdens on his shoulders without added unkindnesses from us.

And even if a person is a stubborn, unrepentant violator of God's law, can any one of us say that that one will never repent? Only God can judge whether he has committed an unforgivable sin. (Matt. 12:32) Furthermore, unkindness tends to separate wrongdoers farther from any desire to repent.—Rom. 2:4.

Even when a congregation was troubled with divisions caused by rebellious ones, the apostle Paul did not resort to harshness, but wrote: "Now I myself, Paul, entreat you by the mildness and *kindness of the Christ.*" (2 Cor. 10:1) The Greek word here translated "kindness" denotes fairness, moderation, gentleness, reasonableness. It is coupled with mildness. It is a comfortable feeling to be around a person who we know will give us fair, reasonable consideration. We follow his counsel more readily.

To imitate God, therefore, let all who are striving to be faithful witnesses of Jehovah work to develop this fruit of God's spirit that makes for our own happiness and smooths out the path of others who want to serve God.—Gal. 5:22.

# Was MARY Taken Bodily INTO HEAVEN?

**M**ILLIONS today believe in Mary's "assumption," that is, that she was taken bodily into heaven. It was on November 1, 1950, that Pope Pius XII proclaimed this to be infallible Roman Catholic doctrine.

The groundwork for this proclamation had been laid much earlier. For many centuries Catholics had been observing the Feast of the Assumption on August 15. Then, after Pope Pius IX, in 1854, proclaimed as dogma that "Mary was preserved from all stain of original sin in the first instant of her Conception," the Vatican began receiving petitions that the "assumption of Mary" be defined. The question needing to be settled was whether Mary was exempted, not only from original sin, but also from having to die and to remain in the grave until the time of the resurrection of the dead.

The definition that Pope Pius XII gave did not resolve whether Mary actually died but did present the "assumption" of Mary as fact. Pope Pius XII stated: "The Immaculate Mother of God, the ever-Virgin Mary,

having completed the course of her earthly life, was assumed body and soul into heavenly glory."

Since Mary's "assumption," therefore, is viewed by many millions as a Christian doctrine, we should expect to find solid basis for it in the Holy Scriptures. But do we? "There is no explicit reference to the Assumption in the Bible," says the *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, "yet the Pope insists in the decree of promulgation that the Scriptures are the ultimate foundation of this truth." (Vol. 1, p. 972) To determine whether "the Scriptures are the ultimate foundation" for the doctrine of Mary's "assumption," we need to examine just what the Bible does say.

#### WHAT GOD'S WORD REVEALS

As is evident from the historical development of the doctrine, Mary's "assumption" is rooted in the dogma of the "immaculate conception." So we might first examine whether there is a Scriptural basis for believing that Mary, as defined in the dogma of the "immaculate concep-



tion," was "preserved from all stain of original sin."

Of the "immaculate conception," the *New Catholic Encyclopedia* admits that "Scripture makes no direct reference to Mary's conception." (Vol. 7, p. 378) This work frankly points out that historical evidence is against the belief that the "immaculate conception" was part of the oral teaching of the apostles. This doctrine was not even taught by the earliest Church Fathers. We read: "The earliest Church Fathers regarded Mary as holy but not as absolutely sinless. Origen and some of his followers assumed that she had been imperfect like other human beings." (Vol. 7, pp. 378, 379) Were the "earliest Church Fathers" in error? Not according to the Holy Scriptures.

There is clear Biblical evidence that Mary viewed herself as a sinner. In connection with the birth of a baby boy, the Mosaic law commanded that, at the end of her purification period, a mother should offer "a lamb one year old for a holocaust, and a young pigeon or turtledove as a sacrifice for sin." Regarding a woman who could not afford to offer a lamb, the law stated: "She is to take two turtledoves or two young pigeons, one for the holocaust and the other for the sacrifice for sin." (Lev. 12:6-8, *Catholic Jerusalem Bible*) Had Mary been sinless, she would have misrepresented matters had she offered a sin offering. Yet the Bible reports that Joseph and Mary came to offer, "in accordance with what is said in the Law of the Lord, a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons." (Luke 2:24, *JB*) By complying with a law applying to sinful humans, Mary acknowledged that she was imperfect.

This was very different from what Jesus did regarding the temple tax. When asked by others whether Jesus paid that tax, the apostle Peter said Yes. Later, Jesus counseled Peter by making it clear that kings

do not tax their sons. Applying Jesus' words, Peter could appreciate that Jesus, as God's only-begotten Son, was under no obligation to pay the tax that supported the temple of his Father. However, in view of the circumstances prevailing, Jesus did not want to give an occasion for others to stumble. Therefore, by miraculous means, he made it possible for Peter to pay the temple tax.—Matt. 17:24-27.

But what about the angel Gabriel's words to Mary, "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee"? (Luke 1:28, *Catholic Douay Version*) These words have been interpreted to mean that Mary must have possessed 'fullness of grace' from the beginning of her life and, therefore, must have been conceived totally free from sin. Pope Pius XII extended the application of Gabriel's statement to the "assumption," maintaining that not until the "assumption" would Mary have attained the 'fullness of grace' bestowed upon her.

It is noteworthy that such interpretations of Gabriel's words do not harmonize with the Bible record in the original Greek. Regarding the use of the expression "full of grace" to support the "immaculate conception," the *New Catholic Encyclopedia* says: "This interpretation . . . overlooks the fact that the Greek term [*kecharitoméne*] is not nearly so explicit as the translation 'full of grace' might suggest." (Vol. 7, p. 378) In harmony with the true sense of the original Greek a number of modern Catholic translations do not use the expression "full of grace" in rendering Gabriel's statement. The *Jerusalem Bible*, for example, reads "so highly favoured," and *The New American Bible* says, "O highly favored daughter." Accordingly, Gabriel's words to Mary show that she was highly favored to become the mother of the Messiah, but those words cannot be used to support such doctrines as the "immaculate conception" and the "assumption."

Furthermore, the Bible argues against anyone's being taken bodily to heaven. In discussing the resurrection to heavenly life, the apostle Paul states: "There are heavenly bodies and there are earthly bodies. The splendor of the heavenly bodies is one thing, that of the earthly another. The sun has a splendor of its own, so has the moon, and the stars have theirs. Even among the stars, one differs from another in brightness. So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown in the earth is subject to decay, what rises is incorruptible. What is sown is ignoble, what rises is glorious. Weakness is sown, strength rises up. A natural body is put down and a spiritual body comes up. . . . This is what I mean, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." (1 Cor. 15:40-50, *New American Bible*) Like all others who gain immortal life in the heavens, Mary would have to give up her body of

flesh in order to experience a change to heavenly nature.

So Biblical evidence unmistakably points to the conclusion that Mary was neither conceived free from every trace of sin nor was she 'taken up bodily to heaven.' This is something to which one should give sober consideration. Jesus Christ charged the religious leaders of his day with "making dogmas out of human precepts." (Matt. 15:9, *NAB*) In view of the evidence we have considered, is not the dogma of Mary's "assumption" derived from "human precepts"? So, if you have been taught this doctrine, should you not want to investigate whether other things you have learned are likewise not based on the Bible but are merely the product of human reasoning? By such investigation, you will be acting in harmony with the apostolic admonition: "Test everything; retain what is good."—1 Thess. 5:21, *NAB*.

## Genuine Friendliness Is Powerful

**T**RUE worship has a wholesome effect on a person's disposition. It stirs within him concern for others. Often this manifests itself in a friendly manner of speaking and dealing with strangers. At times such friendliness has had a wholesome effect on bitter opposers of the Bible's message.

This is what happened on an island of southern Greece. A man was studying the Bible with one of Jehovah's Witnesses, but his wife was bitterly opposed. The celebration of the Lord's Evening Meal was approaching and the man decided to attend. Noting that her husband was getting ready, the wife inquired as to where he was going. "Listen," her husband said, "today Jehovah's Witnesses are observing a unique celebration established by Jesus, the Memorial of his death. I am going to attend. You don't know how happy I would be if you, too, would come." The wife became enraged and began cursing the Witnesses and insulting her husband.

Finally the man got ready to go alone. As he was leaving, the wife suddenly called out:

"Wait! I am coming also." The man simply could not believe his ears. Tears came to his eyes. Both attended the meeting and the wife listened in silence. At the conclusion of the talk, a female Witness spoke to her in a very friendly manner and arranged to call on her at her home. A Bible study was started.

Right in the first month this woman told the Witness: "Now I also am a witness of Jehovah, a sister of yours. I have not yet told my husband. I will now disclose something to you that I had in mind doing. The day my husband told me about the Memorial, I had hidden a knife under my pillow and was looking for the opportunity to kill him. While I was determined to do this, he was inviting me to go to the meeting. I finally decided to go, and there call the police to have everyone arrested. I owe it to you for having come to know the truth. And it is owing to the truth that my husband is living and I am free and not in prison."

What power the friendliness of that Witness had!

# 'GLORIOUS GOOD NEWS'

FROM

## *The Happy God*

"Also, in all the nations the good news has to be preached first."—Mark 13:10.

WE ALL welcome good news, do we not? But where is good news to be found today? Certainly not in the news media of the world! Dark clouds hover over mankind, and for most people there are no silver linings. Employment has become insecure. Food is costing more. Crime and violence are on the increase. Morals have plunged to new low levels. World rearmament "races out of control."\* It is just what the Bible foretold for this day: "Anguish of nations . . . while men become faint out of fear and expectation of the things coming upon the inhabited earth." However, is there only bad news for today? No, for the same scripture goes on to tell Christians: "Raise yourselves erect and lift your heads up." And why? "Because your deliverance is getting near." —Luke 21:25-28.

<sup>2</sup> Here, then, is good news. When we examine it closely, it turns out to be the grandest of good news. It is good news to make you happy.

\* New York Times, March 1, 1976.

1. What does the Bible foretell for this day with regard to: (a) bad news, (b) good news?
2. Why is this the grandest of good news? (Luke 2:10)

<sup>3</sup> The expression "good news" appears more than 120 times in the Christian Greek Scriptures. The Gospel writers Matthew and Luke speak of "the good news of the kingdom." Mark's Gospel proclaims "the good news about Jesus Christ." The apostle Paul refers to "the glorious good news of the happy God." And the apostle Peter describes the "good news" as "the saying of Jehovah" that "endures forever."—Matt. 4:23; Luke 8:1; Mark 1:1; 1 Tim. 1:11; 1 Pet. 1:25.

<sup>4</sup> The permanency of the "good news" is also emphasized in the Revelation to the apostle John, where we read of "everlasting good news" that an angel declares "as glad tidings to those who dwell on the earth, and to every nation and tribe and tongue and people." This angel calls on all men to "fear God and give him glory," yes, to "worship the One who made the heaven and the earth and sea and fountains of waters." This is because, as

3. How is the "good news" variously described in the Greek Scriptures?

4. How do the Scriptures emphasize the permanency of the "good news"?

John writes, "the hour of the judgment by him has arrived."—Rev. 14:6, 7.

<sup>5</sup> At this climax of the ages "the glorious good news" shines forth brilliantly. But does mankind in general view it as good news? Paul tells us at 2 Corinthians 4:3, 4: "The good news . . . is veiled among those who are perishing, among whom the god of this system of things has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, that the illumination of the glorious good news about the Christ, who is the image of God, might not shine through." The good news brings Satan's system of things into judgment. Those who support Satan's system will perish because they "do not obey the good news about our Lord Jesus."—2 Thess. 1:8.

However, those who heed the good news will receive blessings beyond the power of mortal man now to fathom, so marvelous will they be! It was in appreciation of the good news that Paul exclaimed: "O the depth of God's riches and wisdom and knowledge! How unsearchable his judgments are and past tracing out his ways are!"—Rom. 11:28, 33.

#### THE BOOK OF "GOOD NEWS"

##### AND ITS AUTHOR

Where is the good news to be found today? Only in God's Word, the Bible—truly a unique book of boundless wisdom. What splendid panorama the Bible opens up to us, extending from the beginnings of creation, down through all mankind's history into these present critical times, and on through the grand millennium of Christ's glorious reign! And yet, this book of good news was recorded by just ordinary folk like us—devoted men selected by Jehovah, and empowered by his spirit to write his message. Jehovah

5. Why has mankind in general failed to accept the "good news," and with what result?

6. What blessings await those who heed the "good news"? (Ps. 37:11, 29)

7. Why may the Bible be described as the most magnificent literary work of all time?

saw to it also that it was preserved for us, against all attempts to contaminate or destroy it. The "good news" has come down through the centuries in the form of sixty-six "little books," of varying lengths and content, but each contributing its indispensable part to the most magnificent literary work ever to appear on the face of this earth—the Holy Bible.—Ps. 19:7-11.

<sup>8</sup> Above all, this book of "good news" magnifies the name and sovereignty of the true and living God, Jehovah. (Rev. 4:11) Wonderfully it portrays him as the eternal, happy God—"Jehovah, Jehovah, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abundant in loving-kindness and truth, preserving loving-kindness for thousands, pardoning error and transgression and sin." (Ex. 34:6, 7) We can have confidence in this Sovereign Lord of the universe. Jehovah is a compassionate, fatherly God, so different from Christendom's unexplainable Trinity and from the millions of ancestral gods and lifeless idols worshiped in the non-Christian religions. He is God the Almighty, the Most High over all the earth, and his illustrious name Jehovah stands for his purpose to deliver from this Satanic world those who love him.—Ps. 83:17, 18; Ezek. 38:23.

#### MARVELS OF GOD'S CREATION

Jehovah's exercise of wisdom, foresight and love are breathtaking to contemplate. (Ps. 40:5) When he constructed our "spaceship" Earth, placed it in the heavens and prepared it as man's everlasting home, he did not overlook even the minutest details. Home planners of this twentieth century could learn much from the forevision Jehovah displayed when he built and provisioned this earth.

8. (a) What does the book of "good news" magnify above all else? (b) How does God's name set him apart from all other gods?

9. What marvelous qualities did Jehovah show in creating the earth? (Jer. 10:10-12)

He gave our earthly home a foundation that will never be moved and a beautiful star-studded ceiling that will declare his glory for all ages to come. As Proverbs 3:19 states: "Jehovah himself in wisdom founded the earth. He solidly fixed the heavens in discernment."

<sup>10</sup> For the future happiness of his creature man, Jehovah decorated this earthly home with a delightful array of color. He carpeted it with lovely green fields and forests that not only provide restful beauty but also absorb and store energy from the sun. Thus our earthly home has its own built-in power supply. Jehovah so arranged it that all living things could draw on this power supply. By providing the various kinds of grains, fruits, vegetables and other foods, he saw to it that earth's larder was well stocked even long before he created man. That larder will always remain full, for Jehovah later declared: "All the days the earth continues, seed sowing and harvest . . . will never cease."

—Gen. 8:22; Ps. 104:14, 15, 24.

<sup>11</sup> Jehovah also provided precious metals and gems, valuable minerals and radioactive elements, along with the treasures of coal and oil. Only in recent years has man come to realize how marvelously his earthly home was equipped at the time of creation. If only man had used all this provision to the benefit of humanity and to the glory of God, each new discovery would have become a source of good news. (Compare Deuteronomy 8:6-9.) But, instead, greedy men have failed to thank earth's Designer and Maker. They have acted like vandals in misusing and abusing Jehovah's glorious creation. They have polluted the earth, ruined its resources and built an arsenal of nuclear armaments that places mankind on the brink of self-destruction. They have filled the earth

with bad news. But it will not always be that way.

<sup>12</sup> Jehovah's grandest of all earthly creations is man himself. Just look at how he is built! What a magnificent creation the original perfect man must have been, made in God's spiritual "image" and with a physical body of design and workmanship far superior to any machine that man has ever thought out or constructed! (Gen. 1:27) Truly, we should say to Jehovah: "O Jehovah, . . . I shall laud you because in a fear-inspiring way I am wonderfully made. Your works are wonderful, as my soul is very well aware." (Ps. 139:1, 14) And consider, the human being that is *you*, all developed from an egg cell as small as a pinpoint. That was all the space the Great Designer, Jehovah God, needed to write down the original blueprint from which you were constructed in all your parts. That makes you feel very small, does it not?—Eccl. 11:5.

#### WHAT THE "GOOD NEWS" IS ALL ABOUT

<sup>13</sup> Truly it was a disaster that the first man and woman chose to rebel against Jehovah's sovereignty and fall into sin. Because of inherited sin, our wonderfully designed bodies no longer function properly, and in time all of us die. (Rom. 5:12) Many of mankind have added to their imperfections by abusing their bodies and contaminating their minds. They fall far short of reflecting the 'image of God.' Human society has become selfish and corrupt. But we today who love God can strive to reflect his personality. And we can have strong confidence that he will set things right in our earthly home, ousting the vandals who have ruined it, and renovating it so that it will at last shine forth as a beautiful paradise, to the de-

10, 11. (a) What provisions did Jehovah make for man long before creating him? (b) How has the earth become filled with bad news? (Deut. 32:5)

12. Why can it be said that man is made in "a fear-inspiring way"?

13. (a) Why is it that our bodies no longer function properly? (b) With regard to our earthly home, what strong confidence can we have? (Ps. 145:17-20)

light of all mankind and to God's glory. That is what the "good news" is all about.—Rev. 11:18; Ps. 37:37, 38.

<sup>14</sup> This very special "good news" started to be proclaimed from the time that sin came into the world. It was then, in Eden, that Jehovah announced his purpose to provide a "seed," a Messiah and Deliverer, to crush the "original serpent," Satan, and remove all his works of wickedness. (Gen. 3:15; Rev. 12:9-12) Abel, Enoch and Noah exercised faith in that good news, but though God destroyed the ungodly world in the Flood, the promised "seed" had yet to come. Next, the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed.—Gen. 22:15-18.

<sup>15</sup> Who would this "seed" prove to be? Through literally hundreds of prophecies, penmen inspired by God foretold in minute detail the manner of Messiah's coming, his ministry, his suffering and death and his resurrection to God's right hand. Thus, the same God who had shown such marvelous foresight in preparing and provisioning our earthly home also foretold long in advance whom he would use in bringing to earth the final state of paraisaic beauty.

<sup>16</sup> After some four thousand years of waiting, the principal one of the "seed" of promise, namely, Jesus Christ, made his appearance. (Gal. 3:16) In announcing the human birth of Jesus, Jehovah's angel said to humble shepherds: "I am declaring to you good news of a great joy that all the people will have, because there was born to you today a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:10, 11) At thirty years of age, Jesus was baptized and anointed by God's spirit, and in his hometown synagogue at Nazareth he announced his purpose in coming to earth

by reading the words of the prophet Isaiah: "Jehovah's spirit is upon me, because he anointed me to declare good news to the poor, he sent me forth to preach a release to the captives and a recovery of sight to the blind, to send the crushed ones away with a release, to preach Jehovah's acceptable year." Then, after sitting down, Jesus said to his own townspeople: "Today this scripture that you just heard is fulfilled." (Luke 4:18-21) But did they rejoice at the good news? No. Instead, they tried to kill Jesus.

<sup>17</sup> In due course, "Jesus set out on a tour of all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the good news of the kingdom and curing every sort of disease and every sort of infirmity." (Matt. 9:35) So, Jesus told of a Kingdom rule that would bring grand blessings to mankind, and he indicated the marvelous range of those future blessings by healing people of their sicknesses and frailties. (Luke 7:22) Yes, the "good news" provided bright hope of a release from sin and death, from wicked rule by Satan and by man, and from bondage to false religion.

#### WHY WE SHOULD THANK GOD AND CHRIST

<sup>18</sup> This "good news" tells how much God really cares for his human creation on earth: "For God loved the world so much that he gave his only-begotten Son, in order that everyone exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) How we should thank Jehovah for this loving provision! And how we should thank the Son, Jesus Christ, who said of himself: "No one has love greater than this, that someone should surrender his soul in behalf of his

14. What "good news" has been proclaimed as to a "seed"?

15. How was the "seed" identified? (Luke 24:25-27)

16. When and how did the "seed" appear?

17. As made known by Jesus, what bright hope does the "good news" provide?

18. What proves that God and Christ really care for mankind?

friends"! (John 15:13) This self-sacrificing love became the very basis for "good news."

<sup>19</sup> It was in behalf of the "good news" that Jesus submitted to the cruelest of deaths. And what did his death accomplish? By his unswerving loyalty in upholding his Father's sovereignty to the death, Jesus showed himself to be fully qualified for the exalted post of Ruler in the kingdom of heaven. And by maintaining sinlessness to the death, Jesus preserved his right to perfect human life, which he could now use like "ready cash" in buying back all that Adam had lost for mankind. (Heb. 5:8, 9; Rom. 5:19) Jesus could have married and produced a perfect human family of his own. But he was not interested in that. He was interested in *us*, Adam's helpless family, and in doing his Father's will by ransoming *us* from sin and death. How fitting it was that "God exalted him to a superior position and kindly gave him the name that is above every other name."—Phil. 2:9-11.

<sup>20</sup> Now, according to the power of his own "indestructible life," Jesus serves as "a priest forever" in the heavens, so that he is able to remove for all time the effects of inherited sin. This he has done already

19. (a) What did Jesus' death accomplish? (b) Why was Jesus not interested in producing a human family of his own?

20. (a) What is Jesus able to accomplish in his present position of service? (b) What hope does the "good news" hold forth for the 'groaning creation'?

in behalf of his "little flock" of anointed followers, selected first from among the Jews and then also from among the Gentile nations, so that they have been brought into a "new covenant," with the prospect of ruling with him in his heavenly kingdom through a resurrection as spirit creatures. This is the good news that Paul and other disciples proclaimed so vigorously in the first century. (Rom. 1:15, 16; Heb. 7:16, 21; 8:7-13) But the "good news" tells also of the hope of life eternal to be enjoyed by the "great crowd" of Har-Magedon survivors and an even greater crowd of the dead of mankind that will be resurrected in the restored paradise. This is marvelous "good news" indeed for the 'groaning creation.' —Rom. 8:20-22.

<sup>21</sup> Yes, mankind has suffered over the centuries, and especially has this been true of loyal servants of God, who have been persecuted and even killed by Satan and his religious agents. But their integrity will be rewarded. (Rev. 2:10) They have shared with Jesus in answering Satan's challenge that God could not put men on earth who would remain loyal to God under every kind of trial. Throughout six thousand years of human history they have proved that nothing can turn God's true servants from their love and devotion to him. These faithful worshipers of Jehovah appreciate that man-rule cannot bring unity and happiness to mankind. Only God's righteous sovereignty can do that. And now that man-rule has shown itself to be a complete failure, the time is at hand for Jehovah to deliver his loyal servants, vindicate his sovereignty and restore his Kingdom rule over all the earth.

## IN COMING ISSUES

■ **The Promise Fulfilled to Doers of God's Will.**

■ **Why a God of Love Gives Reproof.**

■ **Can an Image Bring Peace and Security?**

21. (a) Who especially have suffered at Satan's hands? (Rev. 6:9) (b) Why is it now due time for God's Kingdom rule to be restored over all the earth? (Rev. 11:17, 18)

# Sounding Forth GOOD NEWS in All the Earth



*"Into all the earth their sound went out,  
and to the extremities of the inhabited  
earth their utterances." —Rom. 10:18.*

TIME is fast running out! The generation from 1914 has now witnessed the fulfillment of the major part of Jesus' great prophetic "sign" describing "the conclusion of the system of things." The "great tribulation such as has not occurred since the world's beginning until now, no,



nor will occur again," is about to break in all its fury over the entire earth. We must remain always on the watch, awake, alert, ready. As Jesus says: "On this account you too prove yourselves ready, because at an hour that you do not think to be it, the Son of man [Christ Jesus] is coming." Jehovah's hour of reckoning with Satan's world hastens on! —Matt. 24:3, 21, 22, 34, 42, 44.

<sup>2</sup> Proving ourselves ready includes separating ourselves completely from all worldly, false religion and maintaining that separateness. (Jas. 1:27) Indeed, those who love God and truth are plainly told: "Get out of her [Babylon the Great], my people, if you do not want to share with her in her sins, and if you do not want to receive part of her plagues. For her sins have massed together clear up to heaven, and God has called her acts of injustice to mind."—Rev. 18:4, 5.

1. (a) What climactic day have we now reached? (b) How may we 'prove ourselves ready'? (Mark 13:32-37)

2. How may we avoid sharing in the sins of Babylon the Great? (Jer. 51:6)

<sup>3</sup> In Christendom and in non-Christian lands, that world empire of false religion has built up a shocking record. She has rejected the true and living God, Jehovah, not even wanting to mention his name. She has taught demonic false doctrines, such as the inherent immortality of the soul, and hellfire torment of the dead. Her Inquisitions, her wars and her oppressions have brought torture and misery to millions. Recall that the two world wars of this century, which took 69 million lives, started in Christendom between countries that claim to be Christian. How great is Christendom's bloodguilt! False religion's superstitions, fortune-telling, spiritism, druggery—these also are hateful in Jehovah's eyes.—Deut. 18:9-13; Isa. 65:11, 12.

<sup>4</sup> However, it is not sufficient just to get *out of* false religion. It is necessary to get *into* the ark of spiritual protection that Jehovah today provides. This is not some material structure, some temple or particular location on earth. As the Son of God, Christ Jesus, stated: "God is a Spirit, and those worshiping him must worship with spirit and truth." (John 4:24) So true worshipers of God not only separate themselves from all idolatry and superstitious practices; they also study and apply God's Word in their lives, cultivate Christian personalities and are 'spirited' in their service, giving themselves heart and soul in showing love for God and neighbor.—Mark 12:28-31.

#### EXECUTION OF GOD'S ENEMIES

<sup>5</sup> With startling suddenness, Jehovah will execute judgment on the world empire of false religion! Revelation 18:21 describes it thus: "A strong angel lifted up a stone like a great millstone and hurled it into the sea, saying: 'Thus with a swift pitch will Babylon the great city be hurled

3. What record shows false religion to be worthy only of destruction?
4. What positive action is required of true worshipers?
5. How will false religion be executed? (Jer. 25:34, 36)

down, and she will never be found again.' " Her judicial punishment will be swift and final.

<sup>6</sup> But more is to come! The "ten horns" of the wild beast will turn next on true religion, and thus "battle with the Lamb," Christ Jesus. (Rev. 17:12-14) No, they cannot touch Christ on his heavenly throne, but they can, so they think, get at his apparently defenseless disciples here on earth. Will those political "horns" succeed in their attack? No! For Jehovah's loyal servants will stand firm against this final demonic attack, even as they are doing in many countries in Africa, the Orient and the Communist world at this present time.

<sup>7</sup> The political "kings of the entire inhabited earth" will then find themselves at the world situation called Har-Magedon, and it is there that, as "Lord of lords and King of kings, the Lamb will conquer them." (Rev. 16:14, 16; 17:14) Finally the victorious Christ will hurl Satan and his demons into the abyss of immobility, opening the way for the start of His glorious thousand-year reign for the blessing of all mankind. What enthralling "good news" is all of this!

#### A PARADISE OF JOY!

<sup>8</sup> This is what opens up to those who love Jehovah—not just after the great battle at Har-Magedon, but now! For already, in this time of the end, "the mountain of the house of Jehovah [the place of his true worship]" has been "firmly established above the top of the mountains," which "mountains" are where Babylon the Great carries on her sectarian rites. Oh, what happiness! Peoples of the nations are streaming in the thousands to the Kingdom Halls and other places, there to join

6. Why will the "ten horns" fall in their attack on the followers of the "Lamb"? (Matt. 10:28)
7. Why can events at Har-Magedon and thereafter be described as "good news"? (Rev. 14:6, 7)
8. What paradise of joy is already available to those who love Jehovah? (Isa. 35:10)

with Jehovah's people in true worship. As the prophecy says: "Many peoples will certainly go and say: 'Come, you people, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah . . . and he will instruct us about his ways, and we will walk in his paths.'"—Isa. 2: 2, 3.

<sup>9</sup> The faithful remnant of anointed witnesses of Jehovah, who bore the brunt of the work and persecutions during the earlier days of this "time of the end," have been joined by an unmistakably "great crowd." They come in their multitudes! This is demonstrated in that, in 1976 at the annual observance of the Memorial of Jesus' death, more than 4,870,000 assembled in over 39,600 congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses earth wide. Truly, the spiritual paradise has swelled to global proportions!—Dan. 12:4; Rev. 7:9.

<sup>10</sup> This spiritual paradise will be like an ark of protection, with a precious load of passengers, in passing through the "great tribulation" into the pollution-free earth beyond! Then, cruel rulers will no longer oppress and persecute. No more will Jehovah's worshipers have to battle against Satan and his immoral world. The "great crowd" will have wholesome, rewarding, stimulating work to do, in transforming the entire globe into a physical paradise of loveliness—a delightful reflection of the spiritual paradise, concerning which Isaiah wrote: "The wilderness and the waterless region will exult, and the desert plain will be joyful and blossom as the saffron. Without fail it will blossom, and it will really be joyful with joyousness and with glad crying out. . . . There will be those who will see the glory of Jehovah, the splendor of our God."—Isa. 35: 1, 2.

9. To what extent has the spiritual paradise now been restored?

10. (a) How will the spiritual paradise serve like an ark? (Isa. 26:20, 21) (b) How will the entire globe come to be a reflection of the spiritual paradise? (Ps. 72:18, 19)

<sup>11</sup> Nor will the dead be forgotten! How many on earth today can remember or even name forefathers of a hundred years ago? Very few! But God remembers them. He remembers all our forefathers, who have toiled and suffered back through six thousand years of human history. (John 5:28, 29; Mark 12:26, 27) On the basis of Jesus' loving sacrifice, Jehovah—the great God of loving-kindness—will resurrect them, the small and the great. They will stand before his throne, with opportunity to meet his further requirements for entering into a happy, abundant life that goes on forever. (Rev. 20:12) What grand good news is all of this! How we should thank our illustrious God, the Author of this good news!

#### "GOOD NEWS" FOR OUR FAMILIES

<sup>12</sup> In our families, we should want to obey the "good news." For the good news can help us to live a happy family life together, now and on into the future. What fine principles does the Book of Good News, the Bible, provide us in this regard! For example, if you just read the third chapter of Colossians, all of it, you will find there loving advice for helping all families successfully to weather the storms of this "time of the end." It is not too difficult in these critical times to succeed together as a family, especially when you "clothe yourselves with love, for it is a perfect bond of union."—Col. 3:14.

<sup>13</sup> And what of our little ones, our children? We love them, and we want them to love us. So what better examples could parents follow than those excellent models of child training provided for us in God's Word, and which helped to produce such stalwart advocates of truth as Samuel, David, John the Baptist, Timothy—

11. What assurance does the Bible give that the dead will not be forgotten?

12. In Colossians chapter 3, what are some of the points of loving counsel for families?

13. What Scriptural examples show the value of guiding little ones from infancy?

and, of course, our Master himself, Jesus! But we need to watch over our little ones and guide them from infancy in developing Christian personalities. We cannot expect perfection to result in this imperfect world, but we can expect that Jehovah will bless our efforts, for, as Psalm 127 (verse 3) states it, our children are "an inheritance from Jehovah," and they will be a blessing to parents who train them in His way.

#### STANDING FIRM FOR THE KINGDOM

<sup>14</sup> Are we not happy that we have come to know Jehovah and his Son? This knowledge has brought us into a way of life that leads to eternal happiness. It is an active, meaningful life. It centers around our showing deep love for Jehovah and self-sacrificing love for our neighbor, and especially for our own families and our brothers. In living the truth we don't have to follow a long list of "don'ts." There are a few "necessary things" to refrain from, which would harm us spiritually, for example, those mentioned at Acts 15: 28, 29: Idolatry, blood, fornication. But our Christian way of life is a positive living of the truth, a joyful, happy manner of life as dedicated, baptized slaves of God. It is life with a purpose. Great will be our joy, now and on through into the paradise earth, if we heed well Paul's words: "Whatever you are doing, work at it whole-souled as to Jehovah, and not to men, for you know that it is from Jehovah you will receive the due reward." (Col. 3:23, 24) And the great work that must be done today is to get "this good news of the kingdom" preached in all the earth as a witness before the end comes!

—Matt. 24:14.

<sup>15</sup> We look forward to Jehovah's creating "new heavens and a new earth" in which "righteousness is to dwell." When

14. What way of life will lead to eternal happiness?

15. What features of the "good news," yet to be fulfilled, should fill our hearts with praise?

through a resurrection in the spirit, all the 144,000 members of Christ's "bride" are united with him in the heavens, and when the new clean society of mankind is fully operative in the earth, what a glorious day that will be! The very certainty of this "good news" fills our hearts with praise for the great God who is making "all things new" and who promises to "wipe out every tear" and remove all things that cause outcry or pain. Yes, even the enemy death is to disappear under the glorious rule of Christ's kingdom. As we today stand firm for that kingdom, and in support of Jehovah's sovereignty, let us do our utmost to be found finally "spotless and unblemished and in peace."

—2 Pet. 3:13, 14; Rev. 21:1-5; 1 Cor. 15: 25, 26.

#### THERE IS WORK TO DO!

<sup>16</sup> When Jesus was on earth, he started something that was to grow until it filled the earth. Even within that generation it came to be said: "That good news . . . was preached in all creation that is under heaven." (Col. 1:23) However, Jesus himself foretold an even grander witness for the "conclusion of the system of things," saying that "in all the nations the good news has to be preached first." And what next? Why, "then the end will come." (Mark 13:10; Matt. 24:3, 14) Has that preaching work now been completed? No! For the end has not yet come.

<sup>17</sup> The end does not come just because we might think it is the due date, or because we feel that our territory has been well worked. It comes when Jehovah has carried through the great work of Kingdom preaching to the extent he wants, and then he will bring the "great tribulation." Until that time there is work to do! And we as Jehovah's Witnesses are the

16. What great work must yet be completed? (John 14:12)

17. Why will Jehovah's Witnesses be busy right up until the time of the "great tribulation"? (Isa. 6:8, 11)

ones assigned to do it! The arrival of the "great tribulation" should find the preaching work at the height of its forward movement, at the very peak of its momentum throughout the earth. The arrival of the Lord Jesus to execute judgment will come as a complete surprise—even to Jehovah's people, for it will no doubt find them at their busiest time of activity!

<sup>18</sup> Jesus tells us: "Keep looking, keep awake, for you do not know when the appointed time is. . . . Keep on the watch." (Mark 13:32-37) What if, in expectation of the "great tribulation," Jehovah's Witnesses had eased up, and stopped watching and making plans for the future, in 1914, in 1925, in 1975 or at any other date—could this have resulted in the expansive spiritual paradise that we see today? How glad we are that Jehovah has energized his people to keep sounding forth good news in all the earth!

<sup>19</sup> Jehovah's advancing theocratic society will be a going concern, a go-forward organization, right down to and through the "great tribulation." For the worship of God with spirit and truth is positive, enthusiastic, spirited and progressive. More and more sections of the earth, in Western lands, in the Orient and elsewhere, are now receiving a thorough witness, and who knows how much farther the "glorious good news" will be sounded forth before the end! As Paul stated, it is "woe" to us if we do not declare the good news, for that is God's will and work for our day!—1 Cor. 9:16.

<sup>20</sup> Jesus himself set the pattern for sounding forth the good news, and his anointed followers have followed in his footsteps down until this day. In referring to this, the apostle Paul quoted Isaiah 52:7, saying: "How comely are the feet of

those who declare good news of good things!" Now in all the earth a "great crowd" joins the anointed remnant in sounding forth that good news. But not all persons heed the message. Paul tells us: "Nevertheless, they did not all obey the good news. For Isaiah says: 'Jehovah, who put faith in the thing heard by us?' So faith follows the thing heard. In turn the thing heard is through the word about Christ. Nevertheless I ask, They did not fail to hear, did they? Why, in fact, 'into all the earth their sound went out, and to the extremities of the inhabited earth their utterances.'"—Rom. 10:15-18; Isa. 53:1; Ps. 19:4.

<sup>21</sup> Today the situation is similar to that in Paul's day. The "glorious good news of the happy God," concerning his Christ, is being sounded forth to earth's extremities. In some countries, harsh rulers or ingrained Babylonish religion have stood as barriers to the light of truth. But the good news continues to be sounded forth, and in more and more places "faith follows the thing heard."

<sup>22</sup> May our feet continue to be "shod with the equipment of the good news of peace," and may we, as Paul did, continue "to bear thorough witness to the good news of the undeserved kindness of God." (Acts 20:24; Eph. 6:15) Yes, may we "behave in a manner worthy of the good news about the Christ, . . . standing firm in one spirit, with one soul striving side by side for the faith of the good news, and in no respect being frightened by [our] opponents." (Phil. 1:27, 28) The "good news" must triumph! May each one of us be very busy in 'sounding forth good news in all the earth.' Thus we will continue to be made happy, and to make many others very, very happy!

18. Why is it necessary to "keep on the watch"? (Luke 21:34-36)

19. In our day, what does it mean to worship God with spirit and truth? (Rev. 7:15)

20. How does 'faith follow the thing heard'? (Rom. 10:10)

21. What shows the "good news" to be unconquerable? (Rev. 10:7)

22. In anticipation of the triumph of the "good news," what should we now be doing?

# I FOUND Something Worth Fighting For

As told by Laurier Saumur

THE winter air was frosty, crisp and clear. Sleighs creaked and horses snorted as they paced the logging trails winding between the spruce and hemlock. Even as we cut the timber and the teams skidded out the logs, I gave thanks to the God who made this wonderful earth.

Such were my teen-age thoughts on a typical winter day at my father's farm in the rolling Gatineau hills of western Quebec. Life was hard, but healthy. I was one of fourteen children in a Catholic French-Canadian family.

The Catholic Church dominated life in our small French-speaking community, as it did in other parts of Quebec. I regularly attended Mass, Communion and other Catholic activities. But while I desired to serve God, something was missing.

Secular education was then under the control of the Catholic Church, not the government. And the Church policy was to restrict the education of the people, and thus make it easier for the priests to control them. As a result, many persons were illiterate, including my father and two of my brothers. This negative approach to education and the lack of books and libraries left me dissatisfied, thirsting for knowledge.

In 1939, at age eighteen, I went to Montreal to further my education. At last, libraries, books to read! Often I would read nearly all night. This led to my learning

of the horrible Catholic Inquisition. I began to see the Church in a different light.

Nevertheless, through a cousin I became associated with the Catholic Action movement. This was a political group with Fascist leanings and strong anti-Semitic feelings. It met in the Catholic church under the guidance of priests. The message of Catholic Action was simple: 'Hitler is not so bad. It is the Jews and English-speaking Protestants who are oppressing us French Catholics.' Hearing violent proposals made me feel uneasy, and I soon withdrew from Catholic Action.

## MY BROTHER'S IMPRISONMENT HELPS ME

In the spring of 1943 a friend in Montreal handed me a newspaper article, and said: "This is about a man with the same name as yours. Is it a relative?"

I read the story. Astonished, I said: "A relative—sure, it's my own brother, Hector!" I hadn't heard of him for years. According to the paper, he had just been given a three-month prison sentence at Timmins, Ontario, because he was one of Jehovah's Witnesses.

"Who are Jehovah's Witnesses?" I asked. "I've never heard of them."

My friend replied: "They are a religious movement that has been banned by the government."\*

My astonishment grew. A religious

\* See *Awake!* of June 8, 1973.

movement? Hector was the most irreligious member of the family! I wrote to him to find out what was happening.

In reply, Hector sent me a Bible and some booklets of Jehovah's Witnesses. This was the first Bible I had ever seen. Priests always said: "Don't read the Bible—it will make you crazy!" Because of this I naively took my Bible to a priest to find out if it was an authentic copy. He took it on the pretext of examining it for me, then refused to give it back.

The booklets, however, so stirred my interest that I obtained another French Bible from a Catholic bookstore. Avidly I began to read. Twice during the next year I read the entire Bible. I found the life of Jesus and the missionary work of the apostles especially fascinating.

Later in 1943 I moved from Montreal to Timmins in order to learn more about Jehovah's Witnesses, and also to learn some English. There I studied with the Witnesses, but also continued attending the Catholic Church. I discussed doctrinal subjects such as

hell, Trinity and immortality of the soul with the parish priest and the bishop. One day the bishop asked where I got the points I was making. "From Jehovah's Witnesses," I replied. He answered, "I have no more time to talk to you."

The next Sunday, still a dutiful Catholic, I was in church to hear the par-

ish priest unleash a vicious diatribe against the Witnesses. The harshness of his comments and the falsity of his accusations disgusted me. I had had enough; I left the Catholic church that day, never to return. Soon my decision was made. I had found Bible truth, and was determined to spend my life fighting to uphold it, even as Christ's early followers had done. On July 1, 1944, I was immersed in symbol of my dedication to serve Jehovah God.

#### QUEBEC BECOMES A BATTLEGROUND

Trouble was escalating in Quebec, with arrests and harassment of Jehovah's people by the powerful combination of the Catholic Church and her political ally, Premier Maurice Duplessis. In June 1945 I began full-time preaching work in Montreal, a principal city in Quebec. The very first time that I went witnessing from door to door there, I was arrested. It was an indication of things to come.

The battle of Quebec was on, and what



The writer and his wife today

a battle! Premier Duplessis promised to drive Jehovah's Witnesses from the province; he announced "war without mercy on the Witnesses." The whole power of the State was arrayed against us. The province was engulfed in a tidal wave of unreasoning animosity. I personally was arrested over one hundred times.

One prominent Canadian newspaper described the persecution as the "return of the Inquisition," and said: "The persecution of the religious sect known as Jehovah's Witnesses, now going on in Quebec Province with enthusiastic official and judicial sanction, has taken a turn which suggests that the Inquisition has returned to French Canada."—Toronto *Globe & Mail*, December 19, 1946.

When calling to speak about the Bible, I would often be greeted with a shouted tirade of the latest accusations that the householder had heard from the parish priest or had read in the French newspapers. It was not unusual to be arrested two or three times in one day, and there would be repeated and interminable court appearances. These were especially troublesome for family men who would lose many days' work and, at times, their jobs. But if the authorities had not learned about the endurance of Jehovah's Witnesses, they were about to have firsthand proof.

To avoid having family men arrested, I'd use diversionary tactics. When a police car arrived, I would go directly to the cruiser to engage the officers in conversation, thus giving the family men working nearby a chance to leave. Of course, my own number of arrests kept climbing.

In September 1945 there were two terrible riots at Châteauguay, a small town west of Montreal. Catholic mobs attacked meetings of Jehovah's Witnesses being held on private property, while police stood idly by. I was viciously kicked and beaten. One of the mobsters got hurt too—he hit

me so hard on the back of the head that he broke his wrist. I was black and blue all over, and for a few days I walked with difficulty and pain.

We struggled to find bail money to keep out of jail; we struggled to wait at doors through tirades of false accusations, hoping at the end to make a few kind remarks and break down prejudice; we struggled to avoid mobs; we struggled to protect family heads from arrest; we struggled to keep up the spirits of our Christian brothers and sisters; we struggled to rent places to hold meetings—property owners were scared by the 'witch hunt'; we struggled to prevent children from being expelled from school; we struggled to arrange home education for those expelled; we struggled to bury our dead, as priests, in some cases, tried to stop Jehovah's Witnesses from being buried.

Being one of Jehovah's Witnesses wasn't easy in those days, but it was faith-strengthening. What a marvelous spirit of faith, love and determination was shown by all the Witnesses! Their experience was like that of the apostle Paul, who said regarding his hour of testing: "The Lord . . . infused power into me, that through me the preaching might be fully accomplished."—2 Tim. 4:17.

Indeed, we were helped and encouraged many times, and in unexpected ways. Soon I had the refreshment of conducting twenty-two Bible studies. One was unusual.

When standing on the street corner offering *The Watchtower* and *Awake!*, I was approached by a lady. Since she was illiterate, the publications were of no help to her, so I obtained her address and arranged a return visit. A Bible study was started immediately and was conducted two or three times a week. Not only did she eagerly absorb the Bible truths, but she also learned to read. Laura Chabot became a stalwart witness of Jehovah despite the



Once illiterate, she has taught many persons Bible truths

heat of persecution, and has remained one for over thirty years. Over the years she has conducted Bible studies with some forty-five persons who are now Witnesses.

#### QUEBEC CITY—A NEW FIELD

There was then no organized activity of Jehovah's Witnesses in the city of Quebec, the capital of the province. Thus, toward the end of 1945, five of us were assigned there. The atmosphere was very different from cosmopolitan Montreal.

In Quebec City the Church was in a position of total domination; priests with their cassocks were everywhere. The very air seemed to breathe a pall of fear and oppression. The Catholic cardinal and dictatorial Duplessis both lived here. Would we find any listening ears in this fortress of Catholicism?

At first the people of Quebec City were very friendly and receptive to our house-

to-house visitations. My partner, John How, and I each placed over a hundred Bible study aids during our first month there. When a meeting was arranged at the home of one interested lady, ten family members were there. The long discussion was lively and very frank. While nominally Catholic, they were really antagonistic to the Church. Before leaving I distributed a whole briefcaseful of literature, including several copies of the book *Enemies*. One of these was taken by Alphonse Beaudet, a brother of the householder.

A few days later someone accosted me on the street. It was the same Alphonse Beaudet. "Could I go with you to visit someone for a Bible discussion?"

"Sure, why not?" I replied. On the way he told me his story.

After my visit with his family the previous Sunday evening, Alphonse had gone home and spent all night reading the book *Enemies*. For three days he devoured it. When he finished reading, he gathered all the images, crucifixes and statues in his house and destroyed them outside in full view of his Catholic neighbors. But that was not all.

Next he went to the bishop and asked to have his name struck from the rolls of the Catholic Church. Then he came looking for me. Today, over thirty years later, Alphonse is still teaching the Bible in the city of Quebec, and his outstanding zeal and devotion have helped a large number of people to serve Jehovah God faithfully.

Very soon a small congregation was formed in Quebec City, and we began holding regular congregational meetings. But the peaceful conditions did not last. Soon the priests began using the pulpits and the Catholic press to blow up a storm of hatred. A series of arrests and convictions followed.

The local Recorder (Judge) Jean Mercier announced that the police were instructed to "arrest on sight every known

or suspected Witness." Suddenly, the persecution in old Quebec became coast-to-coast news. This caused a backlash from the rest of Canada, scandalized that a supposedly impartial judge would be so unjust.

During 1946 and 1947 there were so many convictions, writs, appeals and legal proceedings in Quebec City that the press called it "the battle of the writs." All together I spent four months in prison on the usual nuisance charges of "disturbing the peace," "peddling without a license," and so forth.

I was invited to the ninth class of the Bible School of Gilead, but I was still in prison when it was time to register in February 1947. Thankfully, I was released on bail just in time to start the course. However, before the term was completed, the Supreme Court of Canada rejected my appeal and bail was canceled.

Sadly, I had to leave the wonderful Christian association at Gilead and return to prison in Quebec. The School's registrar sent my examination papers to the jail, where I answered the questions and mailed them back for grading. Thus it was possible to complete the course, though I was not present on graduation day.

Even prison had its compensations. In the exercise yard I was often able to give a Bible lecture to as many as twenty prisoners. One of them later became a witness of Jehovah.

#### A NEW ASSIGNMENT

In the autumn of 1947 I received a new assignment as a traveling representative of Jehovah's Witnesses, now called circuit overseer. I served Quebec Province, where there was only one circuit with perhaps a dozen congregations, mostly very small.

Meetings would frequently be held with missionary groups and one or two newly interested people. When I was sent to encourage the pioneers, as full-time kingdom

proclaimers are called, their steadfastness in the face of opposition was very strengthening to me. In 1949 I married Yvette Ouellette, a faithful pioneer in Montreal, and she accompanied me in the circuit work.

The first group I visited as a circuit overseer was Ste. Germaine Station in the hills south of Quebec City. It consisted of one family, Aime Boucher, his wife and three children. They were poor, humble, lovable people living on a small, rocky farm. Brother Boucher met me at the station with a high two-wheeled cart drawn by a pair of oxen. Despite difficult circumstances, Aime Boucher was a man of courage and a very effective witness for the truth.

#### SUPREME COURT VICTORIES

The year 1950 was marked by the first five major legal decisions won by Jehovah's Witnesses in the Supreme Court of Canada. The first victory was in the case of Aime Boucher. The favorable decision was a major breakthrough against the oppressive Church-State combine that controlled Quebec.

Jehovah further blunted the enemy attack by bringing one of my own cases before the Canadian Supreme Court. The favorable decision in this test case, in October of 1953, brought victory in 1,100 other cases where the same principle of religious liberty was the governing factor. This opened a new era of upbuilding the true worship of Jehovah in Quebec.

While the court decisions improved our legal standing, it still took a lot of work to overcome the fear and prejudice that had been engendered. Some hall owners were still afraid to rent their buildings to Jehovah's Witnesses. So a kindly police officer gave me a letter on a police letterhead stating that Jehovah's Witnesses were a lawful organization and that hall

owners could feel free to rent their premises to us. After that, Protestant and Catholic school boards began to make buildings available for our circuit assemblies.

#### FINE RESPONSE TO KINGDOM-PREACHING

After twelve years in Quebec, in 1957 I was asked to serve all of eastern Canada as a district overseer, whose work is to visit and serve circuits of Jehovah's Witnesses and give talks at their circuit assemblies. Then, for three years I served as district overseer in British Columbia in western Canada.

However, I never lost my love for Quebec. In fact, I was so busy urging brothers to go to Quebec where the need for Kingdom preachers was greater than I was nicknamed the "Pied Piper of Quebec." Many persons to whom I spoke in the west did move to Quebec, learned French, and are doing good work in building up the congregations of Jehovah's people there.

In 1969 Yvette and I returned to Quebec, where I was district overseer till 1972. At this time family responsibilities required us to settle in Montreal, where we have served as special pioneers for four years now. During this time forty-four persons with whom we have conducted Bible studies have been baptized as Jehovah's Witnesses.

In 1974 it was my privilege to go to St. Pierre and Miquelon, small French islands in the North Atlantic, with a view to opening up the work of Jehovah's Witnesses there. The priests found out about my visit, and announced it on the radio to warn their parishioners. The announcement backfired. Many householders greeted me warmly. "Oh, Mr. Saumur, we have heard about you. Please come in."

In a few weeks I started eight Bible studies and laid the foundation for further activity of Jehovah's Witnesses. When I left, two missionaries from France were

assigned there to continue spreading the good news of God's kingdom.

A unique experience was encountered in 1975 when I met some of the influential members of a small French church group of about 1,500 people called "La Mission de l'Esprit Saint" (The Mission of the Holy Spirit). After a long talk with one of these men, he asked if he and some friends could come to see me. "Of course," I said. A few days later he arrived with other members and their wives—forty in all!

In time, they locked up their church, closed their school, and all their "servants" resigned. Then they told their members to start studying with Jehovah's Witnesses. Suddenly, a thousand people wanted Bible studies!

In a space of two months I placed 1,300 Bible study aids among them. Many of the studies ceased later, but close to a hundred of this former church group have been immersed as Jehovah's Witnesses, and four hundred others are either studying or attending meetings at the Kingdom Halls. More are expected to be immersed shortly.

I must say, these more than thirty years in the full-time preaching work have been rich and rewarding. There have been problems. But Jehovah has backed us up and helped us to overcome every obstacle. The Bible accurately says regarding God's servants: "Any weapon whatever that will be formed against you will have no success."

—Isa. 54:17.

How this has proved true in Quebec! Where 356 proclaimed God's kingdom there in 1945, now over 8,000 do so. The eight Quebec congregations of 1945 have become 149. The one small circuit of 1947 has become ten circuits. Truly, 'the spiritual desert has blossomed as the saffron.' (Isa. 35:1) As I look back over these fascinating years, I would not change them for anything. It has been, and still is, a privilege to fight to uphold true worship.

# Insight on the News

● Mayor George Sullivan recently refused to include the Alaska Gay Coalition in the Anchorage Blue Book. His action was ruled legal by Superior Court Judge Justin Ripley. The Coalition held that this deletion "violated its members' Constitutional rights of freedom of speech and of association," reported "The National Observer." However, this newspaper quoted Mayor Sullivan as saying: "To the best of my knowledge, sodomy and incest are still against state laws. I didn't think we should have listings like that in a municipal publication."

Evidently the mayor considered it inconsistent with existing state laws to include a homosexual body in a city directory listing public-service organizations. But even if laws against sodomy and incest were lacking in modern-day legislation, the Highest Authority has spoken against such practices. These acts were forbidden among God's people of ancient times. (Lev. 18:5-30) Moreover, the apostle Paul expressed Jehovah God's standard for Christians in saying: "Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men kept for unnatural purposes, nor men who lie with men . . . will inherit God's kingdom." —1 Cor. 6:9, 10.

● Nobel Laureate Linus Pauling was a chief speaker early in April at a New York city gathering that marked the 100th anniversary of the American Chemical Society's founding. According to "The Greatest Catastrophe" "Chemical & Engineering News," Dr. Pauling said that in twenty-five to fifty years "there will occur the greatest catastrophe in the history of the world." "But," continued the journal, "he expects the human race to survive. And by 2076 it may have solved its problems."

For one reason or another, informed men are not optimistic about the future of mankind. On a strictly personal basis, of course, no one knows whether he will be living tomorrow. The disciple James wrote: "You do not know what your life will be tomorrow. For you are a mist appearing for a little

while and then disappearing."—Jas. 4:14.

But with humanity in general, it is another matter. Their future is made clear in the Bible. It shows that within this very generation the whole human race will face God's war of Armageddon, in which the wicked will be destroyed. (Matt. 24:34; Rev. 16:14-16) Nevertheless, the earth will continue to exist, as will righteously disposed ones of humankind. The psalmist declared: "The righteous themselves will possess the earth, and they will reside forever upon it."—Ps. 37:29.

● The "National Geographic" journal states that scientists "have created not only amino acids, but most of the other important basic molecules of life."

## Biologists Baffled

Yet, their knowledge is limited. Says the magazine: "Much to their frustration, however, biologists can still only speculate on how these simple organic molecules emerged through the eons as proteins and genes. More baffling still is how these proteins and genes got together in the first self-replicating cell. The odds against the right molecules being in the right place at the right time are staggering. Yet, as science measures it, so is the time scale on which nature works. Indeed, what seems an impossible occurrence at any one moment would, given untold eons, become a certainty."

According to this argument, if you gave a group of chimpanzees pieces of metal, wire and the like and put the animals together long enough, they could build a jumbo jet airplane, complete with numbered reclining seats and all the necessary equipment. Obviously, the chimpanzees would never succeed, even if they had "untold eons" to complete the task. And, of course, the molecules of life are far more complex than any aircraft. Their marvelous design testifies clearly that supreme intelligence has been responsible for them.

Because men of science in general are inclined to ascribe the origin of such things to chance and to the passing of eons, they continue to be baffled by many of the wonders of "nature." Much of their perplexity would vanish were they to acknowledge Jehovah as "God, who created all things." —Eph. 3:9.

# A Revelation —of Jehovah's Will and Purposes

HAPPY is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and who observe the things written in it.' (Rev. 1:3) Why could this be said of the book of Revelation when so much of it is in symbolic or sign language?

Why? Because even though sign language is used, much is understandable regarding God's will and purposes, forming a basis for happiness. The book of Revelation tells of Jehovah's judgments upon the wicked; it commends God's servants for their endurance, relates their coming off victorious and describes the eventual destruction of all the incorrigibly wicked and the final triumph of righteousness.

In many respects Revelation happily complements the book of Genesis. Just as Genesis 1:1 speaks of the creation of the heavens and the earth, so Revelation 21:1 speaks of a new heaven and a new earth. As Genesis chapter three reveals how sin and death entered into the world, Revelation makes known the end of these. And as Genesis mentions a tree of life and a river issuing forth from Eden, so Revelation speaks symbolically of trees of life and a river of water of life issuing forth from God's throne.

## WHAT? WHO? WHERE? WHEN?

Many Bible editions speak of Revelation as "The Revelation of St. John the Divine." But not so. It is "A revelation by Jesus Christ, which God gave to him, to show his slaves the things that must shortly take place. And he sent forth his angel and presented it in signs through him to his slave John." —Rev. 1:1.

The apostle John himself tells that at the time of seeing these visions he had been banished to the isle of Patmos "for speaking about God and bearing witness to Jesus." (Rev. 1:9) John was banished toward the end of Emperor Domitian's reign, which ended in 96 C.E., right after which John was released. So quite possibly it was in that very year that John had the visions he recorded.

When did he write them down? The vividness with which he describes the things that he saw and heard would argue that he wrote these down at once. That it was his habit to write these things down without delay seems borne out by the command given to him not to write down certain things that he had just heard, indicating that that particular vision was an exception.—Rev. 10:4.

## MESSAGES TO THE SEVEN CONGREGATIONS

In the Bible the number seven is a symbol of completeness, and especially does

Revelation stress that fact, "seven" appearing in the book some fifty times. To begin with, there are seven congregations, seven spirits, seven golden lampstands and seven stars.\*

After his salutation and introductory remarks, John reports seeing a glorious vision of the resurrected Christ and hears the Creator speak of Himself as "the Alpha and the Omega." (Rev. 1:8) Next, John names seven congregations to whom he sends messages. First, he commends the congregation at Ephesus and then reproves it for having left its first love, but promises a reward upon repentance. The congregation of Smyrna receives only commendation and the promise of the crown of life if faithful to death. The congregations at Pergamum, Thyatira and Sardis are given both commendation and warnings. If they repent they are to be rewarded. The congregation in Philadelphia, however, receives only commendation with a promise of reward. The congregation at Laodicea, by contrast, receives only censure, because it is neither hot nor cold; but it is promised, if it repents and conquers, the reward of sitting with Jesus on his throne, even as he overcame and sat down with his Father on His throne.—Rev. 2:1-3, 22.

#### SIX SEALS OPENED

John now receives a vision of heaven in which he sees a dazzling, glorious view of the Creator seated upon a throne, surrounded by four resplendent creatures full of eyes and by twenty-four elders seated on thrones, and who are saying: "You are worthy, Jehovah, even our God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power, because you created all things."—Rev. 4:9-11.

\* For a detailed, verse-by-verse consideration of Revelation, see "*Then Is Finished the Mystery of God*," which explains the first thirteen chapters, and "*Babylon the Great Has Fallen!*" *God's Kingdom Rules!*, which covers chapters 14 through 22.

The One seated on the throne has a scroll sealed tight with seven seals, and John weeps because no one is found able to open the seals. Then the Lion of the tribe of Judah, Jesus Christ, is shown as the one worthy to open the seals, and praise is repeatedly given both to Jehovah and to the Lamb.—Rev. 5:11, 12.

With chapter six John begins to see the Lamb loosing the seals. The opening of the first seal reveals a righteous victorious warrior on a white horse, Jesus Christ. The opening of the next three seals calls to mind Jesus' great prophecy about wars, famines and pestilence, which are part of "the sign" of the end of the world's system. (Luke 21:7, 10, 11) As the fifth seal is opened, John sees Christian martyrs asking that their blood be avenged. Great commotion in heaven and earth accompany the opening of the sixth seal, with men fearing the coming wrath of God. Chapter seven reveals four angels holding back the wrath of God until the 144,000 spiritual Israelites have been sealed. Thereafter John sees a numberless crowd who have come out of the great tribulation and who ascribe glory, honor and salvation to Jehovah God and to the Lamb, Jesus Christ.—Rev. 7:1-17.

#### SEVEN ANGELS SOUND SEVEN TRUMPETS

With the opening of the seventh seal, we note a brief reference to the prayers of the holy ones and then preparation by seven angels to sound trumpets. Five of these angels, one after the other, blow their trumpets. Then in highly symbolic language their effects are told, all of which are of a punishing nature to wicked men upon earth. With the sounding of the sixth trumpet, John is told that when the seventh trumpet is sounded the mystery of God will be finished. He is given a scroll to eat; in his mouth it is sweet as honey but in his belly it is bitter. John is then directed to measure the temple sanctuary

and is told of the servants of God who, under the symbol of "two witnesses," prophesy for 1,260 days in sackcloth and ashes. After this they are slain, to the rejoicing of their foes, but only to be resurrected and exalted.—Rev. 8:1-11:13.

As the seventh angel sounds his trumpet, John hears the announcement: "The kingdom of the world did become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will rule as king forever and ever." Also, the twenty-four elders worship God and say: "We thank you, Jehovah God, the Almighty, the One who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and begun ruling as king."—Rev. 11:15-18.

By means of a tableau, chapter twelve gives the details of what happened. John sees a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and wearing a crown of twelve stars, as she gives birth to a man child who is to rule all the nations with an iron rod. Thereafter war takes place in heaven: Michael and his angels battle with the dragon and his angels; Michael is victorious and the dragon, Satan, the Devil, the original serpent, is cast down to the earth along with his cohorts. This results in great woe to the earth because the Devil knows that his days are numbered.—Rev. 12:1-17.

#### THE WILD BEAST VERSUS THE HOLY ONES

In chapter thirteen John tells of seeing a wild beast, with seven heads and ten horns, and which blasphemes God and wages war with God's holy ones. Then appears another beast, which influences those on earth to worship the first beast and to make an image to it. It puts all on earth under compulsion to worship and to receive its mark, the number of which is 666.

But it does not succeed with everyone, for next John sees those standing with the

Lamb on Mount Zion who have come off victorious, remaining unspotted, and who are the firstfruits. An angel is seen flying in midheaven having everlasting good news to tell and calling upon all to "fear God and give him glory." Next, a warning is given to all who succumb to the pressures of the wild beast. But, for their endurance, the holy ones are promised: "Happy are the dead who die in union with the Lord." Still another angel tells of the reaping of the vine of the earth and its grapes being trodden in a great winepress.—Rev. 14:1-20.

Chapter fifteen depicts those having gained the victory over the wild beast and its image as they praise God, the One righteous and true. Then follows a scene wherein seven angels, having seven bowls of God's anger, begin pouring out their bowls upon various parts of the wicked world. After the pouring out of the sixth bowl, it is revealed that unclean messages, inspired by demons, are gathering the nations to the war of the great day of God the Almighty at the place Har-Magedon.—Rev. 16:14, 16.

#### BABYLON AND HER PATRONS MEET DEFEAT

Chapters seventeen and eighteen depict Babylon the Great as the mother of harlots riding on the back of a scarlet-colored wild beast that also has seven heads and ten horns. However, before long the ten horns strip the harlot naked, devastate her and burn her with fire. Because Babylon is doomed, the call goes forth for God's people to flee from her lest they share in her sins and receive of her plagues. Upon her being destroyed, both patronizing world's political rulers and the world's leading merchantmen mourn her because of the loss that they thus sustain. We are told that, with her destruction, the blood of God's holy ones is avenged.

Chapter nineteen opens with the com-

mand: "Praise Jah, you people!" Three more times this is repeated. Because Jehovah has executed judgment upon the great harlot, because He has begun ruling as king and because the time has arrived for the marriage of the Lamb and his bride. Then the Faithful and True One, the Lamb of God, is seen going forth with the armies of heaven to do battle with the kings of the earth and their armies, all of whom get slain by the sword.

#### THE THOUSAND YEARS

For a thousand years Satan the Devil will be in an abyss, unable to influence humankind. Then, when he is loosed for a little season, he will try to mislead those on earth. All who succumb to him will be destroyed, as he will be also. Before his destruction, and during the thousand years, all those in Hades will be resurrected. John also sees God dwelling with humankind, as if in a tent, as He makes an end of all tears, pain, sorrow and death. The instrument God uses to bring all of this about is the Bridegroom Jesus Christ and the beautiful bridelike New Jerusalem, depicted as a city glistening with gold and jewels. What a glorious climax! All the mischief done by Satan in Eden and since is now undone!—Rev. 20:1-22:5.

Again, those observing the words of this prophecy are pronounced "happy." Then the invitation is given to all who hear to take the water of life free. And those who would add to or take away from the words of this prophecy are warned of the consequences. Upon hearing Jesus promising to come quickly, John replies, "Amen! Come, Lord Jesus."—Rev. 22:7-21.

#### REVELATION TRULY BENEFICIAL

Though the book of Revelation is largely symbolic, there is truly much food for thought and fine counsel and encouragement in its plain statements. In particular are its messages to the seven congrega-

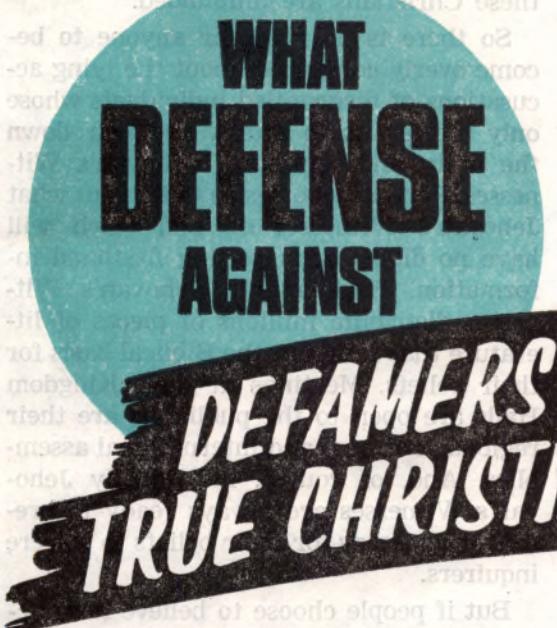
tions in Asia Minor very beneficial. Also, repeatedly we find the need of endurance stressed and the bright hope given of the eventual triumph of righteousness. (Rev. 1:9; 2:3, 19; 3:10; 13:10; 14:12) Also, throughout, it tells of or calls for worship, praise and honor to be given to the Creator, Jehovah God, and to the Lamb.

And let it be noted that, as far as its symbolisms are concerned, time and again other parts of the Bible throw light on some of these. Daniel's use of beasts to depict powerful empires helps to identify the beasts of Revelation as powerful political entities.—Compare Daniel 7:2-26; 8:3-25 with Revelation 13:1-18; 17:3-17; 19:19, 20.

Similarly, in the Hebrew Scriptures an apostate people is referred to as a prostitute. (Isa. 1:21; Ezek. 23:1-49) So we can gather that Babylon the Great, the mother of the harlots, must be a vast religious empire that has prostituted itself.—Rev. 17:1-6; 18:1-24.

Also, let it be noted that there are a number of truths mentioned only in Revelation. Jesus referred to his followers as a "little flock," but only Revelation tells us how little—144,000. (Luke 12:32; Rev. 7:4-8; 14:1, 3) Jesus also spoke of "other sheep," but only Revelation gives us a picture of a "great crowd" of these and tells that they have come out of the "great tribulation." (John 10:16; Rev. 7:9-14) Only Revelation mentions the place where Jehovah's forces and those of Satan meet in battle, namely, Har-Magedon. (Rev. 16:14, 16) Jesus and Paul mentioned a resurrection from the dead, but only Revelation tells us that there will be a "first resurrection" and a resurrection of the rest of mankind. (John 5:28, 29; Acts 24:15; Rev. 20:5, 6) And only Revelation gives us a glorious picture of New Jerusalem descending out of heaven as a bride adorned for her husband.—Rev. 21:2.

No question about it, Revelation does reveal to us God's will and purpose for his people and for all humankind. What good news it contains of the eventual triumph of righteousness! What stress it places on our enduring, so that we can come off victorious, and on our praising Jehovah.



# WHAT DEFENSE AGAINST DEFAMERS OF TRUE CHRISTIANS?

THE entire body of Christian teachings, which became part of God's written Word, is the "truth of the good news" or simply the "truth." (Gal. 2:5; Rom. 2:8) Throughout the centuries relatively few persons have accepted that fact. Blinded by the "god of this system of things," Satan the Devil, many have fought against the "truth of the good news" by misrepresenting true Christians, their teachings and their motives.—2 Cor. 4:3, 4.

To Christians such misrepresentation is one evidence that they are indeed walking in harmony with God's truth. It can thus

God and his Lamb, Jesus Christ! How fitting that it has been placed at the end of the library of "little books" that comprise the inspired Scriptures! Truly 'happy are those who read, hear and observe the things written in it—to the extent that they understand them!

be a reason for their rejoicing, knowing that their adherence to the truth will lead to lasting blessings. As Jesus Christ said in the Sermon on the Mount: "Happy are you when people reproach you and persecute you and lyingly say every sort of wicked thing against you for my sake. Rejoice and leap for joy, since your reward is great in the heavens; for in that way they persecuted the prophets prior to you."—Matt. 5: 11, 12.

Of course, it is not pleasant to be the object of reproach. One may become very much concerned about possible adverse effects upon those who might be led to accept the misrepresentation as truth. Especially when the defamation comes from those who at one time seemingly walked in harmony with the truth of God's Word, one may want to fight against it. But is this the wise course?

We should never forget that many persons simply do not want to know the truth. Believing that conformity to the high standards of God's Word is too much, some are just looking for an excuse not to listen to the Bible's message as presented by Jehovah's Christian witnesses. When Jehovah's Witnesses are misrepresented, these persons want to believe falsehoods in order to justify their course of action.

As 2 Thessalonians 2:11, 12 tells us: "God lets an operation of error go to them, that they may get to believing the lie, in order that they all may be judged because they did not believe the truth but took pleasure in unrighteousness." Obviously, for Jehovah's servants to take issue with every false charge made against them would not help such persons. These would still prefer to believe the lie.

Were Jehovah's Witnesses to immerse themselves in refuting all false charges made against them, they could also fall into a trap of the great accuser Satan the Devil. How so? Well, Satan would certainly be pleased to see a slowing down in the work of aiding honest-hearted persons to learn the truth. Yet that is exactly what could happen. By letting themselves become sidetracked, Jehovah's servants would lose valuable time, time that might otherwise have been used beneficially to help sincere persons to learn about God's will and purposes respecting mankind.

Similarly, by spending a lot of time in reading attacks made against Jehovah's Witnesses and then striving to find ways to refute them, a person could easily get himself all worked up emotionally. He could become depressed and discouraged, especially since, humanly, there is no way to silence all false accusers. Extensive public efforts in this regard would, in fact, only serve to advertise falsehoods. Some persons might even be led to view strenuous efforts to disprove the charges as reason for giving greater weight to those charges.

There is a way, however, to disprove falsehoods without becoming unduly involved in trying to combat them. What way is that? The apostle Peter points to it when saying to fellow Christians: "Maintain your conduct fine among the nations, that, in the thing in which they are speaking against you as evildoers, they may as a result of your fine works of which they are eyewitnesses glorify God in the day for

his inspection. . . . For so the will of God is, that by doing good you may muzzle the ignorant talk of the unreasonable men." (1 Pet. 2:12-15) Yes, as sincere observers note that Jehovah's Witnesses truly live in harmony with the righteous standards of God's Word and are prompted by genuine concern and love for others in carrying out their service, such observers can readily see that the charges made against these Christians are unfounded.

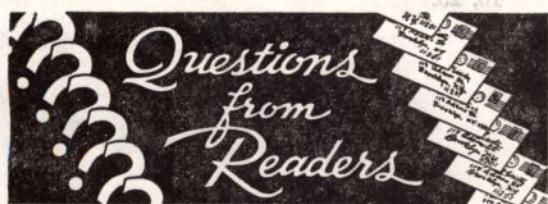
So there is no need for anyone to become overly concerned about the lying accusations of disgruntled individuals whose only interest is to attack and tear down the unity and service of Jehovah's Witnesses. Persons who desire to find out what Jehovah's Witnesses do and teach will have no difficulty in getting firsthand information. Each month Jehovah's Witnesses distribute millions of pieces of literature that set forth the Biblical basis for their beliefs. Meetings at their Kingdom Halls are open to the public, as are their regional, national and international assemblies. And, of course, individually Jehovah's Witnesses are always ready to present the reasons for their beliefs to sincere inquirers.

But if people choose to believe false accusations, they will have to suffer the consequences for having failed to make an honest investigation. This is in agreement with the words of Jesus Christ: "If, then, a blind man guides a blind man, both will fall into a pit."—Matt. 15:14.

Hence, rather than getting into an argument when false accusations are made, Jehovah's Witnesses usually find it best to let the burden of proof rest with the accusers. A good example in this respect is the apostle Paul. When religious enemies made false charges against him before Roman governor Felix, Paul did not try to fight the false charges but simply pointed out that his accusers could not

prove the 'things of which they were accusing him.' (Acts 24:13) Similarly, on one occasion Jesus Christ asked his opposers: "Who of you convicts me of sin?" —John 8:46.

There are occasions, though, when a defense must be made under unfavorable circumstances. Public officials, such as judges, might demand a reply. Though the questions may be propounded in such a way as to belittle him and his message, the witness of Jehovah need not become angry and reflect resentment or irritation. He can remain calm and display mildness when making his reply. Knowing that the "eyes of Jehovah are upon the righteous ones," he rightly manifests deep respect, as if he were in the presence of God. (1 Pet. 3:12) Such conduct is in harmony with the admonition found at 1 Peter 3:



- It seems that so often husbands leave to their wives the task of training and disciplining the children. What does the Bible say on this? Is it really 'the wife's job'?

It is true that in many places men feel that the wife is the one to guide and correct the children. But the Bible does not agree; it shows plainly that both mates have that duty.—Prov. 1:8.

Of course, a person should be reasonable and realistic about the circumstances in many families. Often the husband does secular work to support the family, so he is away much of the day. And in many cases the wife works in the home most of the time, there making her valuable contribution to the happiness and well-being of the entire family. If she is the member of the husband-and-wife team who is in contact with the children regularly during the

15: "Sanctify the Christ as Lord in your hearts, always ready to make a defense before everyone that demands of you a reason for the hope in you, but doing so together with a mild temper and deep respect."

Whereas fighting with words could only worsen the situation, the testimony of fine conduct cannot be disputed. No reasonable person would ever conclude that qualities like unselfishness, kindness, helpfulness and empathy are characteristic of a hateful people. So praiseworthy conduct on the part of true Christians, along with calm persistence in a *positive* presentation of the Bible's teachings, is their best defense against defamers. Fine conduct can muzzle ignorant talk and contribute toward helping others to become glorifiers of Jehovah God.

In this wife's hands the wife will find much guidance and discipline to share with her husband during the day, it is natural that she will give them much of the guidance and discipline that they need.

But, really, what more and more women resent is their husband's reluctance to share in training the children when he is at home with the family.

What the Bible says about training and disciplining the children is both wise and instructive. For instance, we read: "Train up a boy according to the way for him; even when he grows old he will not turn aside from it. Chastise your son and he will bring you rest and give much pleasure to your soul." (Prov. 22:6; 29:17) God places the responsibility on both father and mother. Thus his counsel to children is: "Observe, O my son, the commandment of your father, and do not forsake the law of your mother. Listen to your father who caused your birth, and do not despise your mother just because she has grown old." (Prov. 6:20; 23:22) Hence, even if a man may be away from the home during the day, he should be actively interested in raising his children successfully. He is not merely 'the breadwinner.'

However, he may come home tired, seeking 'peace and quiet.' When, therefore, a day-to-day problem involving the children is brought up,

he may be tempted to tell his wife, 'You care for that. You're with them all day and so you can figure out what is best for them.' Maybe she can, as she may have had to during the day. But when her husband is at home, why should he not cooperate with her in training the children? That would be the loving and considerate thing for him to do.

Furthermore, as head of the family he is charged by God with the responsibility of taking the lead in guiding and correcting the children. God's Word says: "You, fathers, do not be irritating your children, but go on bringing them up in the discipline and mental-regulating of Jehovah." (Eph. 6:4) And the Bible compares beneficial discipline from Jehovah God to the well-motivated discipline from a human father, discipline that engenders in his children respect and that yields peaceable fruit.—Heb. 12:7-11.

That does not mean, though, that once he gets home it is all his job. No, the Bible does not segment the responsibility according to hours in the day. Husband and wife are a team in which both share responsibility and both ought to be considerate of the other. They

should both recognize that together they are Scripturally responsible to help and guide their children whenever they can. (Deut. 11:18-21) When husband and wife cooperate in doing that, happiness and success are likely to result. The children will certainly benefit from having the loving guidance and discipline of both parents. And the husband will probably find that his wife is not resentful, but that she draws satisfaction from knowing that she has his love and cooperation.

Even in a community or a country where it is 'customary' to leave the training and disciplining of the children to the wives, it is wise and beneficial for us to follow the way outlined by our Creator in His inspired Word. So training and disciplining the children is not 'the wife's job'; it is 'the parents' job'—both parents.

## "WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

December 12: 'Glorious Good News from the Happy God.' Page 680. Songs to Be Used:

December 19: Sounding Forth Good News in All the Earth. Page 685. Songs to Be Used: 10, 25.