

The WATCHTOWER

Announcing
**JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM**

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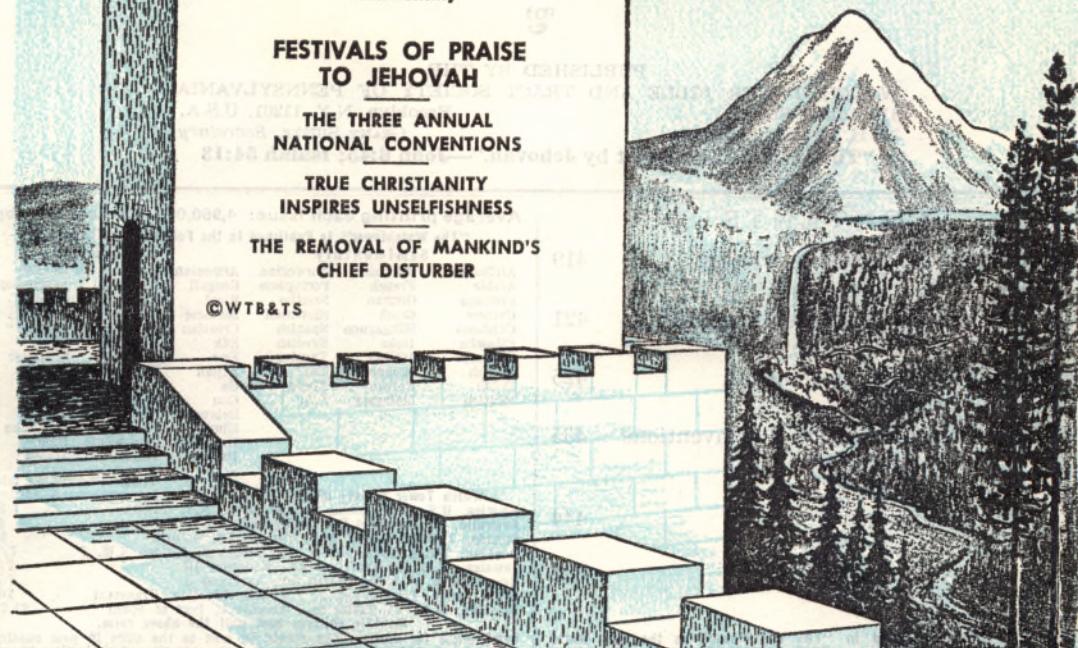
FESTIVALS OF PRAISE
TO JEHOVAH

THE THREE ANNUAL
NATIONAL CONVENTIONS

TRUE CHRISTIANITY
INSPIRES UNSELFISHNESS

THE REMOVAL OF MANKIND'S
CHIEF DISTURBER

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

THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER"

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

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

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

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

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

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

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- AS - American Standard Version Le - Isaac Leeser's version
AT - An American Translation Mo - James Moffatt's version
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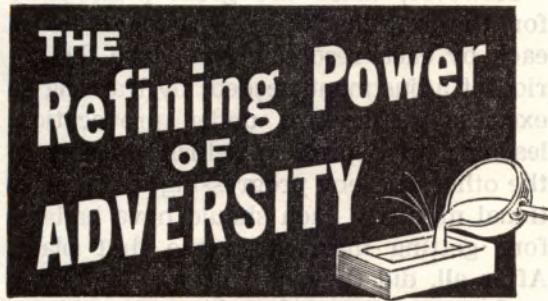
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HOW prone we are to shrink back or try to come out from under the trials and sufferings of adversity! Yet are not all such the common lot of humankind? As patient Job exclaimed in the midst of his trials: "Man, born of woman, is short-lived and glutted with agitation." And as wise King Solomon observed, the lot of man "means pains and vexation." —Job 14:1; Eccl. 2:23.

Since adversity is the lot of humankind, why rebel against it? Adversity, regardless of its cause or nature, can actually work out good for us if we bear up under it in the right frame of mind and for the sake of principle. Not without good reason does the Bible repeatedly recommend to us the virtue of endurance. —Matt. 24:13; Heb. 12:1; 2 Pet. 1:5, 6.

Yes, submitting to conditions that cause suffering, mental or physical, can exert a refining power upon us. It can cause one to become a better person, more understanding, more unselfish. This refining power might be likened to the heat that

in olden times was used to refine gold and silver and that today is used to temper steel. Using this illustration, Jehovah God prophetically caused to be recorded of his faithful people: "I shall certainly bring the third part through the fire; and I shall actually refine them as in the refining of silver, and . . . gold." As a result of this refining work God will be able to say to them, 'You are my people,' and they will readily acknowledge, 'Jehovah is our God.'—Zech. 13:9.

How does this principle apply to our everyday lives in these modern times? For example, through misfortune, lack of good judgment or selfishness, one may have gotten into financial deep waters, so to speak. One could take the easy way out by going into personal bankruptcy, which is what many people are doing. According to *U.S. News & World Report*, April 3, 1967, the number of such bankruptcies for the twelve months ending June 30, 1967, would be at least 186,000. This is three times that of ten years ago and involves a loss to creditors of \$1,500,000,000. But one may have quite a bit of carelessness or selfishness refined away by honoring the obligations, practicing rigid economy and working hard to meet them, if at all able to do so; not to say anything about keeping one's self-respect and a clearer conscience.

This more honorable course is the one that the psalmist of old, King David, rec-

ommended when he spoke favorably about the one that "has sworn to what is bad for himself, and yet he does not alter." Or as worded by a modern free translation, David commended him "who stands by his pledge at any cost."—Ps. 15:4, *The Jerusalem Bible*.

Another example that might be given of the refining power of adversity endured because of principle and in the right frame of mind is that which at times comes to parents with the discovery that a child of theirs is what used to be called "mentally retarded," but now is more considerably and accurately described as a "slow learner." What shall they do? Become bitter and resentful? Or lightly shift their burden to a state institution and forget all about the child, as some parents have done? No, there is a better way.

True, keeping such a child at home may place quite a burden upon the rest of the family, but what possibilities the bearing of this burden holds out in the way of refining them by training them to exercise patience, sympathy, understanding and empathy; in brief, unselfishness! As one of America's leading writers—whose autobiographical book has proved a great comfort to ever so many parents with slow-learning children—expressed it: "My helpless child has taught me so much. She has taught me patience, above all else." In fact, latest medical opinion holds that if it is at all practicable, it is the best for all concerned, for society, for the parents and for the child itself, to keep it at home.—*The Child Who Never Grew*, Pearl Buck (1950).

Then, again, the refining power of adversity can be experienced by 'standing by one's pledge, one's marriage vows, at any cost,' in spite of keen disillusionment and disappointment. Unhappy results often fol-

low when persons lacking in understanding marry, as in the case of teen-agers. Many seek the easy way out, by means of separation or divorce; and this is the course that many teen-agers in the United States are taking, with divorces being from three to four times as high among teen-age married persons as among older persons.

However, there are great possibilities for the refining of the personalities of each by each resolving to endure the period of adjustment needed; by learning to exercise self-control under provocation, learning to express unselfish interest in the other, thereby progressing to the emotional maturity each should have had before getting married in the first place. After all, did they not marry "for better or for worse," and does it not largely depend upon themselves as to just how much joy or pain each gets from the relationship? Those who want to make a success of it can find much helpful counsel in the Word of God, the Bible.—1 Cor. 7:10, 11; Eph. 5:22-33.

Of course, all of this has the most pertinent application to Christians who have dedicated themselves to God, for the doing of his will, and to follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. In carrying out their dedication they may well find hardships in the form of discipline and adversity that they had not foreseen. But by enduring they will be refined, even as indicated by the inspired words: "No discipline seems for the present to be joyous, but grievous; yet afterward to those who have been trained by it it yields peaceable fruit, namely, righteousness." And, additionally, Christians have the promise of receiving everlasting life by enduring to the end.—Heb. 12:11; Matt. 24:13.



True Christianity

INSPIRES

Unselfishness

How did it do so in times past? What proof is there that it does so today?

HE was a young Puerto Rican, the mother of two small children, and her husband was the village barber. She also was a devoutly religious person, so much so, in fact, that she worried herself sick over the torments of purgatory and hell. She would go about clenching a crucifix. The doctors could not do anything for her; her priests gave her pills but they did not help. What finally brought relief to this young mother? It was learning that "God is love," that "the wages sin pays is death," and that true Christianity causes one to be concerned about others and not merely with oneself. —1 John 4:8; Rom. 6:23.

That a devoutly religious person should find herself in such a frame of mind is not at all surprising. Apparently the entire tenor of her religious teaching was to be concerned with self, and such concern can easily go to extremes, as can be seen in the case of ascetics and mystics. In days gone by, very devout persons literally tortured themselves, as Martin Luther did as a monk and priest, in their concern over the saving of their own souls. However, this self-centered way of viewing religion often brings forth a very different kind of fruit. A case in point is that of the priests that offended the Nazis and were interned in the Dachau concentration camp during World War II. Telling about them is Nerin E. Gun, in his book *The Day of the Americans* (1966). He himself was and is a devout Catholic, who, as a correspondent of a neutral country, was nevertheless jailed by the Nazis and landed at Dachau because of his honest

dispatches out of Berlin during the last world war.

In his book he has the following to say about these priests, who must certainly have had some strong convictions or the Nazis would not have locked them up in this camp: "Mass was said in the chapel of Block 26, the priests' block. Entry to this chapel was only given to a privileged few . . . This Block 26 had at first been open to all Catholic priests as a kind of concession to the Vatican. Conditions there were better than elsewhere in the camp and many packages were received from the outside." However, this chapel was later made off limits to all non-German priests as well, even as it had been for all of the rest of the camp's internees, Roman Catholics though they may have been. "A Bavarian priest stood guard outside the door, blackjack in hand, and woe to anyone who tried to get by him" in order to benefit from the religious services inside.

Mr. Gun next quotes a devout top member of the French Catholic Party who was also in this camp at Dachau: "We were thrown out of the chapel, sometimes with

punches to boot . . . Of course, the Block was full of packages . . . Where might it not have led if all the camps' starvelings had suddenly felt overcome with piety and thereby come in contact with the stores of food stuffs kept in the priests' lockers?"* Had those priests taken seriously their beliefs as to the reality of the torments of purgatory and hell, would they have denied the "lay" members of their faith the benefits of their religion? Obviously they were more concerned with their own physical needs than with the spiritual needs of their fellow Catholics.

Yes, contradictory though it may seem, what was wrong with that young Puerto Rican mother was also what was wrong with these German priests in the Dachau concentration camp. And what was that? They both labored under the misapprehension that Christianity is a selfish proposition, that one can be a good Christian and yet be chiefly concerned with one's self. But not so. In fact, an identifying mark of true Christianity, distinguishing it from imitations, is its capacity to inspire unselfishness in its devotees.

THE EXAMPLE OF THE APOSTLES

Not that a Christian is not to be concerned with his own spiritual needs, his own salvation. Indeed he must. He is under obligation to do so; is encouraged to do so. (Matt. 5:3) That is why we read that to please God we must not only "believe that he is," that he exists, but also "that he becomes the rewarder of those earnestly seeking him." (Heb. 11:6) But Christianity does not stop with this. It is only the start. Proof of this is seen in Christianity's very beginnings. Why did Jesus Christ invite Peter and Andrew,

James and John to leave their fishing business and follow him? Merely that they might be saved? No, but that they might become fishers of men, that they might bring salvation to others.—Matt. 4:19-22.

In particular let us consider the apostle Paul, concerning whom the Scriptures have more to say than of any other of Jesus' followers. As a learned Pharisee he was held in high esteem and had a most promising future ahead of him. But upon becoming a Christian he turned his back on all the advantages and prospects he enjoyed as a Pharisee and devoted his life to bringing Christianity to others, unselfishly putting their interests ahead of his own, even as he tells us: "For, though I am free from all persons, I have made myself the slave to all, *that I may gain the most persons*. And so to the Jews I became as a Jew, *that I might gain Jews* . . . To those without law I became as without law, . . . *that I might gain those without law*. To the weak I became weak, *that I might gain the weak*. I have become all things to people of all sorts, *that I might by all means save some*. But I do all things for the sake of the good news, *that I may become a sharer of it with others*."—1 Cor. 9:19-23.

And what did this putting the interests of others ahead of his own involve? As he himself tells us: "By Jews I five times received forty strokes less one, three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I experienced shipwreck, a night and a day I have spent in the deep; . . . in dangers from highwaymen, . . . in dangers in the wilderness, . . . in hunger and thirst, . . . in cold and nakedness," and so on. Did Paul endure all this merely for his own salvation? No, that did not require such heroic exploits. He did it primarily for the honor of his Maker and to bring salvation to others. That is also why he wrote fourteen of the twenty-

* However, that it is possible to hold on to high Christian principles in spite of concentration camp conditions the author Gun shows by his high words of praise for the witnesses of Jehovah incarcerated in this camp.

seven books of the so-called New Testament. No question about the apostle Paul's having become fully saturated with Christianity's spirit of unselfishness!—2 Cor. 11:22-33.

That unselfishness was indeed a characteristic of early Christianity is testified to by secular historians. Thus C. Brinton, J. Christopher and R. Wolff state in their book, *A History of Civilization*: "The Christian was by no means content with the prospects of his own salvation. His acceptance of the will of God was not passive. He was from the first an ardent missionary, anxious to convert others." These authors also speak of the "unselfishness, unself-consciousness" of Christianity, adding: "In the true Christian life all men are one, and subsidiary groups are a distraction—or worse, a padding for the selfish ego. The important thing is for the individual to avoid all kinds of personal triumphs over others, all competitive successes, all the things that set off and sharpen his ego . . . The ideal of unselfishness is there. Christianity tries to tame the more extravagant flights of the competitive human spirit, tries to subdue self-assertiveness, truculence, boasting, pride, and other manifestations of the 'natural' man." The Christian was "not only to subdue his own ego; he should open his heart in loving kindness to all his fellow men."* It may well be asked, To what extent have agnostics and atheists displayed such missionary zeal? Whoever heard of their going into the heart of Africa, or any other foreign land, for that matter, to enlighten superstitious natives the way thousands of Christian missionaries have?

JEHOVAH GOD AND JESUS CHRIST UNSELFISH

It can be no other way. Why not? Because the Bible shows us that Jehovah God

and Jesus Christ are the personifications of unselfishness. Jehovah God, the self-existent One, who never had a beginning, has ever been self-contained. He did not need to create. His doing so was entirely motivated by love, by unselfishness. Further, he showed great unselfishness in permitting the first human pair to continue living after their meriting death by reason of their rebellion; and in particular did Jehovah God express love by sending his dear and only-begotten Son to earth to die for our sins. As the loving apostle John wrote: "God is love. By this the love of God was made manifest in our case, because God sent forth his only-begotten Son into the world that we might gain life through him. The love is in this respect, not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent forth his Son as a propitiatory sacrifice for our sins." —1 John 4:8-10.

'Like father, like son,' may well be said about Jesus Christ's imitating his heavenly Father in being unselfish. Well could he therefore say: "He that has seen me has seen the Father," for Jesus acted just the way his Father would have acted under the same circumstances. Jesus had a glorious prehuman existence in the heavens before he came to earth, existing in God's form. He left all this and came to earth, not for his own salvation, not to be served, but to serve "and to give his soul [life] a ransom in exchange for many." —John 14:9; Matt. 20:28; Phil. 2:5-8.

Yes, as the apostle Paul also noted: "You know the undeserved kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich he became poor for your sakes, that you might become rich through his poverty." Jesus said he had no place to lay his head, not a place he could call his own, yet how rich he could have been had he wanted to profit financially as so many

* In proof of which see the following: 1 Corinthians 10:33; 13:4-8; Galatians 5:26; Philippians 2:3, 4.

professed healers do today!—2 Cor. 8:9; Luke 9:58.

WHAT ABOUT TODAY?

Yes, what about today? Does true Christianity inspire unselfishness in our times, in this last third of the twentieth century, as it did nineteen centuries ago? Yes, it does. Among whom? Among the Christian witnesses of Jehovah. They have an organization patterned after the early Christians' in which there is no clericality distinction but in which every Christian is a minister of the good news. The emphasis in their training is on giving, not on receiving, giving of their time to serve Jehovah and others, giving of their energy and their means. Many of these enter the *full-time* field ministry even though they know that it of itself is not required of everyone in order to gain salvation, everlasting life.

In their local congregations there are "servants" who take the lead. These have specific duties to perform in ministering to the spiritual needs of the congregation that consume much time and energy and that represent weighty burdens of responsibility. Do they receive any financial or honorary remuneration? No, they do not, no more than did the early Christians. They all serve their God and their brothers out of love, unselfishly, knowing that 'there is more happiness in giving than in receiving.'—Acts 20:35.

Illustrating this principle is the following true-life incident. A Brooklyn Jewish youth once accepted an invitation to attend a certain meeting at the local Kingdom Hall, at which the Witnesses received instructions for the field ministry. Among other things considered was the report of the previous month's ministerial activity

and the service goals toward which they were striving.

Afterward he asked his Witness friend: "Did you meet the goals during the past month?" His Witness friend assured him that he had. The youth then asked: "What do you get when you meet the goals?" He was told that there was no reward other than the satisfaction of having done well in Jehovah's service. He next asked: "What happens if you fail to meet the goals? What are the penalties?" He was told: "No one is penalized for failing to meet the goals." It all seemed so incredible to this Jewish youth, who had ever measured motivation by material considerations.

Giving eloquent testimony to the power of true Christianity to inspire unselfishness is the annual *Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses*, which, in addition to listing the activities of the Witnesses in every land, nearly 200 now, in which they are active, also gives hundreds of pages of interesting field experiences. The latest edition shows that during the previous year, 1,058,675 Christian proclaimers of the "good news" preached monthly, devoting a total of more than 170 million hours during the year, making more than 60 million return visits on interested persons and monthly conducting upward of 800,000 Bible studies in the homes of the people.

And all this is just as it should be. Since God is love, the very personification of unselfishness, the true worship of him must inspire unselfishness. His Son came to earth to set us a perfect example, and in God's Word we find many other fine examples. It is by producing such fruit that Christians glorify their God Jehovah and prove that they are indeed disciples of Jesus Christ.—John 15:8.

FESTIVALS OF PRAISE TO JEHOVAH

FESTIVALS are occasions of joy, as we read in Deuteronomy 16:14:

"And you must rejoice during your festival." This is especially true if a feast is celebrated in praise of Jehovah, the Almighty God. When Jehovah organized his people into a nation back in the year 1513 B.C.E., he gave them many festivals. They are listed in Leviticus, chapter 23. Every seventh day was a sabbath, a day of complete rest, "a holy convention." The Passover was celebrated on Nisan 14, followed by the festival of unfermented cakes, which lasted seven days. Fifty days from Nisan 16, when the firstfruits of the barley harvest were offered, was the feast of weeks, also known as Pentecost. On the first day of the seventh month was the festival of trumpets, and on the tenth day the people celebrated the great day of atonement. This cycle of festivals was concluded with the most joyous one of all, the festival of booths, which was kept from the fifteenth to the twenty-first of the same month, with a final holy convention on the twenty-second. In the course of time additional festivals were added, such as the monthly new moon, the festival of Purim and the festival of Dedication, thus making more days for special observance in worship to Jehovah.—Num. 10:10.

"The seasonal festivals of Jehovah that you should proclaim are holy conventions."
—Lev. 23:2.

² These festivals not only were occasions of joy and physical rest, but were pri-

marily occasions of religious and spiritual upbuilding. They were festivals of Jehovah, to his praise and honor. By means of these festivals Jehovah, the great King and Lawgiver, the Organizer of the nation, taught his people his divine will and purpose, together with many basic principles, and gave them the opportunity of expressing their appreciation and gratitude to Jehovah for his goodness and mercy and for all the blessings he had provided during the year. In addition, and this is most important to us, Jehovah not only teaches Christians the same principles today, but also by means of these Jewish festivals he has made many prophecies that find fulfillment in our day. In other words, Jehovah, with the people of a whole nation as actors, has produced on the vast stage of the country of Palestine, and especially of the city of Jerusalem, scenes that are "a shadow of the good things to come." (Heb. 10:1) So by watching the Israelites celebrating their festivals, we today receive instruction on important things fulfilled in our time, and are in addition taught many lessons regarding Jehovah's will, his purposes and principles. Therefore, let us sit back now and watch the players as they enact the scenes of each of these Jewish festivals.

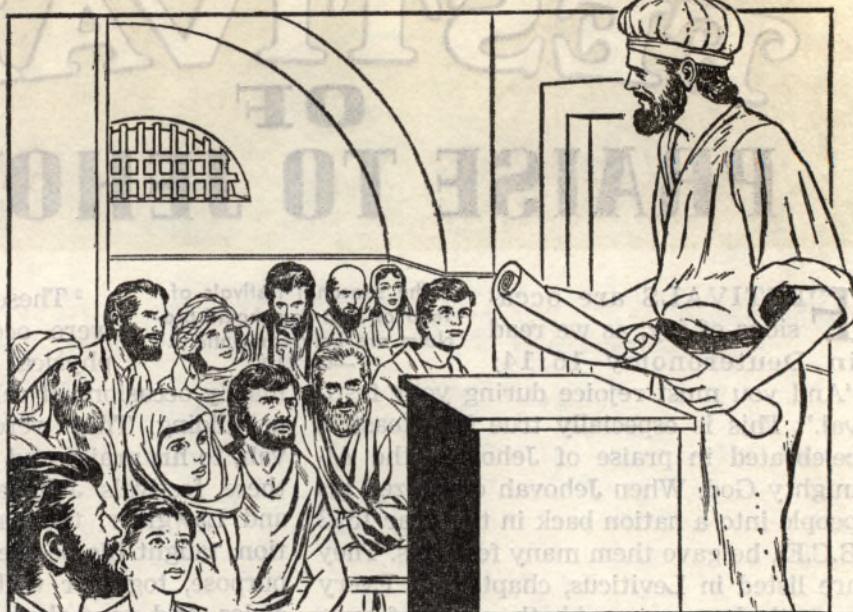
1. When are festivals occasions of joy? Name some of the Jewish festivals.

2. (a) What did Jehovah teach his people by means of festivals? (b) Why do Christians today study these festivals?

SABBATH

³ "Six days may work be done, but on the seventh day is a sabbath of complete rest, a holy convention. You may do no sort of work. It is a sabbath to Jehovah in all places where you dwell." (Lev. 23: 3) The Israelites received a sabbath regulation shortly after their deliverance from slavery in Egypt on their way to Mount Sinai. It became fully expressed in the fourth of the Ten Commandments. (Ex. 20:8-11) The sabbath day began at sunset of the sixth day and lasted till sunset of the seventh day. In Jesus' time, six loud trumpet blasts on the sixth day, three at about the ninth hour (3 p.m.) and three at sunset, heralded its beginning. The sabbath was a day of complete rest, even for slaves and beasts. It was Jehovah's day, a day he had blessed and set apart for observance. Recognizing and obediently carrying out the purpose of the sabbath would bring true enjoyment. (Isa. 58:13, 14) But willfully breaking it would bring the infliction of the death penalty.

⁴ The Israelites could appreciate the value of such a humanitarian law after being slaves under the cruel Egyptian rule. By ceasing from secular work the Jews were able to concentrate on prayer, worship and meditation upon God's Word. In fact,



the sabbath was a day of great religious activity. The priests were busier than on the other days of the week. There were two lambs to be offered along with the two offered every day as a constant burnt offering (Num. 28:9, 10), and the twelve loaves of showbread were changed in the holy place. (Lev. 24:5-8) A holy convention was held, an assembly of public worship and instruction. The people were instructed in the law of God. In the time of Jesus' apostles, as we read in Acts 15:21, Moses was "read aloud in the synagogues on every sabbath." What a grand provision for a whole nation to have a day off every week to worship their God, to assemble together and to be educated in God's laws, free from the daily toil and all its worries! It made them appreciate the goodness of their God, Jehovah, and reminded them of the miraculous deliverance from bondage in Egypt. Each sabbath was refreshing to the body and each and all felt spiritually uplifted.

3, 4. (a) Describe a sabbath day. (b) Why did the Jews feel physically and spiritually refreshed by observing the sabbath?

⁵ It is good to know that this weekly sabbath of the Jews is only "a shadow of the good things to come." The Bible indicates that Jehovah created the heavens and the earth in six days, each 7,000 years in length. On the seventh day Jehovah rested from his creative work and entered into his sabbath. Mankind, however, did not keep peaceful rest or sabbath with Jehovah, but through disobedience came into bondage to sin, imperfection and death. Almost six thousand years of the seventh day have passed and there is only a little more than a thousand years left. Jesus, speaking of the weekly sabbath day, said: "The sabbath came into existence for the sake of man, and not man for the sake of the sabbath." So these last thousand years are set aside by Jehovah for a special purpose foreshadowed by the weekly sabbath of the Jews, namely, for the reign of Christ Jesus, his Son, for Jesus went on to say: "Hence the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath." (Mark 2:27, 28) It is a thousand-year sabbath within Jehovah's great 7,000-year sabbath of rest. Like the weekly sabbath, the greater thousand-year sabbath will be devoted to the worship of Jehovah, and to the education of all the living, including those resurrected from the memorial tombs, in the righteous requirements of Jehovah.—Heb. 10:1; Gen. 2:1-3; John 5:28, 29.

⁶ Back in the years 29 to 33 C.E. Jesus performed many powerful works, especially on the sabbath. He caused the blind to see and the deaf to hear, the crippled to walk and the sick to

5. (a) When does the weekly sabbath find its fulfillment? (b) What purpose is served by the greater Sabbath?

6. Why did Jesus perform many works of healing on the sabbath?

become well, and he even raised some from the dead. Thus he foreshadowed what wondrous works of deliverance and relief he will perform during the thousand-year sabbath day of his reign. No one will be permitted to disturb the peace and rest of this day, as was foreshadowed by putting to death all sabbath breakers. (Num. 15:32-36) During this thousand-year sabbath, mankind will receive real refreshment for body and spirit, gradually progressing to perfection, being able to enjoy to the full all the goodness that Jehovah provides through his King, Christ Jesus, rendering whole-souled worship and obedience to Him. It is a delightful experience to anticipate that, after six thousand years of toil and bondage to sin, imperfection and death under Satan's cruel rule, believing mankind now stand on the threshold of their greatest deliverance, to enjoy a far greater sabbath over which God's Son is Lord. What a joyous day!

NEW MOON AND THE FESTIVAL OF TRUMPETS

⁷ In two passages the law of Moses gives instructions about the observance of the new moon, which marked the beginning of each month. Trumpets were to be sounded and special sacrifices were to be offered, just as on the other days of rejoicing and festal seasons. (Num. 10:10; 28:11-15) In the course of time observance of the new moon developed into an important festival, being mentioned alongside sabbaths and "festal seasons." (Isa. 1:13; Ezek. 46:1; Hos. 2:11) The Law did not

7. What were some features marking the festival of the new moon?



specify that all sorts of work were to cease on the day of the new moon of the ordinary month. But we find the prophet Amos, in the ninth century B.C.E., reprobating the merchants who were anxiously waiting for the end of the new moon so that they could resume their fraudulent business, which fact indicated that it was customary for the people neither to trade nor to engage in secular work on new-moon days, but to employ the day in gatherings and association.—Amos 8:5; 1 Sam. 20:5, 24.

⁸ Like the sabbath, the new moon was a day for special worship and a favorable occasion for public instruction in the temple. It was a busy day for the prophets and other ministers of God, since it was customary for people who had problems to go to see these servants of God and to receive private instruction and help. (Ezek. 46:1; 2 Ki. 4:22, 23) Special provisions were laid down in the law for the new moon of the seventh month, called Ethanim or Tishri, and it was considered a holy convention. It was specifically stated that no laborious work of any sort should be done on this day. Thus, in addition to the fifty-two weekly sabbaths, the Jews had twelve more special days each year in which to praise and worship Jehovah and to receive education in his Word. The fact that Jehovah provided for so much religious instruction and activity should teach Christians today the importance of setting aside time in which to worship Jehovah and to study his Word, privately and with the Christian congregation.

THE DAY OF ATONEMENT

⁹ In the month of Ethanim, nine days after the joyous festival of trumpets an-

other celebration was scheduled. It was Israel's most important day, the day of atonement, to be observed on the tenth day of the seventh month. A holy convention was held and no sort of work was done. The Israelites were commanded to afflict their souls, most likely by fasting. In Leviticus, chapter 16, the procedure of the whole day is outlined in minute detail. To get the most benefit from this study we would like to encourage you to read the entire chapter. As you notice, the high priest presented a young bull for the sins of Aaron and his household, and tribe of Levi, and two goats, one, the goat "for Jehovah," to be slaughtered as a sin-offering for the rest of the nation and the other to be kept as a live goat "for Azazel." After first going with incense into the Most Holy of the tabernacle, the high priest brought some of the blood of the two sin-offerings, first of the bull, then of the goat, into the Most Holy, to be sprinkled before the cover of the Ark. Later the animal carcasses were taken outside the camp and burned. After the high priest confessed all the sins of the people over the live goat, it was led away into the wilderness, never to return. Afterward the high priest bathed and changed garments. Then two rams were offered as burnt offerings, one for Aaron and his house and the other for the rest of the nation.

¹⁰ While the day of atonement in Israel was spiritually uplifting and encouraging, it was a shadow of something far greater, pointing the Jews to the Messiah the Deliverer who was to come, for their animal sacrifices could never actually take away sins. Sincere Hebrews who kept the Law to the best of their ability could see that "men can never with the same sacri-

8. (a) Why was it a favorable occasion for religious instruction? (b) What can Christians learn therefrom?
9. (a) When was the day of atonement, and what requirement was made of all the people? (b) Summarize the highlights of the atonement day procedure.

10. What greater purpose was served by the day of atonement?

fices from year to year which they offer continually make those who approach perfect. Otherwise, would the sacrifices not have stopped being offered . . . ? To the contrary, by these sacrifices there is a reminding of sins from year to year." (Heb. 10:1-3) Faithful Jews, by following the atonement-day sacrifices, were thereby directed to look for the greater High Priest with the better sacrifice, the real one that could remove sins. In the Psalms it is shown that the redemption price was so precious that it was completely beyond the reach of any of them. (Ps. 49:7, 8) The apostle Paul, a faithful Hebrew, said: "Consequently the Law has become our tutor leading to Christ, that we might be declared righteous due to faith."—Gal. 3:24.

¹¹ The apostle, therefore, devotes considerable space in his letter to the Hebrews to show the significance of these things. He describes the tabernacle and its features, with the high priest's entering the Most Holy on only one day in the year with the blood of animals, to offer sacrifices not only for the sins of the people but also for himself, and says: "Thus the holy spirit makes it plain that the way into the holy place had not yet been made manifest while the first tent was standing. This very tent is an illustration for the appointed time that is now here." Then he points out that the sacri-



11. What were the sacrifices unable to do for the Jews, but what satisfaction did they provide?

fices they offered "are not able to make the man doing sacred service perfect as respects his conscience." However, when the high priest of Israel performed his services, the Israelites enjoyed a measure of satisfaction. They were doing God's will for their time, because "they were legal requirements pertaining to the flesh and were imposed until the appointed time to set things straight."—Heb. 9:1-10.

¹² Now the apostle goes ahead to explain that the things of the Law, including the day of atonement, were pictorial of far grander things. He says: "However, when Christ came as a high priest of the good things that have come to pass through the greater and more perfect tent not made with hands, that is, not of this creation, he entered, no, not with the blood of goats and of young bulls, but with his own blood, once for all time into

the holy place and obtained an everlasting deliverance for us." (Heb. 9:11, 12) The tent in the wilderness was an arrangement of God whereby the Israelites could approach him through their high priest and receive a typical forgiveness of sin, which would keep them in God's favor and hold them in line until his time to

provide the real sacrifice. During this time they were clean in a fleshly sense, for Paul says that they were sanctified to the extent of cleanness of the flesh.—Heb. 9:13.

12. What was accomplished by the tent in the wilderness?

THE GREATER TENT

¹³ But, now, what is "the greater and more perfect tent not made with hands"? It is no literal structure, but is God's arrangement for atonement for humankind. God has also provided the great High Priest, Jesus, the perfect One, who needed to offer no sacrifice for himself; his sacrifice could cover the sins of others. Through Jehovah's provision he was resurrected in the spirit and appeared in the real Most Holy, heaven itself, where God had established the legal arrangement for him to offer the value of his sacrifice. (Heb. 9:24) Referring to this, Paul says: "How much more will the blood of the Christ, who through an everlasting spirit offered himself without blemish to God, cleanse our consciences from dead works that we may render sacred service to the living God?" (Heb. 9:14) Those coming to him therefore experience more than a cleanness of the flesh. They can actually have rest from the tormenting consciousness of sin and enjoy the good conscience that they have requested from God through Christ.—1 Pet. 3:21.

THE ANTITYPICAL ATONEMENT DAY

¹⁴ Israel's day of atonement took up the daylight hours of the tenth day of the seventh month. What period of time is occupied by the great antitypical day of atonement? Well, it began at the time of Jesus' baptism, when he presented himself to do God's will in taking up a sacrificial course in the fall of 29 C.E., just as the bull and the two goats were presented at the altar in the tabernacle courtyard. The day continued into the year 33 C.E., during which time he served as

13. (a) What is "the greater and more perfect tent not made with hands"? (b) What is accomplished for the worshipers approaching this tent?

14. (a) When and with what did the antitypical day of atonement begin? (b) How did Jesus serve as the goat "for Azazel"? (c) How did he fulfill the picture of taking the blood of the bull and the goat into the Most Holy?

the goat "for Azazel," keeping perfect integrity under test and cruel persecution to death by Satan, bearing the sins of the people off into the "wilderness," into oblivion forever. (Isa. 53:3-7) His prayers, devotion and course of integrity, like the incense brought into the Most Holy, pleased Jehovah and fulfilled Jesus' primary purpose in coming to earth as God's Vindicator. The antitypical day of atonement included his ascension into heaven, which is parallel to the entry of the high priest into the Most Holy with the blood of the bull and then of the goat. Jesus came through his sacrificial work clean, pure, now clothed in the changed "garments" of glory and immortality as High Priest forever according to the manner of Melchizedek. (Heb. 6:20) But with the bringing of the value of his lifeblood into the Most Holy the antitypical day of atonement was brought to an end.*

¹⁵ The apostle Paul indicates that the applying of the benefits of the great day of atonement is another thing when he goes on to say: "And as it is reserved for men to die once for all time [due to Adam's sin], but after this a judgment, so also the Christ was offered once for all time to bear the sins of many [who inherited sin from Adam]; and the second time that he appears it will be apart from sin and to those earnestly looking for him for their salvation." (Heb. 9:27, 28) All men have fallen under the condemnation of sin due to descent from their forefather Adam. But through Christ "judgment" is provided apart from Adamic sin so that all may have opportunity to be relieved

* See page 267, ¶43, of *The Watchtower* as of September 1, 1942, under the title "Atonement for the New World," Part 3. Also, page 40, ¶14, of the book *You May Survive Armageddon into God's New World*.

15. (a) How does Paul indicate that the offering of the merit of Christ's sacrifice in heaven was something else besides applying benefits of the antitypical day of atonement? (b) How must those who wish to benefit from the ransom do no "laborious work" but must afflict themselves?

of the disability that came upon them through no fault of their own and may prove themselves individually. (Rom. 8:20) All who will profit from the ransom must have it applied to them to get its healing benefits. They cannot save themselves by mere knowledge that the ransom has been offered in heaven. They must repent and rest by faith and obedience in the provision of Christ's sacrifice and his services as High Priest. They cannot do any "laborious work" of their own by attempts at self-justification by self-works. So the High Priest still has work to do in applying the benefits of his sin-atoning sacrifice.—Heb. 4:3, 10.

¹⁶ The application of Christ's ransom has two aspects just as there were two sin-offerings on Israel's atonement day. Having paid the value of his human life to his Father Jehovah and having purchased the human race, Christ must now apply the ransom benefits to mankind. We remember that Aaron sprinkled the blood of the bull before the ark of the covenant in behalf of the priestly tribe of Levi. From 33 C.E. to the present time, Christ, from heaven, has blessed his 144,000 anointed spiritual brothers by applying the benefits of his sacrifice directly to them. They are brought into the new covenant, to be kings and priests with Christ during his thousand-year sabbath reign. (Luke 22:20; Rev. 20:6) But they are not the only beneficiaries of Christ's sacrifice. The blood of the goat for Jehovah was sprinkled after that of the bull, for the *people*. Christ's sacrifice was for all mankind and must be applied impartially to all who exercise faith. When?

¹⁷ It will take the thousand years of Christ's reign to apply the benefits of his

16. Show where the 144,000 get the full application of the ransom and that this is not the end of Christ's use of the ransom.

17. When are the ransom benefits applied to the people on earth, and when does the applying of benefits of the great day of atonement come to completion?

ransom sacrifice to all those who by faith take hold of it, including those resurrected from Sheol or Hades. (Rev. 20:13) By the end of the thousand years the seed of Abraham will have brought blessings to all families of the earth. (Gen. 12:3; 22:18) All who will avail themselves of the blessing will have been brought to perfection. Then the work of applying the benefits of the great atonement day will have been completed. The benefits of the ransom sacrifice of Christ will have been applied in completion, impartially, and Jehovah's great day of atonement will prove not to have been in vain.

A DWELLING PLACE FOR PERFECT HUMANS

¹⁸ Now, Jesus' ransom covered the purchase of the human race and operates to bring them to perfection. But what about the earth, the home in which they are to live? When looking at God's original purpose in the garden of Eden, we see that the garden was a sanctuary, a place for God to dwell in by spirit. It was a place of perfection and beauty, a proper environment for those who would serve their God in perfect holiness. Since Jehovah will again dwell with men and they will come into relationship with him again as sons, it follows that a paradise earth is concomitant with the perfection of mankind. This means that the entire earth will be made a paradise according to the pattern of Jehovah, the great Architect who originally purposed it so. How uplifting and encouraging it is to understand the prophetic meaning of the typical atonement day and the benefits that follow therefrom!

—Rom. 8:20, 21.

FESTIVAL OF PURIM

¹⁹ In about the year 474 B.C.E. another festival was added to the list of Jewish

18. What guarantees that a paradise earth is ahead for mankind?

19. What are the historical facts leading to the festival of Purim?

feasts. The historic events that caused Mordecai to inaugurate this two-day festival, called Purim, are of such important prophetic meaning and encouragement to Christians today that we would like to discuss them with you. The Jews were under Persian rule and scattered throughout the 127 provinces. A certain Haman, an Amalekite and hater of the Jews, was chief of all the princes of the Persian Empire. This man had determined in his heart to exterminate all the Jews in the entire Persian realm. As a religious and superstitious man he asked his gods on what day he should order the Jews to be exterminated, by casting the *Pur*, or Lot. The Lot fell on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, or Adar. This gave him about one year to prepare the slaughter, since the Lot was cast in the first month. But it also gave the Jews time to turn to their God and pray for deliverance and to prepare for it.—Esther 9:20-22; 3:1-7.

²⁰ Now Haman, after knowing the date superstitiously selected, presented his request before the king, representing the Jews as a seditious and dangerous people, not obeying the laws of the king, but having their own customs different from all the people. Haman said that the money necessary to defray the expenses of the slaughter would be forthcoming—it would not cost the crown anything—that ten thousand silver talents (about \$8,456,400) would be brought into the king's treasury. The

king granted the request. The law was issued to kill the Jews in the whole Persian realm on the thirteenth day of Adar. It seemed as if Haman had reached the zenith of his glory. But things changed fast.—Esther 3:9-15.

²¹ Through the fearless action of Queen Esther, herself a Jewess, a counterlaw was issued granting the Jews the right to "stand for their souls, to annihilate and kill and destroy all . . . that were showing hostility to them, . . . on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, that is, the month of Adar." Under the fine leadership of faithful Mordecai the Jews were preparing their defense. And when the day arrived, they were assisted not only by the Persian people but, according to the historic record, by "all the princes . . . and the satraps and the governors and the doers of the business that belonged to the king . . . for the dread of Mordecai had fallen upon them. . . . and there was an avenging of themselves upon their enemies and a killing among those hating them of seventy-five thousand." In Shushan the Castle the fight extended into the next day, with a total of 810 of the enemy killed, including Haman's ten sons. The Jews in the provinces and in Shushan banqueted on the fourteenth and fifteenth days respectively.

Consequently, Mordecai put them under obligation to keep the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the month of Adar in each and every year "as days of banqueting and rejoicing and sending of portions to one another and of gifts to the poor people." The Jews were thereby reminded every

20. Of what were the Jews falsely accused? With what result?

21. (a) How did the Jews counteract the attack, and what was the outcome? (b) What days were set aside for this festival, and why?



year of their deliverance, and year by year they gave praise and honor to Jehovah, the God of deliverance.—Esther 8:9 to 9:22.

MODERN-DAY FULFILLMENT

²² Like the Jews back in Mordecai's day, the small number on earth of Christ's spiritual brothers, the "remnant" of spiritual Israel, have been accused of being seditious and a security risk. Their extermination as witnesses for the Most High, Jehovah, had been decreed by the modern-day Haman class, the religious leaders of Christendom. Jesus Christ, exercising regal power over the entire earth since 1914 as Ahasuerus did over the Persian Empire, has permitted such vicious attempts upon the life of the remnant under all kinds of false accusations, for a severe test. But as the Persian king permitted the Jews to fight for their lives, so, too, Christ Jesus has allowed the remnant to stand for their lives as Jehovah's witnesses against their enemies.

²³ Would the religious clergy of Christendom, with the help of the political state, be able to kill the remnant as Jehovah's witnesses, kill their work of preaching Jehovah's kingdom? Never! As the Jews in Ahasuerus' time, the Lord's people have fought zealously for their lives and rights as preachers and witnesses, not with material weapons of destruction, but using all the legal means at their disposal, together with the "sword of the spirit, that is, God's Word." (Eph. 6:13-17) They have steadfastly continued preaching the good news of the established Kingdom. With their spiritual weapons and the use of all available legal means, not only have they preserved their spiritual lives as witnesses of Jehovah and the right of preaching his name world wide, but they have

symbolically "killed" many attackers by killing the power and influence of their enemies, who were unable to kill their preaching work.

²⁴ The work of the remnant has killed the influence of false religion to such a degree that thousands of honest-hearted people have left its ranks and have taken sides with the remnant, just as it was in the days of Mordecai: "Many of the peoples of the land were declaring themselves Jews." (Esther 8:17) There they had seen that the king's favor had turned away from Haman to the Jews, even making provision for their preservation. Thus since 1931, and with special momentum since 1935, many people have been impressed as they have seen the evidence of God's favor upon the small remnant of spiritual Jews. They have observed the fight of the remnant to save their lives as Jehovah's Christian witnesses against the whole world. They have been awakened to a lively interest in the remnant's firmly maintained fight for true worship and clean moral principles. Even some men of high worldly status, like the princes and governors of Mordecai's day, have assisted the remnant in their fight with what official or judicial help they could lend. In the eyes of the remnant and the "great crowd" of people who have joined the remnant in preaching the good news of the Kingdom, the antitypical religious leaders are already without power and influence, they are dead, and it is only a matter of a short time until Jesus Christ, who holds regal power, will bring about the total extermination of all his enemies on earth in the battle of Armageddon. Until then, many more people will take their stand with the remnant, as pictured in the drama. Thus the anciently celebrated festival of Purim has an antitypical significance

22. (a) Who are pictured by the Jews? by Haman? (b) What false accusations have been made?

23. How have the remnant fought for their lives?

24. (a) What was pictured by the killing of the Jews' enemies? (b) As in the type, who join with the remnant, assisting them?

that gives Christians today the unfailing hope of God's victory over all his enemies.

FESTIVAL OF DEDICATION

²⁵ The background leading to the inauguration of the festival of Dedication is very interesting. In the year 198 B.C.E. Palestine came under the rule of the Syrian king, Antiochus III. His son, Antiochus IV Ephiphanes, was a religious fanatic. He made great efforts to convert the Jews to the Greek religion. He looted the temple in Jerusalem and put into office a high priest favoring the Hellenizing process. In defiance of Jehovah he rededicated the temple and assigned it to the Olympian Zeus or Jupiter. He erected a new pagan altar on top of the great altar of Jehovah in the temple courtyard, where the daily burnt offerings to Jehovah were formerly offered. Finally, on Chislev 25, 168 B.C.E., the first sacrifice was offered on this pagan altar to the honor of Zeus of Mount Olympus in Greece. Copies of the Law were burned, and to have one in possession was punishable by death. Circumcision was a capital crime and the Jews were even forced to eat the flesh of swine.

²⁶ This desecration of the sanctuary of Jehovah and the Hellenizing of the Jews by cruel force led to the uprising under the leadership of the Maccabees in the year 167 B.C.E. For three years the Syrians waged a bitter war against the Jews but were finally defeated, despite the Syrians' overwhelming military force. Jerusalem was recaptured by the Jews in 165 B.C.E., and on Chislev 25, or exactly three years after the Syrians had desecrated the

25. What brought about the need for rededicating the temple?

26. Why was the festival of Dedication added? On what date was it celebrated?

COMING IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- Keeping Free from the Spirit of Complaint.
- Finding Contentment with Jehovah's Organization.
- A New Administration of Earth's Affairs.
- Judge Ehud—Resourceful and Valiant for Jehovah's Cause.

temple, the sanctuary was cleansed and rededicated to Jehovah. This was a memorable day, and is remembered by the Jews even down to our present day. Year by year on the 25th of Chislev (November-December) the Jews celebrated the dedication of the temple. The festival lasted for eight days. They assembled in the temple or in the synagogues of their localities. According to Jewish tradition, it was an occasion of much joy and festivity. Thus by accretion the festival of Dedication was added to those mentioned in the law of Moses.

²⁷ The cleansing of Jehovah's temple from pagan idolatry was certainly a good reason for a joyful feast to be commemorated annually. Jehovah preserved the temple until the Messiah should arrive. Jesus Christ himself was present at the temple during the days of the dedication festival. (John 10:22, 23) But the Jews had long before that ceased to act in harmony with this festival and had themselves polluted the temple in such a way that Jesus told them they were making this "house of prayer" into a "cave of robbers." Their apostasy even led them to the rejection of their Messiah, which, in turn, caused Jesus to tell them: "Look! Your house is abandoned to you." So we see that festivals are to the praise and honor of Jehovah only if those celebrating are also acting in harmony with the meaning of the festival. (Matt. 21:13; 23:38) In the next article we are going to discuss a further exciting provision in connection with Jehovah's "seasonal festivals," and will see how Jehovah is having them fulfilled in a way that brings honor to his name.

27. What important lesson may true worshipers learn about celebrating festivals?

The Three Annual National CONVENTIONS

BESIDES the festivals that the Jews celebrated locally, in their home-towns and villages, there were provisions made for three great national conventions. They were holy conventions to Jehovah, and the law commanded: "Three times in the year every male of yours should appear before Jehovah your God in the place that he will choose." Thus it was Jehovah's desire to have the whole nation assembled together at one place three times a year, at a place of His own choice. From the days of King Solomon this place was the temple in Jerusalem. Jehovah also set the time and outlined the program for these annual gatherings. The first convention was to be held in early spring and lasted eight days, from Nisan 14 to 21, to celebrate the Passover and the festival of unfermented cakes. Late in spring, on Sivan 6, a one-day convention was held, to keep the festival of weeks or Pentecost. The third and last convention was scheduled for the fall, Ethanim 15 to 21, and was dedicated to the festival of booths, with a solemn final convention day on Ethanim 22.—Deut. 16:16; Lev. 23:4-22, 33-36; Ex. 23:14-17.

These conventions were "seasonal festivals of Jehovah" and "none should appear before Jehovah empty-handed. The gift of each one's hand should be in proportion to the blessing of Jehovah your God that he has given you." But this does not mean that those attending these con-

"Three times in the year every male of yours should appear before Jehovah your God in the place that he will choose."
—Deut. 16:16.

ventions would not benefit themselves greatly from the gathering. The fellowship made them appreciate the fact that they were one people, one holy nation, unitedly

serving Jehovah, the only true God. The daily worship at the temple, the praise and thanksgiving publicly offered to Jehovah for his goodness and his blessings, the counsel given by the priests, all this strengthened the conventioners to continue faithfully serving Jehovah. The festivals were an encouragement for all, especially for those coming from faraway or isolated places. They were occasions of great rejoicing before Jehovah and happy fellowship, joyful, upbuilding reunions of the entire nation.—Lev. 23:4; Deut. 16:16, 17; Lev. 23:40; Deut. 14:24-27.

Jehovah knew well how vital these annual national assemblies were for the unity of the nation and the purity of his worship throughout the entire country. That is why he commanded attendance of all the males and, as to the Passover, he decreed the death penalty upon every male Israelite who was qualified to attend, being ceremonially clean and who "did not happen to be off on a journey," if he should deliberately fail to observe it. (Num. 9:13) Many of the Israelite family heads esteemed the educational, upbuilding and social value of these conventions so highly that they did not go alone up to Jerusalem, but took their wives and children along with them. What an exciting

1. What national conventions were held yearly in ancient Israel?
2. How did the people benefit from these conventions?

3. (a) How did Jehovah show that he considered the three "seasonal festivals" important? (b) How did many family heads view the conventions?

and interesting trip for a family and what a lasting impression upon those young minds! And many families heeded the counsel in the law to put some money aside each month to attend these annual conventions, and so these trips were not too great a financial burden. Joseph the foster father of Jesus was such a considerate and loving family head. His household was "accustomed to go from year to year to Jerusalem for the festival of the passover."—Luke 2:41-50.

⁴ This going up to Jerusalem of all male Israelites three times a year to attend the conventions, either alone or with the whole family, was a test of strong faith in Jehovah's protection. Why? The historic account in the Hebrew Scriptures shows that the Jews were surrounded by enemies and had to fight constantly for their independence. There were the Philistines, the Syrians, the Amalekites, the Amorites, the Ammonites and Moabites, the Egyptians, the Assyrians and the Babylonians, all with a greedy eye on the land of Palestine. What an opportunity, it would appear, for these enemies to attack the land with all the men at the festivals in Jerusalem! Only a few women and children were left at home. Would an entire nation put faith in Jehovah to protect the country, the vacant cities and homes according to his promise that "nobody will desire your land while you are going up to see the face of Jehovah your God three times in the year"? (Ex. 34:24) But let us turn our attention again to the stage set in Jerusalem and watch the Jews at their annual gatherings; it will be for our encouragement and upbuilding.

4. Why was faith required for all the male population to go up to Jerusalem three times a year?

FESTIVAL OF THE PASSOVER

⁵ At the observance of this Passover on Nisan 14, when the small Jewish son would ask his father: "What does this service mean to you?" (Ex. 12:26) then the father would answer: "It was on Nisan 14 [1513 B.C.E.], when our forefathers had been dwelling 215 years in Egypt, much of this time as ill-treated slaves under harsh Egyptian rule, that Jehovah delivered his people and proved himself mightier than all the gods of the Egyptians. Four days previously, on the tenth of the month, each family head had to take into the house a sound male lamb or goat, a year old. After sunset of Nisan 14 it was slaughtered without a bone's being broken and then roasted whole. Meantime the blood was splashed upon the upper part of the doorway and upon the two doorposts, where every passerby could see it. After this no one was permitted to leave the house.

⁶ "Later in the evening the whole family assembled around the table to eat the passover lamb or goat with unfermented cakes and bitter herbs. They ate in haste,

5, 6. Describe the Passover festival.



not sitting down at their tables, but standing, with their hips girded, their sandals on their feet and a staff in their hand. They were ready to leave that very night as Jehovah had promised through his prophet Moses. And Jehovah proved himself the true God. At midnight the angel of Jehovah struck down every Egyptian first-born of man and animal, from Pharaoh down to the lowliest one. But because of the blood on the doors of our forefathers, the angel passed over their houses. That is why the festival is called 'passover,' because the angel passed or skipped over the homes of the Israelites and thus all of their firstborn were saved. This tenth plague forced stubborn Pharaoh to let Jehovah's people go. Six hundred thousand men, besides women and children and a vast mixed company, marched out the next morning as a free people. A marvelous liberation!

"This day is always to be remembered by Israel. Even before the deliverance Jehovah commanded Moses: 'And this day must serve as a memorial for you, and you must celebrate it as a festival to Jehovah throughout your generations.' The eating of the passover lamb with unfermented cakes and bitter greens reminds the Israelites, not only of the afflictions while they were in Egypt and the hasty departure, but also of the miraculous deliverance from cruel slavery under the mighty Pharaoh. This has made Passover a joyous festival. To express this joy, wine was added later to be used during this festival of liberation and songs were sung, such as the 'Egyptian Hallel' during the first part of the celebration, that is, Psalms 113 and 114, and at the conclusion of the feast Psalms 115 to 118. Thus you see, my son, the sacrifice of the passover lamb, not only saved the Jewish first-

born, but also brought the great liberation of our people. And celebrating this festival should make the Jews thankful and appreciative toward Jehovah, their great God and Deliverer. It must prove to be a joyous festival to the praise and honor of Jehovah."—Ex. 12:14, 27-42.

A BETTER DELIVERANCE

⁸ Passover not only was a joyous festival commemorating past events, but was also a shadow of better things to come, pointing forward to the real and greater Passover Lamb. The apostle Paul identifies the real Passover Lamb for us: "For, indeed, Christ our passover has been sacrificed." (1 Cor. 5:7) Yes, Christ Jesus was offered as the perfect Lamb of God exactly on Nisan 14, in the year 33 C.E. By this sacrifice the basis was laid for a far greater deliverance than the release from Egyptian captivity.

⁹ This deliverance is for Jehovah's spiritual "firstborn" ones and Christ's spiritual brothers, the 144,000. Jehovah has delivered them from the captivity of sin and death and has made them spiritual sons with prospects of immortal life in heaven. However, at the Passover, the Israelites celebrated the deliverance of the first-born; but the festival of unleavened bread that followed for seven days corresponded with the time of the deliverance of all Israel, along with the mixed multitude at the Red Sea. The sacrifice of Christ therefore lays the foundation for the great crowd of Jesus' "other sheep" also to be delivered at Armageddon from this world under the control of the greater Pharaoh Satan the Devil, with opportunity of everlasting life on earth.—Ex. 12:37-39, 42; 1 Cor. 5:8; Rev. 7:9; John 10:16.

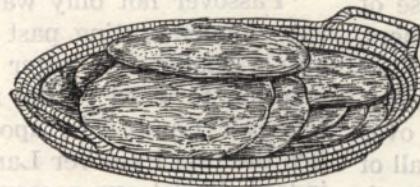
8. Who is the true Passover Lamb?

9. (a) What was pictured by the sparing of the first-born ones at the Passover in Egypt? (b) What was celebrated after the Passover festival, and what does it picture?

FESTIVAL OF UNFERMENTED CAKES

¹⁰ The day following Passover marked the beginning of the festival of unfermented cakes, which ran for seven days, from Nisan 15 to 21. During these seven days the Israelites continued to eat unfermented cakes; in fact, no fermentation was to be found in their homes. This law was very strict; anyone found eating what was leavened was to be cut off from the people, put to death. The removing of all fermentation and old leavened bread indicated that the Jews had left behind the bad Egyptian influences religiously, politically and morally, and had started to live as a cleansed, free people, wholly devoted to Jehovah their God and Protector. Therefore, the festival would remind them, not only of the deliverance from the afflictions of Egypt and their hasty exodus, but also that they were to stay free from all pagan practices, free from the leaven of Satan's world. The unfermented cakes were to impress upon their minds that they should serve Jehovah in sincerity and in truth.—Ex. 12:39; Deut. 16:3.

¹¹ The next day of the convention, Nisan 16, was another featured day. It was the second day of the festival of unfermented cakes, the official opening of the harvest. The Jews were not allowed to eat from the product of the new harvest before this day, when the firstfruits were offered to Jehovah. On this day the high priest was required to wave a sheaf of the barley firstfruits to and fro before Jehovah at the sanctuary. (Lev. 23:10-14) During the seven-day festival, in addition



to the regular sacrifices, two bullocks, one ram and seven male lambs were offered day by day as burnt offerings and a he-goat as a sin offering, besides the many voluntary offerings by individuals. The festival climaxed with a final general assembly on the seventh day, Nisan 21.—Lev. 23:8; Num. 28:19-24; Ex. 23:15.

¹² Those attending the convention felt much like those Jews who went up to Jerusalem in Hezekiah's day: "So the sons of Israel that were found in Jerusalem held the festival of the unfermented cakes seven days with great rejoicing; and the Levites and the priests were offering praise to Jehovah day by day with loud instruments, even to Jehovah . . . And they proceeded to eat the appointed feast for seven days, sacrificing communion sacrifices and making confession to Jehovah the God of their forefathers." (2 Chron. 30:21, 22) It was a joyous and edifying convention, reminding the whole nation of their deliverance from Egypt, their obligation to stay clean and loyal in Jehovah's service and worship. The whole nation was strengthened, and each individual was spiritually uplifted.

"LET US KEEP THE FEAST"

¹³ In 1 Corinthians 5:7, 8 the apostle Paul instructs Christians, even of our twentieth century, to keep the festival of unfermented cakes, with these words: "Clear away the old leaven [as the Jews did], that you may be a new lump, according as you are free from ferment. For, indeed, Christ our passover has been sacrificed. Consequently let us keep the festival, not with old leaven, neither with leaven of injuriousness and wickedness, but with unfermented cakes of sincerity

10. Of what were the Jews reminded at the festival of unfermented cakes?

11. What offering was made on Nisan 16? Why?

12. What do we learn from 2 Chronicles 30:21, 22?

13. How do Christians keep the festival today?

and truth." On the basis of Jesus' sacrifice the 144,000 spiritual Israelites have been freed from the world under Satan and from its condemnation. They have been pronounced "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for special possession" for Jehovah. (1 Pet. 2:9) As long as they are on earth they must remain in this holy condition, as foreshadowed by the unfermented cakes. They must keep free from the leaven of the old system of things, its false religion and moral degeneration. No spiritual or moral uncleanness is permitted among them. They must celebrate a continuous feast of praise and joy, in sincerity and truth, publishing the purposes of Jehovah world wide with gladness. Those of the "great crowd" of "other sheep" associating today with them must have the same mental attitude.

¹⁴ By the waving of the sheaf of the firstfruits of the barley harvest, another important point was foreshadowed. Again it is the apostle Paul who gives us the correct understanding: "However, now Christ has been raised up from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep . . . Christ the first fruits." No ferment or leaven, representing sin, was associated with the presentation of the barley firstfruits, for Jesus Christ was "loyal, guileless, undefiled, separated from the sinners." As the sheaf was



14. What is pictured by the waving of the sheaf of barley firstfruits by the high priest?

waved on Nisan 16 Jesus was raised as the "first fruits," or the firstborn from the dead, on Nisan 16, 33 C.E. Since Jesus is called the "first fruits" or "first-born from the dead," there must be more "fruit" following him. This is foreshadowed by the next festival.—1 Cor. 15:20-23; Heb. 7:26; Acts 26:23; Col. 1:18; Rev. 1:5.

FESTIVAL OF WEEKS

¹⁵ Fifty days after Nisan 16, on Sivan 6, the second national convention was held, the festival of weeks, also called Pentecost, meaning the fiftieth day. It was a one-day convention. Many conventioners stayed in Jerusalem from Passover till Pentecost. Pentecost was a very joyful gathering; it was "the festival of harvest of the first ripe fruits of your labors, of what you sow in the field." (Ex. 23:16) In most districts the wheat harvest had ended and now, at the sanctuary, the firstfruits were offered to Jehovah. "Out of your dwelling places you should bring two loaves as a wave offering.

. . . They should be baked leavened, as first ripe fruits to Jehovah." It is interesting to notice the use of leaven during this festival. Many additional sacrifices were offered and the people made personal voluntary offering just as Jehovah their God had blessed them. All were to rejoice, including slaves, foreigners, orphans and widows.—Lev. 23:17-21; Deut. 16:10-12.

¹⁶ The most notable festival of weeks ever held was the one celebrated after Jesus' resurrection in the year 33 C.E. The historian Dr. Luke has recorded the events of this memorable Pentecost in detail. (See Acts, chapter 2.) It was on this

15. (a) When was the festival of weeks held? (b) What special offering was made?

16. What do the two loaves picture? Why two?

day that the waving of the two fermented loaves began to have fulfillment. The two loaves symbolically represented the entire body of 144,000 spirit-begotten members of Christ's body as being waved or presented by Christ Jesus, the greater High Priest, before Jehovah as holy unto Him. The 120 disciples who were gathered in the upper room were the first members presented and the ingathering of the remaining ones has continued from Pentecost 33 C.E. until our day, with a remnant yet living on earth. The first ones were taken from the natural Jews, as foreshadowed by one of the loaves, and then others were taken from the Gentile nations, beginning in 36 C.E., when Peter preached to Cornelius, as represented by the second "loaf."—Acts 10:1-48.

¹⁷ The fact that the two loaves were fermented pictured that they all were by inheritance sinful creatures, needing Jesus' sacrifice to become holy to Jehovah. Just as the two loaves were the first-fruits of the wheat harvest, so also these 144,000 are the first ones taken out from sinful mankind and declared justified and holy to Jehovah, as we read: "Because he willed it, he brought us forth by the word of truth, for us to be a certain first fruits of his creatures." "These are the

ones . . . bought from among mankind as a first fruits to God and to the Lamb." They are "*a first fruits*," "*a certain first fruits*." Just as the barley, not the wheat, was THE firstfruits, so Jesus Christ is the primary firstfruits to God. In turn, since these 144,000 are called a firstfruits from among mankind, there must be a much larger number of mankind who will be saved to everlasting life, not in heaven, but on earth. Interestingly this is foreshadowed by the third and last convention.—Jas. 1:18; Rev. 14:4.

FESTIVAL OF BOOTHES

¹⁸ In the fall, at the close of the year, the third and last national convention was held. It was scheduled for Ethanim or Tishri 15 to 21, with a final assembly on the 22d. Again all the male Israelites had to appear before Jehovah at the sanctuary in Jerusalem, this time to celebrate the festival of booths. During this festival the conventioners had to dwell for seven days in booths or tabernacles, made out of the "fronds of palm trees and the boughs of branchy trees." The booths were erected on the roofs and in the courtyards of the houses, in the streets and the temple courtyard, and even in the open country up to the distance of a sabbath-day's journey outside the city wall. The festival reminded the Israelites of their nomadic life,

when Jehovah made them dwell in booths during their forty-year trek through the wilderness, and especially of God's care for them after delivering them from Egypt. They could think back with joy and thankfulness over Jehovah's fatherly loving-kindness to them when he provided them shelter and nourishment, "who caused [them] to walk through the great and fear-inspiring wil-



17. (a) What was pictured by the loaves' being baked with leaven? (b) In what way are those pictured by the wheat loaves "first fruits"?

18. How did the Jews celebrate the festival of booths?



derness, with poisonous serpents and scorpions and with thirsty ground that has no water; who brought forth water for you out of the flinty rock; who fed you with manna in the wilderness, which your fathers had not known.”—Lev. 23:40-43; Deut. 8:15, 16; 16:16; Neh. 8:16.

¹⁹ The feast was also called the “festival of ingathering” because it was celebrated at the end of the ingathering of the products of the land, the grainfields, olive yard and vineyard. It was a harvest festival, with all the people assembled to offer thanksgiving to Jehovah for his goodness and to show their appreciation by offering many sacrifices. The special burnt offering amounted to seventy bullocks for the seven days, besides many other offerings.—Num. 29:12-34.

²⁰ The festival of ingathering was held only five days after their ceremonial cleansing from their sinfulness on the day of atonement. Thus the people had a feeling of cleanness, a standing before Jehovah as his people, and could therefore celebrate this last feast with great joy and gladness. It was the most joyful convention of the year. Every seven years, when there was no harvest because of the Sab-

bath year, and again on the fiftieth or Jubilee year, the people assembled during this festival of the booths to hear the reading of the law.—Deut. 16:16; 31:10-13.

²¹ In course of time other features were added. The Jews began to carry palm branches as a sign of joy and victory. Each morning a priest filled a golden vessel with water from the pool of Siloam and carried it to the temple, where trumpets were blown and the words of Isaiah 12:3 were spoken: “With exultation you people will be certain to draw water out of the springs of salvation.” In the evenings it was customary to illuminate the Court of Women at the temple with great golden lamps. The whole cycle of three national conventions was concluded with a fitting general assembly of the entire nation on the eighth day, without various features of the preceding seven days. This was the climax of the joyous feasting and an expression of praise and honor to Jehovah their God. Each and every one returned to his home with a thankful heart, spiritually strengthened and encouraged.

“OTHER SHEEP”

²² Jesus said: “I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; those also I must bring.” (John 10:16) The ingathering of these “other sheep” in our day was also marvelously pictured by the festival of ingathering. The remnant of spiritual Israel are busy since 1919 preaching the good news of God’s kingdom. As a result of this preaching work “a great crowd, which no man was able to number,” has come to join them, “out of all nations and

19. Why was the feast also called “festival of ingathering”?

20. Why was it the most joyous festival of the year?

21. Describe the additions later brought in at the festival of booths.

22. What relation is there between John 10:16 and the festival of ingathering?

tribes and peoples and tongues." (Rev. 7:9) They are harvested, gathered to Jehovah's temple class, as represented by the remnant, to be protected during the coming war of Armageddon. Just as Jehovah blessed the ingathering of the Jews in ancient times, so he blesses the ingathering of the "other sheep" today.

²³ The Jews' dwelling in booths during the festival pictured that the remnant and the "other sheep" consider their sojourn here in this old system of things as but a temporary abode, as they look forward to a permanent dwelling place, in heaven for the remnant and in a paradise on earth for the "other sheep." Those booths were not elaborately furnished; likewise today, Jehovah's people, along with godly devotion, have "self-sufficiency . . . having sustenance and covering" with which they are content. (1 Tim. 6:6-8) They are happy and full of joy in having a share in this greater ingathering work and in helping people now to accept Jesus as the ransom. They know that Jesus' sacrifice alone will bring real forgiveness of sin. The seventy bullocks sacrificed during the seven days of the festival indicate that Jesus' sacrifice is complete, from a human and heavenly standpoint, and is for all mankind typified by the seventy generations named in Genesis, chapter ten. As a token of joy the Jews back there carried palm branches, and it is interesting that in Revelation 7, verse 9, the great crowd of people have palm branches in their hands. Certainly they have good reason to express their joy as they shout with a loud voice: "Salvation we owe to our God, who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb."

—Vs. 10.

23. (a) What does the dwelling in booths foreshadow? (b) The seventy bullocks offered? (c) The carrying of palm branches?

²⁴ During the festival of booths the people were instructed in the Law, and Jesus himself followed this custom, as we read: "When by now the festival was half over, Jesus went up into the temple and began teaching." The same is true of the remnant today; they are preaching and teaching the law of God throughout the whole earth, supported by about a million "other sheep" already gathered. This teaching points to something more refreshing than the waters from the well of Siloam. That is why Jesus said to his listeners in the temple on the last or seventh day of the feast: "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. He that puts faith in me, just as the Scripture has said, 'Out from his inmost part streams of living water will flow.'

²⁵ This teaching is also more enlightening than the four golden lamps that lightened up the Court of the Women at the temple on evenings of the feast. That is what Jesus may have had reference to when he said, possibly the day after this festival in 32 C.E.: "I am the light of the world. He that follows me will by no means walk in darkness, but will possess the light of life." The great festival of ingathering is under way, thousands of "other sheep" have already been brought into Jehovah's organization and thousands will yet come, to the vindication of Jehovah and to His praise and honor.—John 7:14-16, 37, 38; 8:12.

MODERN-DAY ASSEMBLIES

²⁶ With great appreciation we have watched the Jews celebrating their festivals. During the study of these festivals you may have felt a strong desire to be

24. What did Jesus do at the feast, and with what significance to us?

25. What reference may Jesus have made to the celebration carried on during evenings of this festival?

26. Why are assemblies and conventions necessary for Christians today?

with your family among the conventioners in Jerusalem, to share with them in the companionship, the worship, the offerings of sacrifices and praises to Jehovah, and have a part in this joy and gladness. Your desire may be gratified in an enlarged way today. As Jehovah made provision for his ancient people to celebrate festivals and assemblies in holy convention, in the same way he provides for his people today. As in the days of the Jews, the same need exists today for Christians to come together in joyous and upbuilding conventions. And the historic record of modern-day Christians proves that such conventions are of great benefit.

²⁷ Besides assembling locally at five congregational meetings each week, Jehovah's witnesses usually gather together three times a year in circuit and district assemblies, national or international conventions. They take these gatherings seriously by being present at them. Like the ancient Israelites they are thankful for such a provision and they appreciate the educational and encouraging value of such assemblies. They heed the counsel of Paul by "not forsaking the gathering of ourselves together, . . . but encouraging one another, and all the more so as you behold the day drawing near."—Heb. 10:25.

²⁸ Just as the Israelites, when attending the seasonal festivals of Jehovah, were not to appear before Jehovah empty-handed, so Jehovah's witnesses today rejoice to contribute something to assemblies they attend, whether they be weekly meetings or large conventions. They are joyful and their joy finds expression. They manifest it by preparing well for whatever parts they may have on the program. They prepare in advance to comment at the Bible-study meetings. They do not let their

personal difficulties cause them to appear at the meetings with a sad and mournful appearance, but come with happiness on their countenances, glad to see and associate with their brothers in friendliness and kindness, welcoming the stranger at the meetings. In this way they carry out Paul's counsel to encourage one another in a very practical way.

²⁹ At the larger assemblies they are happy to volunteer their services in the various convention departments, whether it be serving as an attendant, in the cleaning crew, on the program or any place where they can use their talents and abilities as a contribution to Jehovah's service. Some open their homes to convention delegates. Others volunteer use of their equipment. Some contribute from their private funds toward convention expenses. Thus moved by Jehovah's spirit, conventions are a joyful success and a praise to His name, which conventions people on the outside see as a model and are thereby impelled toward greater respect for Jehovah, his Word and his organization.

³⁰ And just as the Israelites of old set aside the products of their fields and herds in advance for their seasonal festivals, so today Jehovah's witnesses prepare in advance by arranging their vacations and by saving their money so that their entire families can come to the assemblies. This has resulted in a great witness to Jehovah's name and an encouragement to one another, as during the recent assemblies held in Latin America, where hundreds of fellow Witnesses from the United States, Canada and other lands were able to attend, forming a stronger bond of unity among their Christian brothers and increasing their understanding and love for one another.—Deut. 14:22-27.

27. What provisions are made by Jehovah's organization for assemblies, and how should one view them?

28. How is it that Jehovah's modern-day servants do not appear "empty-handed" at their weekly meetings?

29. How is this same principle true at larger assemblies?

30. How do Jehovah's witnesses view assemblies, and what effect have they had?

The REMOVAL of

MANKIND'S CHIEF DISTURBER

WE OFTEN see a situation where a change of administration is made, a person placed in a political office of rulership by vote, the hope of the people supporting him being that he will bring about better conditions. But after a little while complaints arise, even some of his own supporters blaming him for the undesirable things taking place. It may be a bad economic situation, unemployment, or it may be a war, or certain groups may not feel that they are getting equal treatment and enjoying their civil rights.

Everyone is aware that there are many corrupt politicians, and sometimes some of the conditions may be partly due to corruption on the part of the individual in office. But, again, everyone realizes that one man, no matter how honest and zealous for good government and the good of the people he may be, cannot by himself correct the many bad situations that exist. Actually no individual can be singled out as the cause for the trouble. No, it is the *system* of things that controls. Things are so interrelated and there is such a hopeless tangle and conflict of interests that it is impossible for one man or a group of honest men to straighten it out.

That is why the Bible shows that the entire system of things, first the false religious systems, followed by the political and commercial systems, will have to be wiped out in completion. But one may ask, How will that do any good? Men will just start over and do the same thing again, as past history shows.

THE REAL DISTURBER

That is a good question, but there is an answer, for in asking such a question we are overlooking one important thing, namely, the cause for the world's taking such a course, when actually the majority of people would much prefer to live in peace. The real cause is an invisible one, but, nevertheless, very powerful and influential. Even in the present-day materialistic system people are afraid that they are being watched by some unseen and menacing enemy. They really believe and fear that creatures from outer space may be watching their every move. Fear is heightened by the unexplained flying saucers or "unidentified flying objects" sighted in different parts of the earth. The real source of earth's troubles, however, is much more dangerous and insidious and is absolutely invisible. The Bible describes this source as being the one who is called "the god of this system of things" and "the ruler of this world," who Jesus said had no hold on him and who would be cast out. (2 Cor. 4:4; John 12:31; 14:30) It is none other than Satan the Devil, who is misleading the entire inhabited earth. (Rev. 12:9) That is why, not only this system of things, but also the ruler of the system must be put out of action for the earth to have rest from constant trouble.

FIRST, AN EARTHLY FIGHT

In our previous issue we discussed the war of Har-Magedon (Armageddon),

which takes place after false religion has been wiped out by the political rulers and which war, in turn, wipes out all politics on earth and those who stubbornly hang on, trying to perpetuate man's sovereignty. Although the "wild beast," representing the political organization of earth, got its authority from the Dragon (Rev. 13:2), the Dragon is unable to back it up and support it for success and salvation in the war of Armageddon. Because the great issue of universal sovereignty is between Jehovah God and Satan, God purposes that Satan will get to see his entire earthly seed destroyed, knowing that he personally must be next to come into direct clash with the heavenly commander of God's armies. His earthly "seed" will be destroyed before he faces the bruising of his head.—Gen. 3:15.

The destruction of Satan's visible political organization means the finale of the "time of the end" that began when the Gentile Times ran out in the year 1914 C.E. (Dan. 12:1, 4; Luke 21:24) To clean up the universe the only need left after that is to put Satan and his demon hosts out of action. Since this is a heavenly act it is undoubtedly the greatest part of the cleanup work. Can it be done?

Well, in 1914, when God's Messianic kingdom was set up in the heavens, the first act of the newly enthroned King was to start war against this enemy of God to hurl him and his demons down to the earth, cleansing the heavens. There the angelic forces under Michael, which is the heavenly name of Jesus Christ, were victorious. Since that time the wrathful Dragon and his demons have made it their prime business to "wage war with the remaining ones of [the woman's] seed, who observe the commandments of God and have the work of bearing witness to Jesus." Their efforts are more than ever concentrated because these invisible en-

mies of God can no longer have access to the heavens.—Rev. 12:3-17.

In 1914 Jesus Christ ended his nineteen-hundred-year-long wait at God's right hand and took up the long-promised Kingdom authority. He went forth subduing in the midst of his enemies, first conquering by hurling the demons out of heaven and later to conquer by completely crushing all the visible earthly seed of the Dragon. (Ps. 110:1-6; Rev. 6:2) These enemies have made it hard on the remaining ones on earth of the 144,000 who are to be kings in heaven with Jesus Christ. Additionally, they have made it hard upon the great crowd of persons who have given heed to the good news of the Kingdom as proclaimed by the woman's seed and who have taken up the proclamation of the Kingdom themselves, hailing the King enthroned. But right up through the battle of Har-Magedon Satan is powerless to crush them out. Har-Magedon completed, there will be no danger to these faithful ones on earth.—Rev. 7:9, 10, 15.

LAST, A HEAVENLY BINDING

But there would be danger to them if Satan and his invisible demons were left to war against them. Therefore, John, in the vision, describes the next step to be taken: "And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven with the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. And he seized the dragon, the original serpent, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. And he hurled him into the abyss and shut it and sealed it over him, that he might not mislead the nations any more until the thousand years were ended. After these things he must be let loose for a little while."—Rev. 20:1-3.

Who is the angel, here unnamed, who has the key to the abyss and who comes down out of heaven to bind the Devil? He

must be one of tremendous power, for he accomplishes the binding of Satan without any help. We know that it is harder to bind a strong man than it is to overcome and kill him in combat. Let us identify this angel, for it is important to our understanding.

Since Satan has seen all his earthly seed go, the rest of the prophecy of Genesis 3:15 has to be fulfilled: his head must be bruised. Who is the one to do the bruising? The prophecy says the seed of the woman. In the fight just preceding this, namely, Har-Magedon, none other than the King of kings and Lord of lords, Jesus Christ himself, in command of Jehovah's invisible army, destroyed the wild beast and the false prophet and gave the bodies of the kings and military commanders as food for the birds of heaven. (Rev. 19: 11-21) It was the same one, the archangel Michael, who hurled Satan and his demons out of heaven earlier, 1914-1918. Therefore, it is unreasonable to think that it would be anyone less than the Son of God Jesus Christ himself who would be assigned to such an important task, one requiring such great power.

WHERE THE DISTURBER IS PUT

Are the demons also defeated along with their leader Satan even though they are not mentioned here in the Revelation vision? Yes. This is in harmony with the custom of mentioning only the leader of an army as losing a battle, the understanding being, of course, that his army actually lost under his leadership. When Jesus was on earth as a man, the unclean demons entreated him not to order them into the abyss. (Luke 8:31) Jesus is the starlike One who has the "key of the pit of the abyss." (Rev. 9:1) He himself went into the abyss when he died but was raised out of it by his own Father, Jehovah God, on the third day and was given the keys

of death and Hades. (Rev. 1:18; Rom. 10: 7) Therefore all the evidence points to him as the one whom Jehovah uses to bind Satan and to throw him with his demons into the abyss and shut it and seal it over him, "that he might not mislead the nations any more until the thousand years [are] ended." He is the mightiest angel of all, the angel of angels, the archangel Michael.—Dan. 12:1; Jude 9; 1 Thess. 4: 16; Luke 11:20-22.

Why is it that it is the abyss, not Sheol or Hades, into which the angel or messenger of God, Jesus Christ, hurls Satan? For the reason that Hades or Sheol is the common grave of dead humans and is in the ground of our earth. Satan and his demons are not earthly, visible, but are of a different nature, angelic or spirit. The binding and hurling into the abyss will consequently be something invisible to the eyes of the survivors of the war of the great day of God the Almighty. Already these invisible spirit persons have been cast out of heaven and no one on earth saw this, for it was something in the invisible realm. When Jesus was in the abyss he was dead, unconscious, out of action. The condition of Satan and the demons when they are in the abyss means that they will be in the condition of deathlikeness, likely an unconscious state, with no ability to do anything at all to disturb mankind and mislead the nations into captivity to form another oppressive system of things such as we see today.

A THOUSAND-YEAR REBUILDING PERIOD

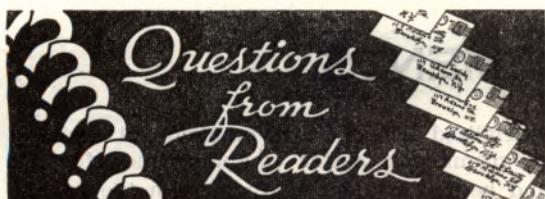
According to the Bible timetable, man's history on earth has been nearly 6,000 years. Adam was created in 4026 B.C.E., which means that six thousand years of human history end about the fall of 1975 C.E. We are in the great 7,000-year rest day of God, starting at the time he rested after the creation of Adam and Eve. There

are, therefore, a thousand years left to run. Without Satan and his demons to disturb mankind it will indeed be a restful time. It will be like a sabbath. In a way it will be a sabbath within a sabbath. The last thousand years of God's great seven-thousand-year rest is a special sabbath over which the Son of man will be Lord.

—Matt. 12:8.

Since Satan is to be loosed along with his demons for a "little while," by the end of this sabbath millennium mankind will have to be considerably changed, so that Satan will be unable to influence them so easily to take the course of wickedness that past history records. They will have to be helped so that they are able to withstand the final test at the loosing of the Serpent and the demons. This work,

therefore, is to be done during the thousand-year reign of Christ. During his rule righteousness will be in the earth and the people will be taught righteousness. Christ and his 144,000 associate kings and priests will minister to mankind and raise them up from the imperfect state in which desires of the flesh have such a hold upon them. They will be able to make over their personalities and arrive at physical perfection. But as we go on farther into the Revelation prophecy we get much more detail and enlightenment on this, for the blessings that God has in store for mankind when the Great Disturber is out of the way are greater than man by his own reasoning can conceive.—John 5:22, 28, 29; Acts 17:31; 2 Pet. 3:13; Eph. 4:22, 23.



- According to Luke 22:37, Jesus was to be "reckoned with lawless ones," in fulfillment of Isaiah 53:12. Are Christ's disciples to be viewed as the "lawless ones" because some were carrying swords?—A. F., U.S.A.

No, it does not appear that Jesus' followers, even though they had two swords at that time, were the "lawless ones." Rather, this portion of Isaiah 53:12 was fulfilled when he was impaled between two criminals. By examining the context of Jesus' words we can better understand the point he was making. Luke 22:35-38 reads:

"He also said to them: 'When I sent you forth without purse and food pouch and sandals, you did not want for anything, did you?' They said: 'No!' Then he said to them: 'But now let the one that has a purse take it up, likewise also a food pouch; and let the one having no sword sell his outer garment and buy

one. For I tell you that this which is written must be accomplished in me, namely, "And he was reckoned with lawless ones." For that which concerns me is having an accomplishment.' Then they said: 'Lord, look! here are two swords.' He said to them: 'It is enough.'

The Lord was spending his last night with the disciples before his death. He realized that, once he was arrested and executed, conditions would change for them. When he had sent them out before, they had been welcomed and provided for by the people, but, in general, things were going to be more difficult now. (Mark 6:7-11) From this time forward they would not be welcomed by the majority, but would be rejected and scorned. Consequently, they would have to make some provisions for themselves.

After stating what their situation would be in the future, Jesus explained to his disciples why things were going to change; he gave them the reason. It was because he was to be killed, taken away like a transgressor and executed with lawless ones in fulfillment of Isaiah 53:12. The "lawless ones" were not the disciples to whom he was speaking, but, instead, were the evildoers between whom Jesus was impaled. (Matt. 27:38) Some manuscripts

have a verse inserted in Mark 15 directly linking these evildoers with the prophecy in Isaiah 53:12; but older and more reliable Bible manuscripts omit Mark 15:28.

After Jesus provided the explanation of why the disciples could expect problems ahead, Jesus' followers commented: "Lord, look! here are two swords." Not that Jesus' followers customarily carried swords, but on this occasion they were provided. In mentioning a sword to them, Jesus was not recommending that they arm themselves for attack. Quite the opposite! His next words showed he had something else in mind and that he was using the swords to teach his followers an important lesson.

Shortly he was going to be arrested by an armed band, including Roman soldiers; and the circumstances could provoke armed resistance. (Matt. 26:47; John 18:12) In order to accomplish what was prophesied, however, Jesus chose not to resort to armed resistance but voluntarily allowed himself to be seized. The two swords would not be enough to de-

fend the group victoriously against the mob, but they would be enough for the purpose of teaching a lesson, to emphasize that Jesus was submitting of his own will, freely, and not violently resisting, as his group was equipped to do. (John 18:11, 36) When Peter impetuously drew his sword and cut off the ear of the slave Malchus, Jesus reprimanded him. He said that "those who take the sword will perish by the sword"; besides, if he wanted to he could have called on the angels for help. (Matt. 26: 52, 53) But that was not what he wanted. As shown by his not engaging the two swords for defense, Jesus was willingly giving himself to die on the stake between two "lawless ones." As for Jesus' faithful followers, they had learned their lesson well, so that Justin Martyr wrote in his *Dialogue with Trypho, a Jew* (155-160 C.E.): "We who were filled with war, and mutual slaughter, and every wickedness, have each through the whole earth changed our warlike weapons,—our swords into ploughshares, and our spears into implements of tillage."

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- August 20: The Three Annual National Conventions, ¶10-30. Page 438. Songs to Be Used: 9, 110.