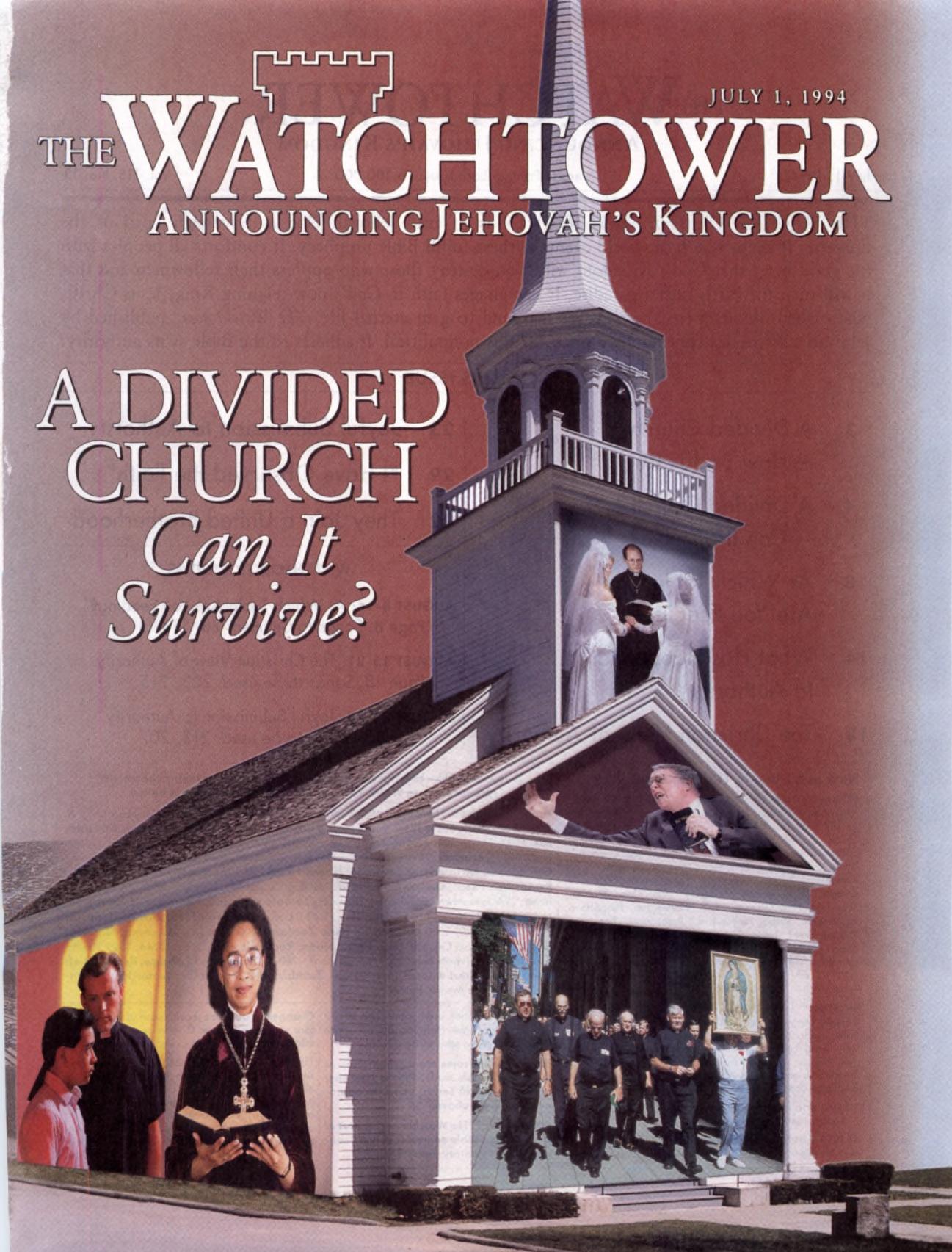


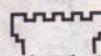
# THE WATCHTOWER

JULY 1, 1994

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

## A DIVIDED CHURCH *Can It Survive?*





# THE WATCHTOWER®

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

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

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# A DIVIDED CHURCH

## How Bad Is It?

**L**IKE a large and startled family, living in a ramshackle old house whose front wall has suddenly collapsed, there seems to be a row going on in practically every room—with tambourine-bashing Jesus children screaming at elegant Anglo-Catholic homosexuals in black silk suits.”—*The Sunday Times*, London, April 11, 1993.

This family is the Church of England. The row is about admitting women to the priesthood. The graphic description of deep disunity applies just as well to all Christendom. With the patriarchs of the Orthodox Church and the pope condemning the decision to allow women to be priests, the overall result, one report concludes, is that “the dream of reunification with the rest of Christendom is farther away than ever.”

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**Demonstration by priests against abortion**

### How Divided Is the Church?

As we read at Matthew 7:21, Jesus Christ said that many would profess faith in him as Lord but still fail to ‘do the will of his Father.’ *Maclean’s* magazine observes: “Readers of Matthew seeking salvation could be excused for confusion about what exactly the will of God is, when Christians, and their churches, differ so profoundly on the question.” Following a poll among Canadians, it concluded that there is “tremendous diversity in Canadian Christians’ beliefs and practices—more diversity among members of any given denomination, in fact, than between the denominations themselves.”

According to its survey, 91 percent of Catholics agree with the use of artificial birth control even though their church condemns it; 78 percent think women should be allowed to become priests; and



Cover and above: Eleftherios/Sipa Press

41 percent accept abortion "in certain circumstances." Disagreement within the different denominations on "a host of theological questions," *Maclean's* says, "underscores the divisions tearing at the seams of the mainstream churches."

### Double Standards

Double standards as well as conflicting standards exist on morals. Some profess to uphold the Bible's principles, but others flout them. Was the "marriage" ceremony performed for two Lesbians in the Metropolitan Church of Toronto, for example, in keeping with God's will? The participants evidently thought so. "We want to celebrate our love publicly and before God," they said.

One columnist asked how it was that "a Catholic archbishop with whom complaint after complaint had been filed, moved pedophilic priests to a different set of altar boys." Priest Andrew Greeley suggests that from 2,000 to 4,000 priests may have abused 100,000 underage victims, oftentimes with little done about it.

A disunited church produces disunited people. In the Balkans, both Serbian and Croat "Christians" feel that Christ is with them in their "just" war. Many wear crucifixes in battle; one, it is reported, "always held his crucifix in his mouth when the fighting was fiercest."

### "There Should Not Be Divisions Among You"

True, the Bible leaves some matters to conscience, but this should not leave room for such division. The apostle Paul clearly states: "You should all speak [and act] in agreement, and . . . there should not be divisions among you."—1 Corinthians 1:10; Ephesians 4:15, 16.

An honest look at "Christianity" some two thousand years after the apostle Paul wrote those words raises some very serious questions. Why are "Christians" so divided? Can such a divided church survive? Will there ever be a united Christendom? The next article will consider these questions.

## A DIVIDED CHURCH *Can It Survive?*

**A**LL who profess the saving truth of Christ belong to the visible Church. The divisions of Christendom—between East and West, and between Rome and the churches of the Reformation—are divisions within the one Church." (*Christians in Communion*) That is how one author views Christianity—as a

widely scattered family of religions, all professing some kind of faith in Jesus Christ.

However, it is a divided family, with conflicting beliefs and standards of behavior. "Present-day Christianity . . . has lower standards for church membership than those for getting on a bus," says one observer. How, then, should we diagnose its

spiritual state? Catholic bishop Basil Butler concludes: "A divided Christianity is very ill indeed." (*The Church and Unity*) How did the illness begin? Are there hopes for recovery?

### "The Man of Lawlessness"

The apostle Paul warned that disunity would develop. To Christians in Thessalonica who thought that Christ's presence was imminent, he wrote: "Let no one seduce you in any manner, because it [Jehovah's day] will not come unless the apostasy comes first and the man of lawlessness gets revealed, the son of destruction."—2 Thessalonians 2:3.

This "man of lawlessness" introduced apostasy and rebellion into the Christian congregation. Who is he? Not any individual man but, rather, the clergy class of Christendom. This class elevated itself over the apostate congregation relatively soon after the death of Jesus' apostles, and eventually came to teach pagan philosophies, such as the Trinity and the immortality of the human soul. (Acts 20:29, 30; 2 Peter 2:1-3) Like a lethal virus, it infected the professing Christian congregation with demon-inspired ideas that would lead inevitably to disunity.—Galatians 5:7-10.

The contagion had already started in the apostle Paul's day. He wrote: "True, the mystery of this lawlessness is already at work; but only till he who is right now acting as a restraint gets to be out of the way." (2 Thessalonians 2:7) The apostles acted as a restraint against the poison of apostasy. When their unifying influence was removed, unrestrained apostasy spread like gangrene.—1 Timothy 4:1-3; 2 Timothy 2:16-18.

The activities of this "man of lawlessness" continue unabated. In a recent report

on "a church in sexual and theological torment," one archdeacon of the Church of England is quoted as complaining: "Motions calling on the clergy not to indulge in sexual activity outside marriage are flung out. Practising homosexuals are ordained. They have made good evil and evil good."—*The Sunday Times Magazine*, London, November 22, 1992.

### Wheat and Weeds

Jesus Christ himself taught that true Christianity would temporarily disappear from view. He said that the founding of the Christian congregation was like a man sowing fine seed in his field. But, Jesus said, "his enemy came and oversowed weeds in among the wheat." When his slaves asked whether they should try to uproot the weeds, the field owner said: "No; that by no chance, while collecting the weeds, you uproot the wheat with them." How long would this mingling of wheat and weeds continue? The owner of the field said: "Let both grow together until the harvest."—Matthew 13:25, 29, 30.

Until "the harvest," or time of separation during the last days of the "system of things," imitation Christians grew alongside true Christians. (Matthew 28:20) Satan the Devil used the apostates to create a corrupt and divided imitation Christian congregation. (Matthew 13:36-39) They produced a shameful counterfeit of genuine Christianity. (2 Corinthians 11:3, 13-15; Colossians 2:8) As the church fragmented over the centuries, it became increasingly difficult to identify true Christians.

### New Divisions

In more modern times, says *The Testing of the Churches*—1932-1982, "[n]ew divisions have appeared, in particular the charismatic movement, with its emphasis on

personal faith and experience." Interestingly, some see the born again, charismatic movements as signs of spiritual recovery rather than new divisions. Northern Ireland, for example, experienced such a revival in the 1850's. High hopes were raised. A report told of "fraternal union . . . among the Presbyterian, Wesleyan, and Independent ministers" and said that "every day brought new tales of trances, sleeps, visions, dreams and miracles."—*Religious Revivals*.

Many saw these dramatic manifestations as evidence of God's spirit working to revive his church. "The church of God," said one observer, "in its highest sense is in these districts revived." However, even though this particular revival was heralded as "a glorious and unprecedented epoch in the religious history of Ulster," it and other revivals like it have not produced religious unity among those who claim a spiritual rebirth.

Such ones will argue that they are united in fundamentals. But this is the same argument used by the rest of Christendom, who rationalize that "what unites Christians is already far more important than the matters that still divide them." (*The Church and Unity*) Christendom claims:

## In Our Next Issue

Why Does Fear Grip the World?

Work Hard for the Salvation  
of Your Household

How Do You Settle Differences?

"Our fundamental unity with each other and with all our fellow Christians is rooted in our baptism in Christ." (*Christians in Communion*) To say that the divisions are unimportant because of common faith in Jesus is, however, like saying that cancer is not serious as long as your heart is strong.

The reality is that such modern religious movements have added to the confusion and produced spiritual anarchy as persuasive teachers corral followers for themselves. Jim Jones and David Koresh are recent examples of spiritual leaders who misled thousands. (Matthew 15:14) One Baptist minister is a leading member of the Ku Klux Klan. He links his campaign for white supremacy with a religious revival and says that those who take part in it will "be given the strength of providence on high, given the courage of He who died on Calvary [Jesus Christ]."

What about the supposed miracles, the powerful works, and the signs performed in the name of Jesus? Remember Jesus Christ's strong warning that it is, not those merely saying "Lord, Lord" who gain his approval, but, rather, 'those who do the will of his Father.' Many today do not even know the name of his Father, Jehovah. Jesus warned of those who would 'expel demons in his name, and perform powerful works in this name' and yet would be "workers of lawlessness."—Matthew 7: 21-23.

## "Get Out Of Her My People"

What is the prognosis for sick Christendom? Very poor. Should we, then, take Catholic bishop Butler's advice, to "join [the church] without more ado and to lend our aid to her continual 'purification' from within her ranks"? No! Divided and divisive Christendom will not survive. (Mark 3:24, 25) She is part of a world empire of

false religion called Babylon the Great. (Revelation 18:2, 3) This bloodguilty religious system faces imminent destruction at God's hand.

The Bible does not suggest that genuine Christians stay within this corrupt religious organization and try to reform her from inside. Rather, it exhorts: "Get out of her, my people, if you do not want to share with her in her sins, and if you do not want to receive part of her plagues. For her sins have massed together clear up to heaven, and God has called her acts of injustice to mind."—Revelation 18:4, 5.

"Get out" to where? Remember, Jesus promised that at the time of the harvest, true Christians would be gathered together

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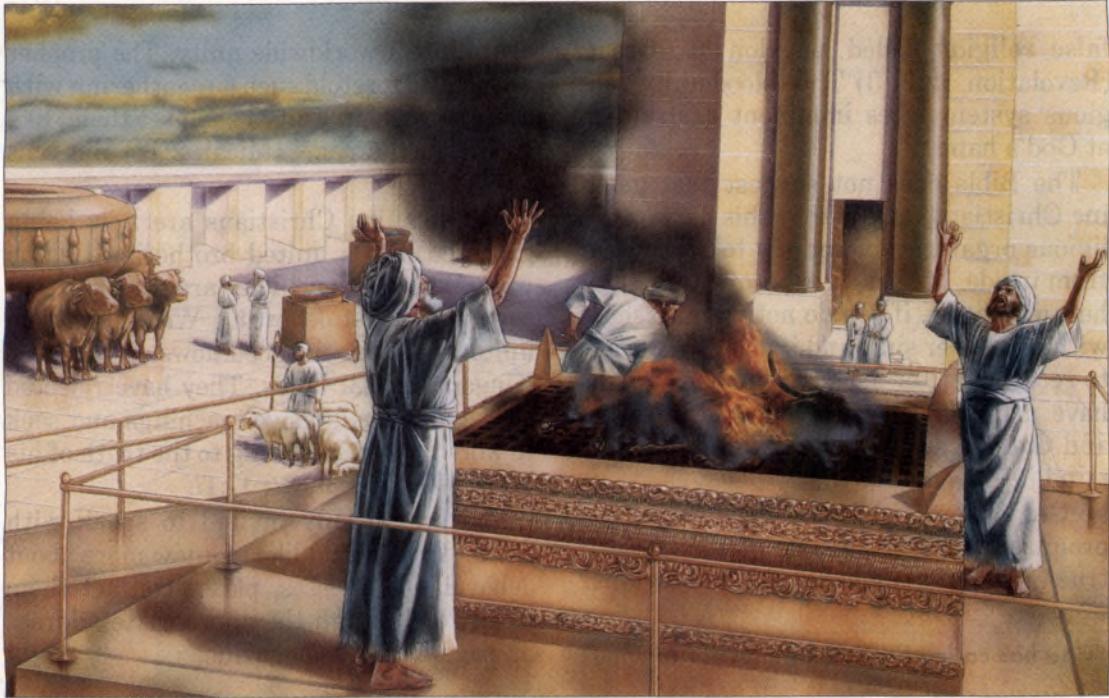
***"God has called her acts of injustice to mind"***

again into a worldwide unity. The prophet Micah also foretold such a regathering with these words: "In unity I shall set them, like a flock in the pen." (Micah 2:12) Has this happened?

Yes! genuine Christians are now being gathered into a united brotherhood earth wide. Who are they? They are the Christian congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses, who unitedly declare the good news about God's Kingdom in 231 lands. They have rejected Christendom's divisive teachings and seek to worship God according to the truth of his Word.—John 8:31, 32; 17:17.

You are warmly invited to speak with them. If you would like to know more about Jehovah's Witnesses, please contact them locally or through the appropriate address on page 2 of this magazine.





## AT WHICH TABLE ARE YOU FEEDING?

*"You cannot be partaking of 'the table of Jehovah' and the table of demons."*

—1 CORINTHIANS 10:21.

THESE inspired words of the apostle Paul show that two figurative tables are set before mankind. Each table is identified by the kind of symbolic food placed upon it, and all of us are eating at one or the other. However, if we wish to please God, we cannot be feeding at his table and at the same time be nibbling at the table of demons. The apostle Paul warned: "The things which the nations sac-

rifice they sacrifice to demons, and not to God; and I do not want you to become sharers with the demons. You cannot be drinking the cup of Jehovah and the cup of demons; you cannot be partaking of 'the table of Jehovah' and the table of demons."

—1 Corinthians 10:20, 21.

<sup>2</sup> Paul's words remind us of the communion sacrifices that the ancient Israelites

2. (a) What table of Jehovah existed in the days of ancient Israel, and who shared in the communion sacrifices? (b) What does partaking of the table of Jehovah mean today?

offered under Jehovah's Law. The altar of God was called a table, and the one bringing the animal to be sacrificed was said to have communion with Jehovah and with the priests. How? First, Jehovah shared in the sacrifice because the blood was sprinkled upon his altar and the fat was consumed by flames underneath. Second, the priest shared in that he (and his family) ate the roasted breast and right leg of the animal sacrificed. And third, the offerer shared by eating the rest of it. (Leviticus 7: 11-36) Today, partaking of the table of Jehovah means that we give him the kind of worship that he requires, as exemplified by Jesus and his apostles. To do this, we must feed spiritually on what Jehovah provides through his Word and organization. The Israelites, who enjoyed special communion with Jehovah at his table, were forbidden to offer sacrifices to demons at their table. Spiritual Israelites and their "other sheep" companions are under the same divine prohibition.—John 10:16.

<sup>3</sup> How could one become guilty of partaking of the table of demons in our day? By serving the interests of anything opposed to Jehovah. The table of demons includes all demonic propaganda, which is designed to mislead and to turn us away from Jehovah. Who would want to feed his heart and mind on such poison? True Christians refuse to share in the sacrifices that most people today offer to the gods of war and riches.  
—Matthew 6:24.

#### Avoiding "the Table of Demons"

<sup>4</sup> The question all of us face is, At which table am I feeding? We cannot escape the

3. How could one become guilty of partaking of the table of demons in our day?

4. What question do all of us face, and why would we not knowingly want to partake of the table of demons?

fact that we are obliged to eat at one table or the other. (Compare Matthew 12:30.) We would not knowingly want to be partaking of the table of demons. To do that would cost us the favor of the only true and living God, Jehovah. On the other hand, to partake of food only at Jehovah's table leads to our everlasting life in happiness! (John 17:3) There is a saying that a person is what he eats. Anyone, then, who wants to keep in good physical and mental health has to watch his diet. Just as high-fat junk food, though tastily prepared with chemical additives, does not contribute to our continued physical health, so the propaganda of this world laced with demonic ideas is bad figurative junk food that will corrupt our minds.

<sup>5</sup> The apostle Paul foretold that during the last days, people would be led astray by the "teachings of demons." (1 Timothy 4:1) Not only are such demonic teachings found in false religious beliefs but they are also widely promulgated in other ways. For example, we need to analyze and weigh what books and magazines we and our children read, what television programs we view, and what plays and films we watch. (Proverbs 14:15) If for recreation we read fiction, does it feature senseless violence, illicit sex, or occult practices? If we read nonfiction in order to be instructed, does it expound a philosophy or way of life "not according to Christ"? (Colossians 2:8) Are empty speculations presented, or is involvement in worldly social movements advocated? Does it foster the determination to get very rich? (1 Timothy 6:9) Is it a publication that subtly presents divisive teachings that are un-Christlike? If the answer is yes and we continue to read or view such material, we risk

5. How can we avoid taking in demonic teachings today?



**Jehovah's table is brimming with the best of spiritual food**

feeding at the table of demons. Today, there are hundreds of thousands of publications that promote worldly philosophies that seem so enlightened and current. (Ecclesiastes 12:12) But none of this propaganda is really new; nor does it work for one's benefit and betterment, any more than what Satan cunningly said to Eve worked for her betterment.—2 Corinthians 11:3.

<sup>6</sup> Therefore, when Satan invites us to taste his demonic junk food, how should we respond? As Jesus did when he was tempted by Satan to turn stones into bread. Jesus replied: "It is written, 'Man must live, not on bread alone, but on every utterance com-

<sup>7</sup> When Satan invites us to taste his demonic junk food, how should we, in effect, respond?

ing forth through Jehovah's mouth.'" And when the Devil offered Jesus "all the kingdoms of the world and their glory" if he would fall down and do an act of worship to Satan, Jesus responded: "Go away, Satan! For it is written, 'It is Jehovah your God you must worship, and it is to him alone you must render sacred service.'”—Matthew 4: 3, 4, 8-10.

<sup>7</sup> Jehovah's table and the table spread by his demonic enemies can never be reconciled! Oh, yes, it has been tried before. Recall the ancient Israelites in the days of the prophet Elijah. The people claimed to worship Jehovah, but they believed that other gods, such as Baal, promised prosperity. Elijah approached the people and said: "How long will you be limping upon two

<sup>7</sup> Why are we deluding ourselves if we think we can successfully feed both at Jehovah's table and at the table of demons?

different opinions? If Jehovah is the true God, go following him; but if Baal is, go following him." Undeniably, the Israelites were hobbling "first on one leg then on the other." (1 Kings 18:21; *The Jerusalem Bible*) Elijah challenged the priests of Baal to prove the godship of their deity. The God that could bring fire down from heaven upon a sacrifice would prove to be the true God. Despite much effort, the priests of Baal failed. Then Elijah simply prayed: "O Jehovah, answer me, that this people may know that you, Jehovah, are the true God." Immediately fire from Jehovah shot down from heaven and consumed the water-drenched animal sacrifice. Stirred by the convincing demonstration of Jehovah's godship, the people obeyed Elijah and put all 450 prophets of Baal to death. (1 Kings 18:24-40) So today, we must recognize Jehovah as the true God and decisively turn to feeding only at his table if we have not already done so.

### 'The Faithful Slave' Serves Jehovah's Table

<sup>8</sup> The Lord Jesus Christ foretold that during his presence a "faithful and discreet slave" would provide spiritual food for his disciples: "Happy is that slave if his master on arriving finds him doing so. Truly I say to you, He will appoint him over all his belongings." (Matthew 24:45-47) This slave has proved to be, not any single individual, but the class of dedicated, anointed Christians. This class has put upon Jehovah's table the finest spiritual food for both the anointed remnant and the "great crowd." Now over four million strong, the great crowd have taken their stand with the anointed remnant for the universal sover-

8. What slave did Jesus foretell he would use to feed his disciples spiritually during his presence, and what is the slave's identity?

eignty of Jehovah God and for his Kingdom by which he will sanctify his holy name.—Revelation 7:9-17.

<sup>9</sup> This faithful slave class has been using the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society to provide spiritual nourishment for all of Jehovah's Witnesses. While Christendom and the rest of this system of things are starving for the lack of life-giving spiritual food, Jehovah's people are feasting. (Amos 8:11) This is in fulfillment of the prophecy at Isaiah 25:6: "Jehovah of armies will certainly make for all the peoples, in this mountain, a banquet of well-oiled dishes, a banquet of wine kept on the dregs, of well-oiled dishes filled with marrow, of wine kept on the dregs, filtered." As verses 7 and 8 show, this feast will continue everlasting. What a blessing it is for all in Jehovah's visible organization now, and what a blessing it will continue to be in the future!

### Beware of the Poisonous Food on the Table of Demons

<sup>10</sup> Food on the table of demons is poisonous. Consider, for example, the food dispensed by the evil slave class and the apostates. It does not nourish or build up; it is not wholesome. It cannot be, for the apostates have stopped feeding at Jehovah's table. As a result, whatever they had developed of the new personality is gone. What motivates them is, not holy spirit, but vitriolic bitterness. They are obsessed with only one aim—beating their former fellow slaves, as Jesus foretold.—Matthew 24: 48, 49.

9. What instrument has the slave class been using to provide spiritual food for Jehovah's Witnesses, and how is their spiritual feasting prophetically described?

10. (a) What kind of food is dispensed by the evil slave class, and what is their motivation? (b) How do the evil slave class treat their former fellow slaves?

<sup>11</sup> For example, away back in 1909, the then president of the Watch Tower Society, C. T. Russell, wrote about those who turned away from Jehovah's table and then began to mistreat their former fellow slaves. *The Watch Tower* of October 1, 1909, said: "All who cut loose from the Society and its work, instead of prospering themselves or upbuilding others in the faith and in the graces of the spirit, seemingly do the reverse—attempt injury to the Cause they once served, and, with more or less noise, gradually sink into oblivion, harming only themselves and others possessed of a similarly contentious spirit. . . . If some think that they can get as good or better provenance at other tables, or that they can produce as good or better themselves—let these take their course. . . . But while we are willing that others should go anywhere and everywhere to find food and light to their satisfaction, strange to say, those who become our opponents take a very different course. Instead of saying in the manly fashion of the world, 'I have found something which I prefer; goodbye!' these manifest anger, malice, hatred, strife, 'works of the flesh and of the devil' such as we have never known worldly people to exhibit. They seem inoculated with madness, Satanic hydrophobia [rabies]. Some of them smite us and then claim that we did the smiting. They are ready to say and write contemptible falsehoods and to stoop to do meanness."

<sup>12</sup> Yes, apostates publish literature that resorts to distortions, half-truths, and outright falsehood. They even picket Witness conventions, trying to trap the unwary. Hence, it would be a dangerous thing to

11. What did C. T. Russell write as to one's choice of spiritual food, and how did he describe those who forsake Jehovah's table?

12. (a) How do apostates beat their fellow slaves? (b) Why is it dangerous out of curiosity to feed on the writings of apostates?

allow our curiosity to move us to feed on such writings or to listen to their abusive speech! While we might not think it a risk for us personally, the hazard remains. Why? For one thing, some of the apostate literature presents falsehoods by means of "smooth talk" and "counterfeit words." (Romans 16:17, 18; 2 Peter 2:3) What would you expect from the table of demons? And while the apostates may also present certain facts, these are usually taken out of context with the goal of drawing others away from the table of Jehovah. All their writings simply criticize and tear down! Nothing is upbuilding.

<sup>13</sup> Jesus said: "By their fruits you will recognize them." (Matthew 7:16) What, now, are the fruits of the apostates and their publications? Four things mark their propaganda. (1) Cleverness. Ephesians 4:14 says that they are "cunning in contriving error." (2) Prideful intelligence. (3) Lack of love. (4) Dishonesty in various forms. These are the very ingredients of the food that is on the table of demons, all of which is designed to undermine the faith of Jehovah's people.

<sup>14</sup> And there is another aspect. To what have the apostates returned? In many cases, they have reentered the darkness of Christendom and its doctrines, such as the belief that all Christians go to heaven. Moreover, most no longer take a firm Scriptural stand regarding blood, neutrality, and the need to witness about God's Kingdom. We, though, have escaped the darkness of Babylon the Great, and we never want to return to it. (Revelation 18:2, 4) As loyal servants of Jehovah, why would we even want to peek at the propaganda put out by these rejecters of Jehovah's table

13, 14. What are the fruits of the apostates and their propaganda?

who now verbally beat those who are helping us take in "healthful words"?—2 Timothy 1:13.

<sup>15</sup> Some may be inquisitive about accusations that the apostates make. But we should take to heart the principle at Deuteronomy 12:30, 31. Here Jehovah through Moses warned the Israelites about what to avoid once they dispossessed the pagan inhabitants of the Promised Land. "Watch out for yourself for fear you may be entrapped after them, after they have been annihilated from before you, and for fear you may inquire respecting their gods, saying, 'How was it these nations used to serve their gods? And I, yes, I, will do the same way.' You must not do that way to Jehovah your God." Yes, Jehovah God knows how human curiosity works. Remember Eve, and also Lot's wife! (Luke 17:32; 1 Timothy 2:14) Let us never give ear to what the apostates are saying or doing. Rather, let us be busy building people up and loyally feeding at the table of Jehovah!

### Only Jehovah's Table Will Remain

<sup>16</sup> Shortly, the great tribulation will suddenly break out, moving quickly to a climax in "the war of the great day of God the Almighty." (Revelation 16:14, 16) It will reach a crescendo as Jehovah destroys this system of things and the figurative table at which the world's nations have been feeding. Jehovah will also overthrow the entire invisible organization of Satan the Devil with its hordes of demons. Those who have continued to feed at Satan's spiritual table,

15. What Bible principle helps us to take the wise course when we hear of accusations the apostates make?

16. (a) What will shortly happen to Satan, his demons, and the figurative table at which the world's nations have been feeding? (b) What will happen to all humans who continue to feed at the table of demons?

the table of demons, will be forced to attend a literal meal, no, not as partakers, but as the main course—to their destruction! —See Ezekiel 39:4; Revelation 19:17, 18.

<sup>17</sup> Only Jehovah's table will remain. Those who are appreciatively feeding at it will be preserved and will be privileged to eat there for all time to come. Never again will food shortages of any kind threaten them. (Psalm 67:6; 72:16) In perfect health they will serve Jehovah God in Paradise! At last the stirring words of Revelation 21:4 will be magnificently fulfilled: "He will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away." With opposition a thing of the past, Jehovah God's universal sovereignty will obtain everywhere forever and ever as endless divine favor pours upon redeemed mankind occupying the Paradise earth. To gain this reward, let all of us be determined to partake exclusively of Jehovah's table, which is brimming with the best of spiritual food!

17. What blessings come to those who feed exclusively at Jehovah's table?

### How Would You Answer?

- How can we avoid being misled by demonic teachings?
- Why can we not successfully feed both at Jehovah's table and at the table of demons?
- What kind of food is dispensed by apostates?
- Why is it dangerous to be curious about the charges of apostates?
- What are the fruits of the apostates?

# *What has happened to authority?*

**T**HINKING people see the need for authority. Without some kind of authority structure, human society would quickly become chaotic. Hence, a classic French textbook on constitutional law states: "In any human group, two categories of people are to be found: those who command and those who obey, those who give orders and those who comply, leaders and members, the governors and the governed.... The existence of authority can be observed in any human society."<sup>\*</sup>

However, attitudes toward authority have changed since World War II and particularly since the 1960's. Commenting on that period, the French *Encyclopædia Universalis* speaks of an "antihierarchy and antiauthority crisis." Such a crisis is no surprise to students of the Bible. The apostle Paul foretold: "Remember, the final age of this world is to be a time of turmoil! People will love nothing but self and money; they will be boastful, arrogant, and abusive; disobedient to parents . . . ; they will be implacable in their hatreds, . . . uncontrolled and violent, . . . swollen with self-importance. They will love their pleasures more than their God." —2 Timothy 3:1-4, *The Revised English Bible*.

## **Authority in Crisis**

This prophecy well describes our day and age. Authority is challenged at all levels —family, public school, university, business enterprise, local and national government. The sexual revolution, hard-core rap music, student demonstrations, wildcat

strikes, civil disobedience, and acts of terrorism are all signs of a breakdown in respect for authority.

At a symposium organized in Paris by the French Institute of Political Science and the Paris daily *Le Monde*, Professor Yves Mény stated: "Authority can exist only if it is backed up by legitimacy." One reason for today's crisis of authority is that many doubt the legitimacy of those in power. That is, they doubt their right to be in authority. A poll revealed that in the early 1980's, 9 percent of the population in the United States, 10 percent in Australia, 24 percent in Britain, 26 percent in France, and 41 percent in India considered their government to be illegitimate.

## **Man's Quest for Legitimate Authority**

According to the Bible, man was originally under the direct authority of God. (Genesis 1:27, 28; 2:16, 17) However, very early on, humans claimed moral independence from their Creator. (Genesis 3:1-6) Having rejected theocracy, or God-rule, they had to find other systems of authority. (Ecclesiastes 8:9) Some asserted their authority by force. For them, might was right. It was sufficient that they were strong enough to enforce their will. Most, though, felt the need to legitimize their right to rule.

From earliest times many rulers did this by saying either that they were gods or that they had received power from the gods. This is the mythical concept of "sacred kingship," claimed by early rulers of Mesopotamia and the Pharaohs of ancient Egypt.

Alexander the Great, the Hellenistic kings

\* *Droit constitutionnel et institutions politiques*, by Maurice Duverger.

that succeeded him, and many of the Roman emperors also claimed to be gods and even demanded to be worshiped. Systems under such rulers were known as "ruler cults," and their purpose was to consolidate the ruler's authority over a mixture of conquered peoples. Refusal to worship the ruler was condemned as an act against the State. In *The Legacy of Rome*, Professor Ernest Barker wrote: "The deification of the [Roman] emperor, and the allegiance which he receives in virtue of his divinity, are obviously the foundation, or at any rate the cement, of the empire."

This remained true even after "Christianity" was made legal by Emperor Constantine (ruled 306-337 C.E.) and later adopted as the State religion of the Roman Empire by Emperor Theodosius I (ruled 379-395 C.E.). Some of the "Christian" emperors were worshiped as gods until well into the fifth century C.E.

### "Two Powers," "Two Swords"

As the papacy became more powerful, problems between Church and State became acute. Hence, at the end of the fifth century C.E., Pope Gelasius I set forth the principle of the "two powers": the sacred authority of the popes coexisting with the royal power of the kings—with the kings subordinate to the popes. This principle later developed into the doctrine of the "two swords": "The spiritual sword the popes wielded themselves, delegating the temporal sword to lay rulers, but the latter must nevertheless use the temporal sword according to papal directions." (*The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*) On the basis of this doctrine, during the Middle Ages, the Catholic Church claimed the right to crown emperors and kings so as to legitimize their authority, thus perpetuating the ancient myth of "sacred kingship."



**The Catholic Church claimed the authority to crown emperors and kings**

This should not, however, be confused with the so-called divine right of kings, a later development that was aimed at freeing political rulers from submission to the papacy. The divine-right theory holds that kings get their authority to rule directly from God, not through the pope of Rome. The *New Catholic Encyclopedia* states: "At a time when the pope was exerting a universal spiritual and even temporal power over the heads of states, the idea of divine right put the kings of national states in a position to justify their authority as being equally divine with that of the pope."\*

### The Myth of Popular Sovereignty

As time went on, men suggested other

\* *The Catholic Encyclopedia* states: "This 'divine right of kings' (very different from the doctrine that all authority, whether of king or of republic, is from God), has never been sanctioned by the Catholic Church. At the Reformation it assumed a form exceedingly hostile to Catholicism, monarchs like Henry VIII, and James I, of England, claiming the fullness of spiritual as well as of civil authority."

sources of authority. One was the sovereignty of the people. Many believe that this idea originated in Greece. Ancient Greek democracy, however, was practiced only in a few city-states, and even in these only male citizens voted. Women, slaves, and resident aliens—estimated at half to four fifths of the population—were left out. Hardly popular sovereignty!

Who promoted the idea of the sovereignty of the people? Surprisingly, it was introduced in the Middle Ages by Roman Catholic theologians. In the 13th century, Thomas Aquinas held that while sovereignty originates with God, it is vested in the people. This idea proved popular. The *New Catholic Encyclopedia* says: “This idea of the people as the source of authority was supported by the vast majority of the Catholic theologians of the 17th century.”

Why would theologians of a church in which the people had no voice at all in the choice of pope, bishop, or priest promote the idea of the sovereignty of the people? Because some European kings were increasingly restless under papal authority. The theory of popular sovereignty gave the pope the power to overthrow an emperor or monarch if it seemed necessary. Historians Will and Ariel Durant wrote: “The defenders of popular sovereignty included many Jesuits, who saw in this view a means of weakening royal as against papal authority. If, argued Cardinal Bellarmine, the authority of kings is derived from, and therefore subject to, the people, it is obviously subordinate to the authority of the popes . . . Luis Molina, a Spanish Jesuit, concluded that the people, as the source of secular authority, may justly—but by orderly procedure—depose an unjust king.”

The “orderly procedure” would, of course, be orchestrated by the pope. Confirming

this, the French Catholic *Histoire Universelle de l’Eglise Catholique* quotes the *Biographie universelle*, which states: “Bellarmine . . . teaches as common Catholic doctrine that princes derive their power from the choice of the people, and that the people can exercise this right *only under the influence of the pope.*” (Italics ours.) Popular sovereignty thus became a tool that the pope could use to influence the choice of rulers and, if need be, have them deposed. In more recent times, it has allowed the Catholic hierarchy to influence Catholic voters in representative democracies.

In modern democracies the legitimacy of the government is based on what is called “consent of the governed.” At best, though, this is the “consent of the majority,” and because of voter apathy and political shenanigans, this “majority” is often in reality only a minority of the population. Today, “consent of the governed” often means little more than “acquiescence, or resignation, of the governed.”

### The Myth of National Sovereignty

The myth of sacred kingship promoted by the early popes backfired on the papacy when it mutated into the divine right of kings. The theory of popular sovereignty similarly boomeranged on the Catholic Church. During the 17th and 18th centuries, secular philosophers, such as the Englishmen Thomas Hobbes and John Locke and the Frenchman Jean-Jacques Rousseau, reflected on the idea of popular sovereignty. They developed versions of the theory of a “social contract” between rulers and the ruled. Their principles were based not on theology but on “natural law,” and the concept culminated in ideas that seriously harmed the Catholic Church and the papacy.

Shortly after the death of Rousseau, the

French Revolution broke out. This revolution destroyed certain ideas of legitimacy, but it created a new one, the idea of national sovereignty. *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica* comments: "The French repudiated the divine right of kings, the ascendancy of the nobility, the privileges of the Roman Catholic Church." But, says *Britannica*, "the Revolution had brought the new invention, the nation-state, to maturity." The revolutionaries needed this new "invention." Why?

Because under the system Rousseau had advocated, all citizens would have an equal say in the choice of rulers. This would have resulted in a democracy based on universal suffrage—something the leaders of the French Revolution did not favor. Professor Duverger explains: "It was precisely to avoid this result, considered undesirable, that, from 1789 to 1791, the bourgeois of the Constituent Assembly invented the theory of *national sovereignty*. They identified the people with the 'Nation,' which they considered as a real entity, distinct from its component parts. The Nation alone, by means of its representatives, is entitled to wield sovereignty . . . Democratic in appearance, the doctrine of national sovereignty is not really democratic at all because it can be used to justify practically any form of government, autocracy in particular." (Italics his.)

### Human Efforts a Failure

Acceptance of the Nation-State as a legitimate source of authority led to nationalism. *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica* states: "Nationalism is often thought to be very old; sometimes it is mistakenly regarded as a permanent factor in political behaviour. Actually, the American and French revolutions may be regarded as its first powerful manifestations." Since those rev-

olutions, nationalism has swept across the Americas, Europe, Africa, and Asia. Vicious wars have been legitimized in the name of nationalism.

British historian Arnold Toynbee wrote: "The spirit of Nationality is a sour ferment of the new wine of Democracy in the old bottles of Tribalism. . . . This strange compromise between Democracy and Tribalism has been far more potent in the practical politics of our modern Western World than Democracy itself." Nationalism has not produced a peaceful world. Toynbee said: "The Wars of Religion have been followed, after the briefest respite, by the Wars of Nationality; and in our modern Western World the spirit of religious fanaticism and the spirit of national fanaticism are manifestly one and the same evil passion."

By means of the myths of "sacred kingship," "divine right of kings," "popular sovereignty," and "national sovereignty," rulers have attempted to legitimize their authority over fellow humans. After considering the record of human rulers, however, a Christian cannot but share the thought expressed by Solomon: "Man has dominated man to his injury."—Ecclesiastes 8:9.

Rather than worship the political State, Christians worship God and recognize in him the legitimate source of all authority. They agree with the psalmist David who said: "Yours, Yahweh, is the greatness, the power, the splendour, length of days and glory, everything in heaven and on earth is yours. Yours is the sovereignty, Yahweh; you are exalted, supreme over all." (1 Chronicles 29:11, *The New Jerusalem Bible*) Yet, out of deference to God, they show proper respect for authority in both the secular and the spiritual fields. Just how and why they can do this joyfully will be examined in the two articles that follow.

# THE CHRISTIAN VIEW OF AUTHORITY

*"There is no authority except by God."* —ROMANS 13:1.

**A**UTHORITY is linked to creatorship. The word "authority" is related to the word "author," which means "one that originates, makes, or gives existence." The Supreme One who gave exis-

1. To what is the word "authority" related, so why can it be said that Jehovah is the Supreme Authority?

tence to all creation, animate and inanimate, is Jehovah God. He is undeniably the Supreme Authority. True Christians share the feelings of the heavenly creatures who declare: "You are worthy, Jehovah, even our God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power, because you created all things, and because of your will they existed and were created." —Revelation 4:11.

<sup>2</sup> The mere fact that many of the earliest human rulers tried to legitimize their authority by claiming to be a god or to be the representative of a god was tacit recognition that no human has an inherent right to rule over other humans.\* (Jeremiah 10:23) The only legitimate source of authority is Jehovah God. Christ told Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea: "You would have no authority at all against me unless

\* See the preceding article.

2. How did early human rulers in a sense admit that they had no natural right to dominate their fellowmen, and what did Jesus tell Pontius Pilate?

**Jesus stated:**  
**"Pay back Caesar's things to Caesar"**



it had been granted to you from above.”  
—John 19:11.

### **“No Authority Except by God”**

<sup>3</sup> The apostle Paul wrote to Christians living under the domination of the Roman Empire: “Let every soul be in subjection to the superior authorities, for there is no authority except by God; the existing authorities stand placed in their relative positions by God.” (Romans 13:1) What did Jesus mean when he stated that Pilate’s authority had been granted to him “from above”? And in what way did Paul consider that the political authorities of his day stood placed in their positions by God? Did they mean that Jehovah is personally responsible for the appointment of each individual political ruler of this world?

<sup>4</sup> How could this be so, since Jesus called Satan “the ruler of this world,” and the apostle Paul labeled him “the god of this system of things”? (John 12:31; 16:11; 2 Corinthians 4:4) Furthermore, when tempting Jesus, Satan offered him “authority” over “all the kingdoms of the inhabited earth,” claiming that this authority had been delivered to him. Jesus rejected his offer, but he did not deny that such authority was Satan’s to give.—Luke 4:5-8.

<sup>5</sup> Jehovah delivered rulership over this world to Satan by allowing him to live after his rebellion and after he had tempted Adam and Eve and had caused them to rebel against His sovereignty. (Genesis 3:1-6; compare Exodus 9:15, 16.) Jesus and Paul’s

3. What did the apostle Paul state concerning “the superior authorities,” and what questions do Jesus and Paul’s statements raise?
4. What did Jesus and Paul call Satan, and what claim by Satan did Jesus not deny?
5. (a) How are we to understand Jesus and Paul’s words about human authority? (b) In what sense do the superior authorities “stand placed in their relative positions by God”?

words must, therefore, mean that after the first human pair in Eden rejected theocracy, or God-rule, Jehovah allowed estranged humans to create authority structures that would permit them to live in an orderly society. At times, in order to accomplish his purpose, Jehovah has caused certain rulers or governments to fall. (Daniel 2:19-21) Others he has allowed to remain in power. Of rulers whose existence Jehovah tolerates, it can be said that they “stand placed in their relative positions by God.”

### **Early Christians and the Roman Authorities**

<sup>6</sup> The early Christians did not join forces with the Jewish sects who conspired and fought against the Romans occupying Israel. Insofar as the Roman authorities, with their codified legal system, maintained order on land and sea; built many useful aqueducts, roads, and bridges; and in the main acted for the common welfare, Christians considered them to be ‘God’s minister [or, “servant,” footnote] to them for their good.’ (Romans 13:3, 4) Law and order produced an environment that enabled Christians to preach the good news far and wide, as commanded by Jesus. (Matthew 28:19, 20) In all good conscience, they could pay the taxes levied by the Romans, even if some of the money was used for purposes not approved by God.—Romans 13:5-7.

<sup>7</sup> A careful reading of the first seven verses of Romans chapter 13 reveals that political “superior authorities” were “God’s minister” to praise those doing good and to

6. How did the early Christians view the Roman authorities, and why?
7. 8. (a) What does a careful reading of Romans 13:1-7 reveal, and what does the context show? (b) Under what circumstances did the Roman authorities not act as “God’s minister,” and in this case what attitude did the early Christians adopt?

punish those practicing what is bad. The context shows that God, not the superior authorities, determines what is good and what is bad. If, therefore, the Roman emperor or any other political authority required things that God prohibited or, conversely, prohibited things that God required, he no longer acted as God's minister. Jesus stated: "Pay back . . . Caesar's things to Caesar, but God's things to God." (Matthew 22:21) If the Roman State demanded things that belonged to God, such as worship or a person's life, true Christians followed the apostolic counsel: "We must obey God as ruler rather than men." —Acts 5:29.

<sup>8</sup> The early Christians' refusal to practice emperor worship and idolatry, forsake their Christian meetings, and stop preaching the good news brought persecution. It is generally believed that the apostle Paul was executed upon the orders of Emperor Nero. Other emperors, notably Domitian, Marcus Aurelius, Septimius Severus, Decius, and Diocletian, also persecuted the early Christians. When these emperors and their subordinate authorities persecuted Christians, they were certainly not acting as "God's minister."

<sup>9</sup> All of this serves to illustrate that while the political superior authorities serve in some respects as "the arrangement of God" to maintain an orderly human society, they remain a part of the worldly system of things of which Satan is the god. (1 John 5:19) They belong to the worldwide political organization symbolized by "the wild beast" of Revelation 13:1, 2. That beast re-

9. (a) What remains true of the political superior authorities, and from whom does the political beast receive power and authority? (b) What can logically be said of Christian submission to the superior authorities?

ceives its power and authority from "the great dragon," Satan the Devil. (Revelation 12:9) Logically, therefore, Christian submission to such authorities is relative, not absolute.—Compare Daniel 3:16-18.

### Proper Respect for Authority

<sup>10</sup> This does not mean, however, that Christians should adopt a brazen, defiant attitude toward the political superior authorities. True, many of these men are not particularly worthy of respect in their private, or even their public, lives. Yet, the apostles, by their example and by their counsel, showed that men in authority should be treated with respect. When Paul appeared before incestuous King Herod Agrippa II, he spoke to him with proper deference.—Acts 26:2, 3, 25.

<sup>11</sup> Paul even stated that it is appropriate to mention worldly authorities in our prayers, particularly when they are called upon to make decisions that affect our lives and Christian activities. He wrote: "I therefore exhort, first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, offerings of thanks, be made concerning all sorts of men, concerning kings and all those who are in high station; in order that we may go on leading a calm and quiet life with full godly devotion and seriousness. This is fine and acceptable in the sight of our Savior, God, whose will is that all sorts of men should be saved and come to an accurate knowledge of truth." (1 Timothy 2:1-4) Our respectful attitude toward such authorities may lead to their allowing us to carry on more freely our work of trying to save "all sorts of men."

10, 11. (a) How did Paul show that we should be respectful to men in authority? (b) How and why can prayers be made "concerning kings and all those who are in high station"?

<sup>12</sup> The apostle Peter wrote: "For the Lord's sake subject yourselves to every human creation: whether to a king as being superior or to governors as being sent by him to inflict punishment on evildoers but to praise doers of good. For so the will of God is, that by doing good you may muzzle the ignorant talk of the unreasonable men. Be as free people, and yet holding your freedom, not as a blind for badness, but as slaves of God. Honor men of all sorts, have love for the whole association of brothers, be in fear of God, have honor for the king." (1 Peter 2:13-17) What balanced counsel! We owe total submission to God as his slaves, and we give relative and respectful submission to political authorities sent to punish evildoers.

<sup>13</sup> It has been found that many secular authorities have the oddest misconceptions about Jehovah's Witnesses. This is usually because they have been misinformed by malicious enemies of God's people. Or it may be that all they know about us they learned from the mass media, which are not always impartial in their coverage. Sometimes we can break down this prejudice by our respectful attitude and, where possible, by providing the authorities with an accurate picture of the work and beliefs of Jehovah's Witnesses. For busy officials, the brochure *Jehovah's Witnesses in the Twentieth Century* provides a succinct explanation. For fuller information, they can be supplied the book *Jehovah's Witnesses—Proclaimers of God's Kingdom*, a fine instrument that deserves a place on the bookshelves of local and national public libraries.

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12, 13. (a) What balanced counsel regarding authority did Peter give? (b) How may we counteract "the ignorant talk of the unreasonable men" who create prejudice against Jehovah's Witnesses?

### Authority Within Christian Homes

<sup>14</sup> It goes without saying that if Christians are required by God to show due respect for worldly authorities, they should likewise respect the authority structure established by God within Christian households. The apostle Paul outlined in concise terms the principle of headship that obtains among Jehovah's people. He wrote: "I want you to know that the head of every man is the Christ; in turn the head of a woman is the man; in turn the head of the Christ is God." (1 Corinthians 11:3) This is the principle of theocracy, or God-rule. What does it involve?

<sup>15</sup> Respect for theocracy begins in the home. A Christian wife who does not show due respect for her husband's authority—whether he is a fellow believer or not—is not theocratic. Paul counseled Christians: "Be in subjection to one another in fear of Christ. Let wives be in subjection to their husbands as to the Lord, because a husband is head of his wife as the Christ also is head of the congregation, he being a savior of this body. In fact, as the congregation is in subjection to the Christ, so let wives also be to their husbands in everything." (Ephesians 5:21-24) Just as Christian men have to submit to Christ's headship, Christian women should recognize the wisdom of submitting to the God-given authority of their husbands. This will bring them deep inner satisfaction and, more important, Jehovah's blessing.

<sup>16</sup> Theocratic children are happy to show

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14, 15. (a) What is the basis of authority within a Christian household? (b) What should be the attitude of Christian wives toward their husbands, and why?

16, 17. (a) How can children reared in Christian homes distinguish themselves from many youngsters today, and what incentive do they have? (b) How was Jesus a fine example for young ones today, and what are they encouraged to do?

proper respect for their parents. Of the young generation in the last days, it was foretold that they would be "disobedient to parents." (2 Timothy 3:1, 2) But to Christian children the inspired Word of God says: "You children, be obedient to your parents in everything, for this is well-pleasing in the Lord." (Colossians 3:20) Respect for parental authority pleases Jehovah and brings his blessing.

<sup>17</sup> This is illustrated in the case of Jesus. Luke's account states: "He went down with them [his parents] and came to Nazareth, and he continued subject to them. . . . And Jesus went on progressing in wisdom and in physical growth and in favor with God and men." (Luke 2:51, 52) Jesus was a 12-year-old at the time, and the Greek verb form used here emphasizes that he "*continued subject*" to his parents. So his submissiveness did not end when he entered his teens. If you young ones want to progress in spirituality and in favor with Jehovah and godly men, you will show respect for authority inside and outside your home.

### Authority Within the Congregation

<sup>18</sup> Speaking of the need for order within the Christian congregation, Paul wrote: "God is a God, not of disorder, but of peace. . . . Let all things take place decently and by arrangement [or, "according to order," footnote]." (1 Corinthians 14:33, 40) For all things to take place in an orderly fashion, Christ, the Head of the Christian congregation, has delegated authority to faithful men. We read: "He gave some as apostles, some as prophets, some as evangelizers, some as shepherds and teachers, with a view to the readjustment of the holy ones, for ministerial work . . . But speaking the truth, let us by love grow up in all

18. Who is the Head of the Christian congregation, and to whom has he delegated authority?

things into him who is the head, Christ."  
—Ephesians 4:11, 12, 15.

<sup>19</sup> In this time of the end, Christ has appointed the collective "faithful and discreet slave" over "all his belongings," or Kingdom interests on earth. (Matthew 24:45-47) As in the first century, this slave is represented by a governing body of anointed Christian men to whom Christ has given the authority to make decisions and appoint other overseers. (Acts 6:2, 3; 15:2) In turn, the Governing Body delegates authority to Branch Committees, district and circuit overseers, and elders within each of the more than 73,000 congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses throughout the earth. All these devoted Christian men deserve our support and respect.—1 Timothy 5:17.

<sup>20</sup> With regard to the respect we owe to those in authority within the Christian

19. (a) Whom has Christ appointed over all his earthly belongings, and to whom has he granted special authority? (b) What delegation of authority takes place in the Christian congregation, and what does this call for on our part?

20. What example shows that Jehovah is displeased with those who lack respect for fellow Christians in authority?

### By Way of Review

- Who is the Supreme Authority, and why is his authority legitimate?
- In what sense do the superior authorities "stand placed in their relative positions by God"?
- When do the superior authorities cease to be "God's minister"?
- What authority structure exists within Christian families?
- What delegation of authority exists within the Christian congregation?

congregation, an interesting comparison can be made with the submission we owe the secular authorities. When a person violates a human law that God approves, the punishment meted out by "those ruling" is, in fact, an indirect expression of God's wrath "upon the one practicing what is bad." (Romans 13:3, 4) If Jehovah is angry when a person breaks human laws and lacks proper respect for worldly authorities, how much more must he be displeased if a dedicated Christian flouts Bible principles and shows disrespect for fellow Christians who are in authority!

<sup>21</sup> Rather than incur God's displeasure by adopting a rebellious or independent attitude, we will follow Paul's counsel to Chris-

21. What Scriptural counsel will we be happy to follow, and what will be considered in the following article?

tians in Philippi: "Consequently, my beloved ones, in the way that you have always obeyed, not during my presence only, but now much more readily during my absence, keep working out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for God is the one that, for the sake of his good pleasure, is acting within you in order for you both to will and to act. Keep doing all things free from murmurings and arguments, that you may come to be blameless and innocent, children of God without a blemish in among a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you are shining as illuminators in the world." (Philippians 2:12-15) Unlike the present crooked and twisted generation that has brought upon itself an authority crisis, Jehovah's people readily submit to authority. They thus reap great benefits, as we shall see in the following article.

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## JOYFUL SUBMISSION TO AUTHORITY

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*"You became obedient from the heart."* —ROMANS 6:17.

**T**HE spirit that now operates in the sons of disobedience" is shockingly evident today. It is a spirit of unbridled independence, emanating from Satan, "the ruler of the authority of the air." This spirit, this "air," or domi-

1, 2. (a) What spirit is evident in the world today, and what are its source and its effect? (b) How do Jehovah's dedicated servants show that they are different?

nant attitude of selfishness and disobedience, exerts "authority," or power, over most of mankind. This is one reason why the world is going through what has been called a crisis of authority.—Ephesians 2:2.

<sup>2</sup> Happily, Jehovah's dedicated servants today do not fill their spiritual lungs with this polluted "air," or spirit of rebellion. They know that "the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience." The apostle



**Elders encourage the flock to do joyfully whatever they can**

Paul adds: "Therefore do not become partakers with them." (Ephesians 5:6, 7) Rather, true Christians endeavor to be "filled with [Jehovah's] spirit," and they drink in "the wisdom from above," which is "chaste, then peaceable, reasonable, ready to obey." —Ephesians 5:17, 18; James 3:17.

### **Willing Submission to Jehovah's Sovereignty**

<sup>3</sup> The key to willing submission is recognition of legitimate authority. The history of mankind shows that rejection of Jehovah's sovereignty does not bring happiness. Such rejection did not bring happiness to Adam and Eve, nor to the instigator of their rebellion, Satan the Devil. (Genesis 3:16-19) In his present debased condition, Satan has "great anger" because he knows that his time is short. (Revelation 12:12) The peace and happiness of mankind, yes, of the whole

3. What is the key to willing submission, and what great lesson does history teach us?

universe, depend on universal recognition of Jehovah's righteous sovereignty.—Psalm 103:19-22.

<sup>4</sup> Yet, because of his marvelously balanced qualities, Jehovah is not satisfied with cold obedience. He is powerful, oh, yes! But he is not a tyrant. He is a God of love, and he wants his intelligent creatures to obey him willingly, out of love. He wants them to submit to his sovereignty because they wholeheartedly choose to place themselves under his righteous and legitimate authority, convinced that there could be nothing better for them than to obey him forever. The kind of person that Jehovah wants in his universe shares the feelings of the psalmist who wrote: "The law of Jehovah is perfect, bringing back the soul. The reminder of Jehovah is trustworthy, making the inexperienced one wise. The orders from Jehovah are upright, causing the heart to rejoice; the commandment of Jehovah is clean, making the eyes shine. The fear of Jehovah is pure, standing forever. The judicial decisions of Jehovah are true; they have proved altogether righteous." (Psalm 19:7-9) Implicit confidence in the rightness and the righteousness of Jehovah's sovereignty—this must be our attitude if we want to live in Jehovah's new world.

### **Joyful Submission to Our King**

<sup>5</sup> Christ Jesus is himself a sterling example of submission to his heavenly Father. We read that "he humbled himself and became obedient as far as death, yes, death on

4. (a) What kind of submission and obedience does Jehovah want his servants to show? (b) Of what should we be convinced, and how does the psalmist express this?

5. How was Jesus rewarded for his obedience, and what do we willingly acknowledge?

a torture stake." Paul adds: "For this very reason also God exalted him to a superior position and kindly gave him the name that is above every other name, so that in the name of Jesus every knee should bend of those in heaven and those on earth and those under the ground, and every tongue should openly acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father." (Philippians 2:8-11) Yes, we joyfully bend the knee before our Leader and reigning King, Christ Jesus.—Matthew 23:10.

<sup>6</sup> Of Christ as our Leader, Jehovah prophesied: "Look! As a witness to the national groups I have given him, as a leader and commander to the national groups." (Isaiah 55:4) By his earthly ministry and by his directing the preaching work from heaven after his death and resurrection, Jesus has shown himself to be a "faithful and true witness" of his Father toward peoples of all nations. (Revelation 3:14; Matthew 28:18-20) Such national groups are now represented in increasing numbers by the "great crowd," who will survive the "great tribulation" under Christ's leadership. (Revelation 7:9, 14) But Jesus' leadership does not end there. His "princely rule" will last for a thousand years. For obedient humans, he will live up to his name of "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace."—Isaiah 9:6, 7; Revelation 20:6.

<sup>7</sup> If we wish to benefit from the "fountains of waters of life" to which the Lamb, Christ Jesus, guides righthearted humans, we must without delay prove by our course of action that we joyfully submit to his authority as

6. How has Jesus proved to be a witness and a leader to national groups, and how will his "princely rule" continue after the great tribulation?

7. If we wish Christ Jesus to lead us to "fountains of waters of life," what must we do without delay, and what will cause us to be loved by Jesus and Jehovah?

King. (Revelation 7:17; 22:1, 2; compare Psalm 2:12.) Jesus stated: "If you love me, you will observe my commandments. He that has my commandments and observes them, that one is he who loves me. In turn he that loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him." (John 14:15, 21) Do you want to be loved by Jesus and by his Father? Then be submissive to their authority.

### Overseers Joyfully Obey

<sup>8</sup> "The congregation is in subjection to the Christ." As its Overseer, he has provided "gifts in men" for "the building up" of the congregation. (Ephesians 4:8, 11, 12; 5:24) These spiritually older men are told to 'shepherd the flock of God in their care,' not "lording it over those who are God's inheritance, but becoming examples to the flock." (1 Peter 5:1-3) The flock is Jehovah's, and Christ is its "fine shepherd." (John 10:14) Since the overseers properly expect willing cooperation from the sheep that Jehovah and Christ have committed to their care, they themselves should be fine examples of submissiveness.—Acts 20:28.

<sup>9</sup> In the first century, anointed overseers were symbolically represented as being "in," or "upon," Christ's right hand, denoting their submission to him as Head of the congregation. (Revelation 1:16, 20; 2:1) No less so today, overseers within the congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses should submit to Christ's direction and 'humble themselves under the mighty hand of God.' (1 Peter 5:6) When called upon to handle judicial matters, like Solomon during his faithful years, they should pray to Jehovah: "You must give to

8, 9. (a) What has Christ provided for the up-building of the congregation, and in what respect should these men be examples to the flock? (b) How is the submission of Christian overseers symbolized in the book of Revelation, and how should they seek an "obedient heart" when handling judicial matters?



**Jehovah takes pleasure in those who obey him from the heart**

"...your servant an obedient heart to judge your people, to discern between good and bad." (1 Kings 3:9) An obedient heart will move an elder to seek to see things as Jehovah and Christ Jesus see them so that the decision made on earth resembles as closely as possible that made in heaven.—Matthew 18:18-20.

<sup>10</sup> Traveling overseers and congregation elders will likewise endeavor to imitate Christ in the way he treated the sheep. Unlike the Pharisees, Jesus did not impose a lot of rules that were hard to follow. (Matthew 23:2-11) He said to sheeplike ones: "Come to me, all you who are toiling and loaded down, and I will refresh you. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am mild-tempered and lowly in heart, and you will find refreshment for your souls. For my yoke is kindly and my load is light." (Matthew 11:28-30) While it is true that each Christian must "carry his own load," the overseers should remember Jesus' ex-

10. How should all overseers endeavor to imitate Jesus in the way he treated the sheep?

ample and help their brothers to feel that their load of Christian responsibility is "kindly," "light," and a joy to carry.—Galatians 6:5.

### Theocratic Submission

<sup>11</sup> Theocracy is rule by God. It involves the principle of headship expressed at 1 Corinthians 11:3. But it means more than that. A person might appear to show respect for headship and yet not be theocratic in the full sense of the word. How could this be? To illustrate, democracy is government by the people, and a democrat has been defined as "a person who believes in the ideals of democracy." A man might claim to be democratic, take part in elections, and even be an active politician. But if, in his general behavior, he flouts the spirit of democracy and all the principles it involves, can it be said that he is truly democratic? Similarly, to be truly theocratic, a person must do more than submit to headship in a nominal way. He must imitate Jehovah's ways and qualities. He must really be governed by Jehovah in every way. And since Jehovah has invested his Son with full authority, being theocratic also means copying Jesus.

<sup>12</sup> Remember, Jehovah wants willing submission motivated by love. That is his way of governing the universe. He is the very personification of love. (1 John 4:8) Christ Jesus is "the reflection of his glory and the exact representation of his very being." (Hebrews 1:3) He requires his true disciples to love one another. (John 15:17) So being

11. (a) How might a person respect headship and yet not be really theocratic? Illustrate. (b) What does it mean to be truly theocratic?

12, 13. (a) What, in particular, does being theocratic involve? (b) Does theocratic submission involve obeying a lot of rules? Illustrate.

theocratic involves not only being submissive but also being loving. The matter might be summed up as follows: Theocracy is rule by God; God is love; therefore theocracy is rule by love.

<sup>13</sup> An elder could think that in order to be theocratic, the brothers should obey all sorts of rules. Some elders have made rules out of suggestions given from time to time by "the faithful and discreet slave." (Matthew 24:45) For instance, it was once suggested that for the sake of more readily getting to know the brothers in the congregation, it might be good not always to sit in the same seat in the Kingdom Hall. This was meant to be a practical suggestion, not a hard-and-fast rule. But some elders may be inclined to convert it into a rule and to feel that those who do not follow it are not theocratic. Yet, there may be many good reasons why a brother or a sister might prefer to sit in a certain area. If an elder does not lovingly take such things into account, is he himself being truly theocratic? To be theocratic, "let all your affairs take place with love."—1 Corinthians 16:14.

### Serving With Joy

<sup>14</sup> Being theocratic also means serving Jehovah with joy. Jehovah is "the happy God." (1 Timothy 1:11) He wants his worshipers to serve him joyfully. Those who are sticklers for rules should remember that among the regulations that Israel had to be "careful to carry out" was the following: "You must rejoice before Jehovah your God in every undertaking of yours." (Deuteronomy 12:1, 18) Whatever we undertake in

14, 15. (a) How could an elder deprive certain brothers or sisters of their joy in serving Jehovah, and why would this not be theocratic? (b) How did Jesus show that he appreciates the love expressed by our service, rather than the amount? (c) What should elders take into consideration?

Jehovah's service should be a joy, not a burden. Overseers can do much to make the brothers feel happy to do what they can in serving Jehovah. Conversely, if elders are not careful, they can deprive some of the brothers of their joy. If, for example, they make comparisons, commending those who have reached or exceeded the congregation's average in hours spent witnessing and by implication criticizing those who did not attain it, how will those feel who may have had a valid reason for reporting much less time? Could this not make them feel unnecessarily guilty and deprive them of their joy?

<sup>15</sup> The few hours that some can devote to public witnessing may represent a greater effort than the many hours that others spend preaching, in view of younger age, better health, and other circumstances. In this respect, elders are not to judge them. Indeed, it is to Jesus that the Father has given "authority to do judging." (John 5:27) Did Jesus criticize the poor widow because her offering was less than the average? No, he was sensitive to what those two small coins really cost her. They were "all of what she had, her whole living." What deep love for Jehovah they represented! (Mark 12: 41-44) Should elders be any less sensitive to the loving efforts of those whose all is numerically below "average"? In terms of love for Jehovah, such efforts might well be above average!

<sup>16</sup> Should these remarks now be converted into a new "rule" that figures—even averages—should never be mentioned? Not at all! The point is that overseers should strike a balance between encouraging the brothers to expand their ministry and helping them

16. (a) If overseers use figures in their talks, why do they need discernment and good balance? (b) How can the brothers best be helped to increase their service?

to do what they can with joy. (Galatians 6:4) In Jesus' illustration of the talents, the master committed his belongings to his slaves "each one according to his own ability." (Matthew 25:14, 15) Elders likewise should take into account the possibilities of each Kingdom publisher. This takes discernment. It may well be that some actually do need encouragement to do more. They may appreciate help toward better organizing their activity. Be that as it may, if they can be assisted to do what they can with joy, that joy will likely strengthen them to expand their Christian activity where possible.—Nehemiah 8:10; Psalm 59:16; Jeremiah 20:9.

### The Peace That Comes From Joyful Submission

<sup>17</sup> Joyful submission to Jehovah's legitimate sovereignty brings us great peace. The psalmist said in prayer to Jehovah: "Abundant peace belongs to those loving

17, 18. (a) How can joyful submission bring us peace and righteousness? (b) What can be ours if we really pay attention to God's commandments?

### Points to Remember

- What kind of submission and obedience does Jehovah want his servants to show?
- How was Jesus rewarded for his obedience, and what must we prove by our course of action?
- How should all overseers imitate Jesus in the way he treated the sheep?
- What is involved in being theocratic?
- What blessings does joyful submission bring us?

your law, and for them there is no stumbling block." (Psalm 119:165) By obeying God's law, we benefit ourselves. Jehovah told Israel: "This is what Jehovah has said, your Repurchaser, the Holy One of Israel: 'I, Jehovah, am your God, the One teaching you to benefit yourself, the One causing you to tread in the way in which you should walk. O if only you would actually pay attention to my commandments! Then your peace would become just like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea.'"—Isaiah 48:17, 18.

<sup>18</sup> Christ's ransom sacrifice brings us peace with God. (2 Corinthians 5:18, 19) If we have faith in Christ's redeeming blood and conscientiously endeavor to combat our weaknesses and do God's will, we find relief from feelings of guilt. (1 John 3:19-23) Such faith, backed up by works, gives us a righteous standing before Jehovah and the wonderful hope of surviving "the great tribulation" and living forever in Jehovah's new world. (Revelation 7:14-17; John 3:36; James 2:22, 23) All of this can be ours 'if only we would actually pay attention to God's commandments.'

<sup>19</sup> Yes, our happiness now and our hope of everlasting life on a paradise earth revolve around our joyful submission to Jehovah's authority as Sovereign Lord of the universe. May we ever share the feelings of David, who said: "Yours, O Jehovah, are the greatness and the mightiness and the beauty and the excellency and the dignity; for everything in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O Jehovah, the One also lifting yourself up as head over all. And now, O our God, we are thanking you and praising your beauteous name."—1 Chronicles 29:11, 13.

19. Upon what does our happiness now and our hope of everlasting life depend, and how did David express our heartfelt conviction?



# "I HAVE OBSERVED THE FAITH"

AS TOLD BY FRIENDS OF BRUNELLA INCONDITI

**S**TURDAY was a very slow and lonely day. I was all alone in the room, feeling hopeless. It felt like walking through a hallway. Everything was going well, and all of a sudden, someone slammed the door right in my face, and there was no way out, no matter how hard I tried."

Extreme disappointment weighed heavily on the heart of 15-year-old Brunella Inconditi. The most important day in her young life was slipping by. Earlier that year her growing love for Jehovah and the Bible had moved her to dedicate her life to him. In July 1990 she was to be baptized at the "Pure Language" District Convention of Je-

hovah's Witnesses in Montreal, Canada. Instead, Brunella was about to face a test of her faith that would last the rest of her life.

Two days before she expected to symbolize her dedication by water baptism, Brunella learned that she had leukemia. Doctors at the local children's hospital wanted to begin treatment immediately, so Brunella remained in the hospital.

### Her Own Words Move the Doctors

Brunella knew that blood is sacred to Jehovah God. (Leviticus 17:11) Her parents, Edmondo and Nicoletta, had stipulated that no blood transfusions were to be used in their daughter's treatment. "Brunella

wanted the doctors to hear it from her too, even though she was a minor," recalls her father. "She firmly told them that she did not want treatment that would violate the Bible's command to 'abstain from blood.'" —Acts 15:20.

On July 10, 1990, three doctors and a social worker met with Brunella's parents and two ministers from the local congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses. Tests confirmed that Brunella had acute lymphoblastic leukemia. The doctors explained their plan to fight the disease. They tactfully described that it was very difficult to treat. "Brunella's conduct and determination to obey God had touched the doctors and the social worker. They were impressed by the love of her parents and by the support of friends from the Christian congregation. They also appreciated the way we understood and respected their position," remembers one of the congregation elders.

The doctors intended to avoid blood transfusions. Brunella would receive extensive chemotherapy, but it would be less aggressive than usual. This would reduce the damage to her blood cells caused by the treatment. "The doctors considered Brunella's physical, emotional, and spiritual needs," explains Nicoletta. "When we asked them to consult a specialist experienced in nonblood management of childhood leukemia, they agreed." Brunella and the hospital staff formed a warm bond of affection.

### Spiritual Goals

Although the initial treatment produced some good results, Brunella's ordeal was just beginning. By November 1990 her disease was in remission, so without delay she was baptized. Reflecting on the previous few months, Brunella admitted: "It wasn't easy at all. You need a lot of strength, and you need to think positively. . . . My faith

was put to the test, but I remained firm, and I still plan to have a career as a regular pioneer [full-time minister]."

Early in 1991, Brunella suffered a relapse. She almost died while undergoing chemotherapy, but to everyone's surprise and delight, she recovered. By August she was well enough to spend the month in the public ministry as an auxiliary pioneer. Her illness worsened again, and by November 1991 her body was stricken in several places with cancer. Another team of doctors at another hospital began to treat her with radiation therapy.

Even under such difficult circumstances, Brunella remained steadfast and set spiritual goals for herself. When first learning about the leukemia, she was told she might live only six months. Now, almost a year and a half later, Brunella was still making plans for the future. "She wasted no time in working toward her goals," remarked a congregation elder. "Brunella's faith in God's promised Paradise sustained her throughout her ordeal. She grew to Christian maturity though young in years. Her conduct and attitude inspired the congregation and won the hearts of those who knew her, including the hospital staff." Her mother recalls: "She never complained. When someone asked how she was feeling, she would answer, 'Fine' or, 'Not bad, and how about you?'"

### A Secure Future

Brunella planned to attend the "Light Bearers" District Convention of Jehovah's Witnesses in July 1992. By the time of the convention, however, Brunella was hospitalized, and her life was slipping away. Nonetheless, she attended the convention in a wheelchair, intent on seeing the drama *Doing What Is Right in Jehovah's Eyes*.

She returned home to her family for the

last few days of her life. "To the end, she was more concerned about others than about herself," says Nicoletta. "She would encourage them to study the Bible, telling them, 'We will be together in Paradise.'"

Brunella died on July 27, 1992, firm in her hope of a resurrection to life in Paradise on earth. She had only begun to pursue her goals, but she planned to continue her dedicated course after her resurrection. Only a few days before she died, Brunella wrote the following letter, which was read at her memorial service.

"Dear Friends:

"Thank you for coming. Your presence means a lot to my family.

"To the people that were close to me—we've been through a lot. We had a lot of bad times, but there were some funny times too. It was a hard and long fight, but I don't feel that I have failed. As it says in the

Scriptures, 'I have fought the fine fight, I have run the course to the finish, I have observed the faith.'—2 Timothy 4:7.

"I have also learned a lot, and I grew a lot, and my friends and those who were around me saw the change. I want to thank all those people who gave me their support.

"You who believe in the new system and in Jehovah know there will be a resurrection, just as John 5:28, 29 says. So keep strong in the truth, and we will be able to see one another again.

"I want to thank those people who know what I've been through. I give each of you a long hug and a kiss. I love you all."

Brunella did not let her youth or her illness postpone her dedication to God. Her example of faith and determination encourages young and old alike to put off anything that might hinder them from running the race for life.—Hebrews 12:1.

## ANNUAL MEETING

OCTOBER 1, 1994

THE ANNUAL MEETING of the members of Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania will be held on October 1, 1994, at the Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 2932 Kennedy Boulevard, Jersey City, New Jersey. A preliminary meeting of the members only will convene at 9:30 a.m., followed by the general annual meeting at 10:00 a.m.

The members of the Corporation should inform the Secretary's Office now of any change in their mailing addresses during the past year so that the regular letters of notice and proxies can reach them during July.

The proxies, which will be sent to the members along with the notice of the annual meeting, are

to be returned so as to reach the Office of the Secretary of the Society not later than August 1. Each member should complete and return his proxy promptly, stating whether he is going to be at the meeting personally or not. The information given on each proxy should be definite on this point, since it will be relied upon in determining who will be personally present.

It is expected that the entire session, including the formal business meeting and reports, will be concluded by 1:00 p.m. or shortly thereafter. There will be no afternoon session. Because of limited space, admission will be by ticket only. No arrangements will be made for tying in the annual meeting by telephone lines to other auditoriums.



# They Join a United Brotherhood



**I**t was August 7, 1993, at the Republican Stadium in Kiev, Ukraine. The more than 64,000 in attendance looked on with expectation as the moment arrived. Then, in reply to two meaningful questions, thousands called out “*Da!*” (“Yes!”) In this way, they made a public declaration of their faith and then went on to symbolize their dedication to Jehovah God by being baptized in one of the six pools in the stadium.—Matthew 28:19.

Thus, on this third day of the international “Divine Teaching” Convention of Jehovah’s Witnesses, the audience beheld an outstanding event: 7,402 were baptized and became part, not of a divided church, but of a united worldwide Christian congregation.

