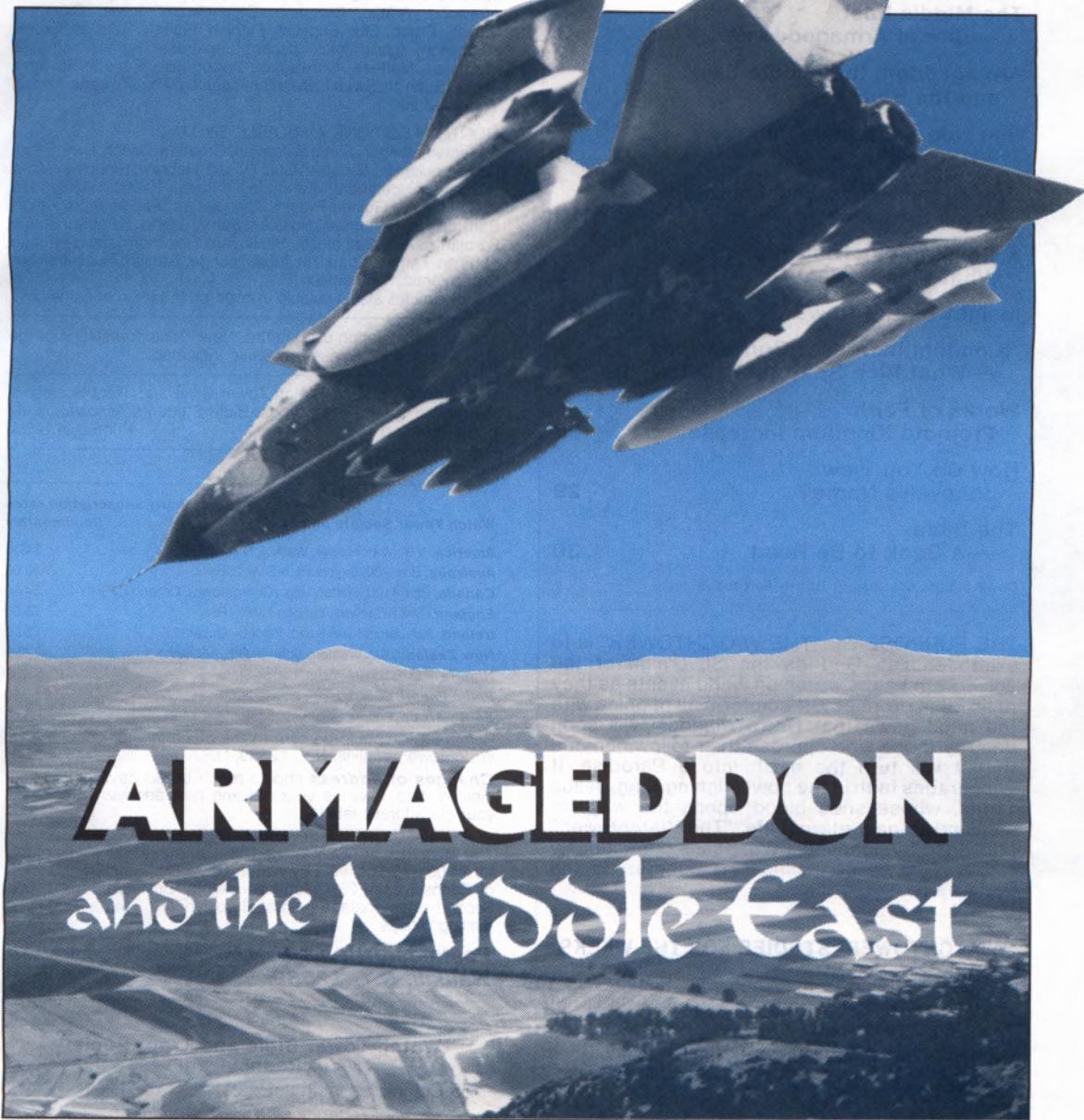


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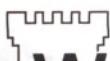


The Watchtower

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom



ARMAGEDDON
and the Middle East



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Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom

January 15, 1985
Vol. 106, No. 2

In This Issue

The Middle East —Site of Armageddon?	3
Armageddon, the Middle East, and the Bible	4
She Had Faith and Courage —Do You?	8
Can Human Accomplishments Ward Off Catastrophe?	10
A Government That Accomplishes What Man Cannot	15
Insight on the News	21
"Kingdom Increase" Conventions —What Rich Spiritual Feasts!	22
Works of Faith Promote Kingdom Increase	28
How Do You View Jehovah's Name?	29
The Bible —A Book to Be Read	30

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THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER" is to exalt Jehovah God as the Sovereign of the universe. It keeps watch on world events as they 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 the 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.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

- February 17: Can Human Accomplishments Ward Off Catastrophe? Page 10. Songs to Be Used: 23, 21.
- February 24: A Government That Accomplishes What Man Cannot. Page 15. Songs to Be Used: 16, 187.

Average Printing Each Issue: 11,150,000

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*Study articles also available in large-print edition at same cost.

The Bible translation used is the "New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures," unless otherwise indicated.

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Printed in U.S.A.

Twenty cents (U.S.) a copy

Yearly subscription rates

Semimonthly

America, U.S., Watchtower, Wallkill, N.Y. 12589	\$4.00
Australia, Box 280, Ingleburn, N.S.W. 2565	A\$6.00
Canada, Box 4100, Halton Hills (Georgetown), Ontario L7G 4Y4	\$4.50
England, The Ridgeway, London NW 1RN	£5.00
Ireland, 29A Jamestown Road, Finglas, Dublin 11	£5.00
New Zealand, 6-A Western Springs Rd., Auckland 3	\$7.00
Nigeria, P.O. Box 194, Yaba, Lagos State	N3.50
Philippines, P.O. Box 2044, Manila 2800	P50.00
South Africa, Private Bag 2, Elandsfontein, 1406	R5.60

Remittances should be sent to the office in your country or to Watchtower, Wallkill, N.Y. 12589, U.S.A.

Changes of address should reach us 30 days before your moving date. Give us your old and new address (if possible, your old address label).

The Watchtower (ISSN 0043-1087) is published semimonthly for \$4.00 (U.S.) per year by Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania, 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201. Second-class postage paid at Brooklyn, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices.

Postmaster: Send address changes to Watchtower, **Wallkill, N.Y. 12589.**

Published by

**Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society
of Pennsylvania**

25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201, U.S.A.

Frederick W. Franz, President

"ARMAGEDDON"—what does this Bible name signify? Introduced each time by a meaningful cover, a series of informative articles on this topic is being featured in the four issues of *The Watchtower* for January and February 1985. It is hoped that these Scriptural discussions will comfort you with knowledge as to what is the real ARMAGEDDON.

The Middle East—Site of ARMAGEDDON?

AS THE world races toward its final hour of struggle, the important city to watch is not New York, Moscow, Paris, Peking, or Cairo. The city to watch is Jerusalem!" So declared theologians John F. and John E. Walvoord in their book *Armageddon, Oil and the Middle East Crisis*.

Many are indeed casting a nervous eye at both Jerusalem and the troubled region in which it is situated. Says the *Times of London*,

"The Middle East is becoming more frightening." Some fear that a future U.S.-Soviet confrontation there is almost inevitable. By January 1984, relations between the rival superpowers had so deteriorated that the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* moved its famous "doomsday clock" (a symbol of how near the world is to nuclear annihilation) to three minutes before midnight. Declared the *Bulletin*: "We thus stand at a fateful juncture, at the threshold of a period of confrontation, a time when the blunt simplic-



ties of force threaten to displace any other form of discourse between the superpowers. This is an appalling prospect."

A growing number of fundamentalist preachers, theologians, and TV evangelists, though, applaud these developments. Escalating Middle East tensions have worked to give seeming credence to their startling predictions that Armageddon is soon to take place in that vicinity! And by sounding the alarm in books, lectures, and television productions, they have gathered a considerable following.

These commentators quarrel over the exact sequence of events. But a typical 'Armageddon scenario' goes like this: The starting of the 'doomsday countdown,' they say, was the establishment of the State of Israel. They therefore feel that the so-called rapture is imminent. According to them, soon true Christians will suddenly disappear from the earth—being snatched up to heaven. During the ensu-

ing seven years of "tribulation," many evangelists even predict that the nation of Israel will be converted to Christianity. Most of the human race, though, will supposedly be brought under the spell of a charismatic dictator (the "Antichrist") who will lead a ten-nation coalition. Even Israel, they believe, will align itself with him. But a confederacy of Arab nations and others, led by Russia, will make a surprise invasion of Israel. God will miraculously halt this invasion, say these fundamentalists. Soon to follow, however, will be another attack from the "Antichrist," triggering all-out war in the Middle East—Armageddon.

Perhaps this sounds quite plausible to some. After all, the Bible *does* predict a gathering of nations for war at "Armageddon." (Revelation 16:14-16, *King James Version*) But does the Bible really indicate that this event will take place in the Middle East? And what significance does the location of this battle have?

ARMAGEDDON, the Middle East, and the Bible

"THE center of the entire prophetic forecast," claims author Hal Lindsey, "is the State of Israel." (*The 1980's: Countdown to Armageddon*) Critical to the fundamentalists' 'Armageddon scenario,' therefore, is their belief that God has special dealings with Israel. God, they believe, will intervene when her enemies seek to destroy her.

The Bible, however, indicates that the Jewish nation lost God's favor and protec-

tion when they rejected his Son, Jesus Christ. (Acts 3:13, 14, 19) Jesus himself plainly told them: "The kingdom of God will be taken from you and be given to a nation producing its fruits."—Matthew 21:43.

Rejected Entirely?

Theologians John F. and John E. Walvoord (previously quoted) nevertheless counter by saying: "The Apostle Paul

clearly indicated that the Old Testament promises for Israel were still to be fulfilled. Paul wrote, 'I ask then, Did God reject his people? By no means!' (Rom. 11:1; NIV.) They fail, though, to quote the rest of that verse: "For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin." What did Paul mean by this?

Paul could not have believed that the Israelites as a nation still had a special place with God, for the apostle expressed "great grief and unceasing pain in [his] heart" over their unresponsiveness to God's goodness. (Romans 9:2-5) At Romans 9:6 Paul adds: "However, it is not as though the word of God [to Abraham] had failed. For not all who spring from [natural] Israel are really 'Israel.'" Note what Paul is saying: that because the Jews rejected Christ, God *no longer considered them to be Israel!* The anointed congregation of Jesus Christ's followers was now

the *real* "Israel," the instrument through which God would bless all mankind.—1 Peter 2:9; Galatians 3:29; 6:16; Genesis 22:18.

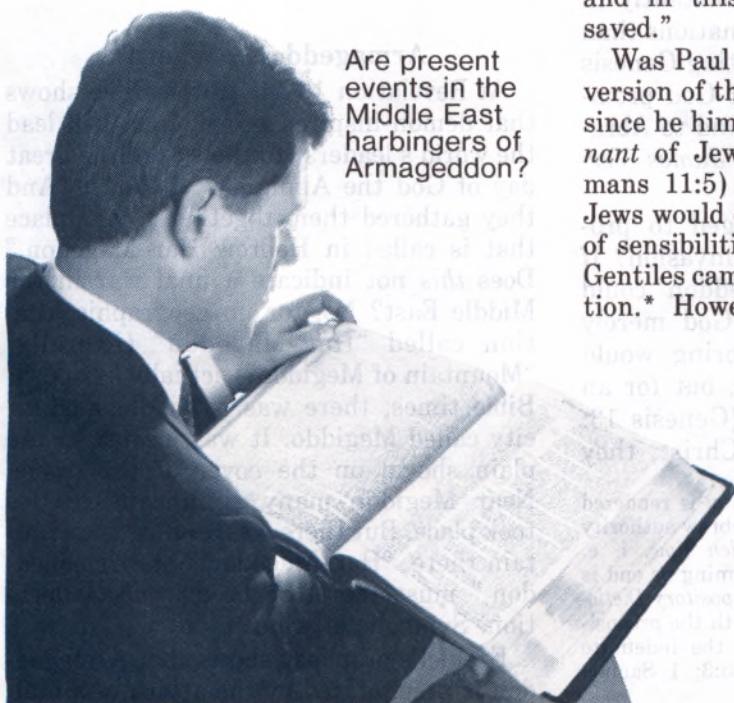
God, though, did not reject the Jewish people as *individuals*, for Paul pointed out: "For I also am an Israelite." Yes, individuals within the Jewish nation, like Paul, could become part of spiritual Israel if they accepted Christ. Only "a remnant," a minority, chose to do so.—Romans 11:1, 5.

A Future Conversion?

Some, however, anticipate a dramatic change of heart on the part of all natural Jews. "The great tribulation, which will follow the rapture of the Church," claims one fundamentalist writer, "will be the means of Israel's conversion [to Christianity]." Interestingly, Paul does say at Romans 11:25, 26: "A dulling of sensibilities has happened in part to Israel until the full number of people of the nations has come in, and in this manner all Israel will be saved."

Was Paul predicting a future mass conversion of the Jews? How could that be so, since he himself indicated that only a *remnant* of Jews would accept Christ? (Romans 11:5) True, Paul did say that the Jews would experience a spiritual "dulling of sensibilities" until "the full number" of Gentiles came into the Christian congregation.* However, Greek scholar Richard

* Christendom's religions fail to recognize that a definite number, revealed in the Bible to be 144,000, makes up spiritual Israel. (Revelation 7:4) As a result, some draw the erroneous conclusion that Paul predicted a mass conversion of both the Jews and "the whole pagan world." (*The Jerusalem Bible*) Paul's illustration of the olive tree in Romans, chapter 11, however, makes little sense without a definite number being involved.



Are present events in the Middle East harbingers of Armageddon?

Lenski shows that here the word "until" does *not necessarily* imply some later conversion. (Compare the use of "until" at Acts 7:17, 18 and Revelation 2:25.) Paul is actually saying that the natural Jews' sensibilities would *remain* 'dull' right down to the end. God, however, wisely completes "the full number" of spiritual Israel (144,-000) by bringing believing Gentiles into the Christian congregation. "And in *this manner* [not by the Jewish nation's change of heart] all [spiritual] Israel will be saved."

Possessing the Promised Land —“For Ever”?

What, though, about the land on which the State of Israel is situated? Does God have some sort of special interest in it? Many, such as Protestant theologian William Hurst, think so. Said Hurst: "No parcel of land on the face of the earth has been more sought after or more constantly in the attention of the society of nations than has the land of the Jew." Quoting Genesis 13:14, 15, he reminds us that God promised that he would give this land to Abraham's seed "*for ever.*"—King James Version.

Is Jehovah God thus obliged to protect the land of Israel from invasion? If so, a Middle Eastern "Armageddon" could be imminent. Nevertheless, God merely told Abraham that his offspring would occupy this land, not *forever*, but for an "indefinite" period of time.* (Genesis 13:14, 15) By rejecting Jesus Christ, they

* Although the Hebrew word '*oh-lam*' is rendered by some as "forever," according to Hebrew authority William Gesenius, it means "*hidden time*, i. e. obscure and long, of which the beginning or end is uncertain or indefinite." Nelson's Expository Dictionary of the Old Testament adds: "With the preposition '*ad*, the word can mean 'into the indefinite future.'"—Compare Deuteronomy 23:3; 1 Samuel 1:22.



Is Jerusalem the key to the events leading to Armageddon?

lost all claim to this land—and God's protection.

Armageddon—Where?

At Revelation 16:14, 16 the Bible shows that demon-inspired propaganda will lead the world's leaders "to the war of the great day of God the Almighty." It adds: "And they gathered them together to the place that is called in Hebrew Har-Magedon." Does this not indicate a final war in the Middle East? No, for no geographic location called "Har-Magedon" (literally, "Mountain of Megiddo") actually exists. In Bible times, there was a Middle Eastern city called Megiddo. It was located in the plain shown on the cover of this issue. Near Megiddo many significant battles took place. But there was, and is, no mountain there. "Har-Magedon," or "Armageddon," must therefore be a *symbolic* location. Symbolic of what?

Ezekiel's prophecy shows that Armageddon is precipitated by the attack of a mul-

tinational army upon "Israel." The attackers are led by 'Gog of Magog,' whose forces swoop down from "the remotest parts of the north." Who is this "Gog"? Fundamentalist theologian Hal Lindsey confidently declares (as do others): "There is only one nation to the 'uttermost north' of Israel—the U.S.S.R." He likewise theorizes that those making up Gog's "military force" (called Meshech, Tubal, Persia, Ethiopia, Put, Gomer, and Togarmah in the Bible) will be Soviet allies, primarily Arab nations.—Ezekiel 38:1-9, 15.

The nations listed as Gog's confederates, though, were not especially prominent on the world scene in Ezekiel's day. The prophecy's fulfillment was thus to take place in "the final part of the years," when ancient Israel's traditional enemies had passed off the earthly scene. (Ezekiel 38:8) Therefore, Gog's obscure and remote "land of Magog" would not picture the prominent and far from remote Soviet Union.

Who, then, is it that dwells in a 'remote' land and harbors fierce animosity toward God's people? At Revelation 12:7-9, 17, the Bible answers: "War broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels battled with the dragon . . . So down the great dragon was hurled, the original serpent, the one called *Devil and Satan*." How did Satan react to being cast out of heaven into the debased spirit realm? Says the Bible: "And the dragon grew wrathful at the woman [God's heavenly organization], and went off to wage war with the remaining ones of her seed, who observe the commandments of God and have the work of bearing witness to Jesus."

Satan, therefore, is "Gog." For decades, Satan and his demon hordes have carried out this warfare against the remnant of spiritual Israel—the anointed Christian congregation. (Galatians 6:16) These Christians are spread throughout the

earth; they are not in some central location that could be invaded by a Middle Eastern confederacy of troops. But as Ezekiel prophesied, they are "dwelling in security" under God's protection. (Ezekiel 38:11) Present-day natural Israel, surrounded by hostile neighbors and suffering internal difficulties politically and socially, is hardly "dwelling in security."

The Bible, however, indicates that the world scene will undergo a drastic change. "Babylon the Great," the world empire of false religion, will suffer sudden destruction. (Revelation, chapter 18) With this debacle of false religion, the remaining true Christians will seem vulnerable, and Satan, or "Gog," will not be able to resist attempting to destroy them. He will see to it that under demonic influence "the kings of the entire inhabited earth" are gathered together "to the war of the great day of God the Almighty" at Har-Magedon.—Ezekiel 38:12-16; Revelation 16:14, 16.

"Har-Magedon" is, therefore, not some tiny location in the Middle East. Rather, it is a *world situation*. The entire world will be united in its opposition to Jehovah God and his witnesses. (Isaiah 43:10-12) It is Satan's vicious attack upon true Christians—not a battle between nations in an area of the Middle East—that arouses God to warfare in defense of His people!—Ezekiel 38:18-23; Zechariah 2:8.

True Christians today are therefore doing more than keeping a passive watch on the Middle East. Their prime concern is to direct people to what God's Word really says about this coming war. Jehovah's Witnesses have gained a worldwide reputation for fearlessly taking this message to the homes of people. Nevertheless, you may wonder why a God of love would bring about such a war. Is it possible to survive it? Our next two issues of *The Watchtower* will address themselves to these very questions.

She Had Faith and Courage —Do You?



THIS little Israelite girl is being taken captive by a marauding band of Syrians. Eventually she is brought to the wife of Naaman, the commander of the Syrian army. In this enemy territory, far from her home in Israel, she becomes a servant of Naaman's wife.

Naaman is a valiant, mighty man who is held in high esteem. However, this great military commander is afflicted with the terrible disease leprosy, which eats away parts of a person's body. Back in Israel, before she was captured, the little Israelite girl heard about the miracles Jehovah God performed through his prophet Elisha, including even the restoring of life to a woman's dead son. (2 Kings 4:8-37) Unlike so many others, the little girl has complete faith in God's miracles, and she has the courage to speak up about them.

So one day, as you can see, the little girl tells Naaman's wife: 'If my master would go to Samaria, Jehovah's prophet there would cure him of leprosy.' Well, eventually, someone goes to Naaman and reports what the little Israelite girl

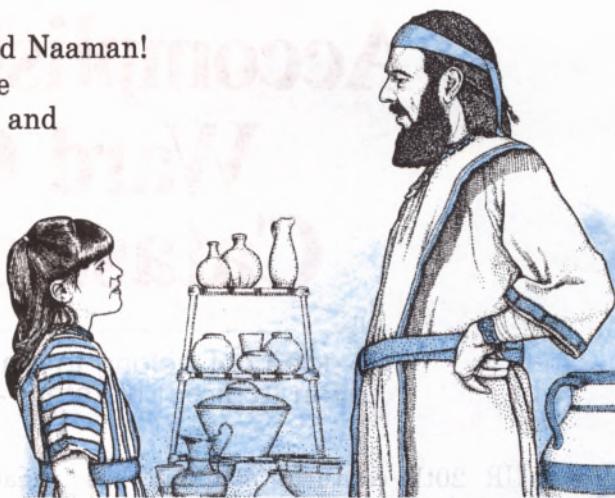


God's Word Is Alive

said. How this must have impressed Naaman!

As here pictured, we can imagine Naaman approaching the little girl and saying something like this: 'I am the chief of the army of Syria.

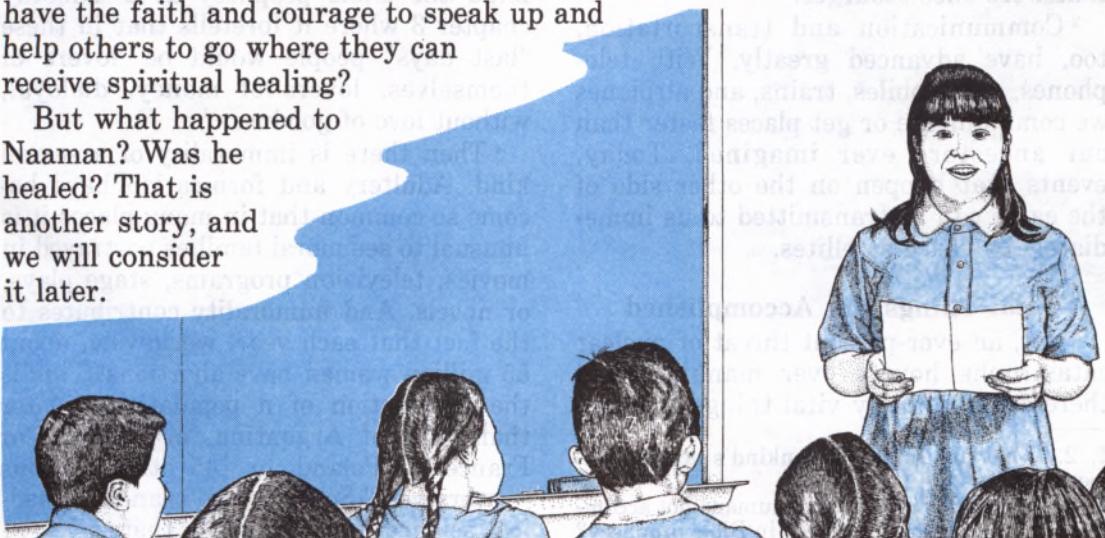
Yet you dare to urge me to go to your country, to the prophet of your God, that I might be cured of my leprosy. Little one, you have great faith and unselfish courage, risking my displeasure to render me this kindness. I will ask permission of the Syrian king to go to Israel.'—2 Kings 5:1-5.



Can you see yourself in a position similar to that of the little Israelite girl? Do you know about Jehovah's goodness and how he purposed to create a new system of things in which all people will be healthy and can live forever? (2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:3, 4) Why, most people today know little if anything about these things!

So, as a youngster, you might find yourself in a situation like that of the young girl pictured here. The teacher and the other students in this class do not know about Jehovah. In such a case, if you had the opportunity, would you have the faith and courage to speak up and help others to go where they can receive spiritual healing?

But what happened to Naaman? Was he healed? That is another story, and we will consider it later.





Can Human Accomplishments Ward Off Catastrophe?

"It does not belong to man who is walking even to direct his step."—JEREMIAH 10:23.

IN OUR 20th century, mankind has accomplished amazing things. Great strides have been made in education, in science, and in technical fields. Today many reap the benefits of this in their daily lives. In various lands there are modern conveniences such as indoor electric lighting, plumbing, and helpful appliances. Also, medical science is helping to control certain diseases, such as smallpox, that were once scourges.

² Communication and transportation, too, have advanced greatly. With telephones, automobiles, trains, and airplanes we communicate or get places faster than our ancestors ever imagined. Today, events that happen on the other side of the earth can be transmitted to us immediately by space satellites.

Vital Things Not Accomplished

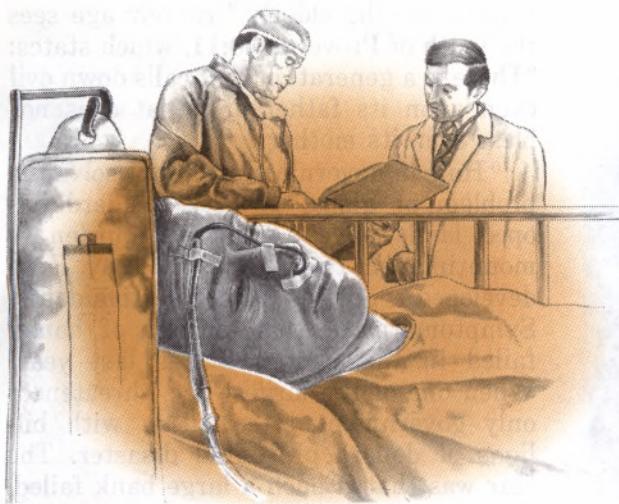
³ Yet, an ever-present threat of nuclear catastrophe hovers over mankind, and there are absolutely vital things that hu-

1, 2. What are some of mankind's accomplishments in this 20th century?

3, 4. What vital things have humans not accomplished, as accurately foretold in Bible prophecy?

mans have not been able to accomplish. For example, has the advance in education seen a similar advance in the educating of people to be more honest, truthful, and moral? In the United States, tax losses from cheating come to over 100 billion dollars annually. In another country, in one large city alone, 17,000 police officers reportedly were dismissed for corruption in seven years. Such dishonesty brings to mind the Bible prophecy at 2 Timothy chapter 3 where it foretells that in these "last days" people would be 'lovers of themselves, lovers of money, disloyal, without love of goodness.'

⁴ Then there is immorality of a sexual kind. Adultery and fornication have become so common that in many places it is unusual to see moral families portrayed in movies, television programs, stage plays, or novels. And immorality contributes to the fact that each year, worldwide, about 55 million women have abortions! This is the destruction of a population greater than that of Argentina, or Canada, or France, or Poland, or 145 other nations —every year! So while one branch of medical science hails advances that save the



Medical science has not stemmed the tide of disease and death

lives of some children, another branch murders millions of the unborn. Just as the Bible foretold, in these "last days" many people are "without self-control" and have "no natural affection."—2 Timothy 3:3.

⁵ Sexual immorality is causing an epidemic of sexually transmitted diseases. Many types are now resistant to drugs. The widespread disease known as genital herpes has seen no cure so far. And there is a sharp rise in the number of babies who have it, born from infected mothers. About half of these babies die, and of the rest, half are physically or mentally damaged. Nor has any cure been found so far for AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), the deadly disease that has baffled doctors. AIDS has appeared in at least 33 nations "and now poses a global health threat" says the Associated Press. It has especially affected homosexuals, calling to mind Romans 1:27.

5. What are some health consequences of rampant immorality today?

⁶ Medical science cannot stem the tide of many other diseases. In Africa alone, millions have malaria, sleeping sickness, leprosy, and other illnesses. In developed nations cancer, heart trouble, diabetes, cirrhosis, and emotional disorders are on the rise. Some of these are brought on, or worsened, by the anxieties or by-products of modern industrial society. Others result from permissive life-styles.

⁷ If more diseases were controlled, could medical science keep us in good health indefinitely? No, say many scientists. They show that while the life span might be lengthened by a few years, other illnesses would become bigger killers. A scientist concluded: "There is little chance that we will greatly increase life expectancy or postpone aging in the near future." Accurately, the Bible stated long ago at Psalm 90:10: "The days of our years are seventy years; and if because of special mightiness they are eighty years, yet their insistence is on trouble and hurtful things; for it must quickly pass by."

Problem of Poverty Unsolved

⁸ Technology has made living more convenient for some people, true. But many others do not have enough money to buy the products of technology. The publication *World Military and Social Expenditures 1983* reported: "2,000,000,000 people live on incomes below \$500 [U.S.] per year." It continued: "At least one person in five is trapped in absolute poverty, a

6. Has medical science stemmed the advance of disease throughout the world?
7. Is it likely that advances in medicine could keep us in good health indefinitely?
8. How did the Bible accurately foretell that technology would not solve the poverty problem?



Human governments cannot eliminate global poverty

state of destitution so complete that it is silent genocide." It then noted that each year "11,000,000 babies die before their first birthday" from malnutrition or disease.—Revelation 6:5-8.

⁹ In some countries, states *The Detroit News*, "many women find themselves with too many children and no means to care for them. . . . All too often, such mothers simply deposit an unwanted child . . . on the street." There are millions of such children. In other places, parents are abandoned. An Asian journalist writes: "Thousands of old people are being turned out of their homes because their families cannot feed them anymore. There are no welfare agencies to provide help. Many times the children of these elderly ones take them on a train and drop them off someplace or abandon them at train stations." The writer adds: "What a shocking change in a culture that had so much

9. What sad situation prevails in many lands?

respect for the elderly." So our age sees the truth of Proverbs 30:11, which states: "There is a generation that calls down evil even upon its father and that does not bless even its mother."

¹⁰ Human governments cannot solve the problem of global poverty. Underdeveloped lands have a crushing burden of mounting debt that they cannot pay. Even developed countries have excessive debts. Symptomatic of this, dozens of banks failed in the United States last year. When one of the largest was threatened, only government intervention with billions of dollars prevented disaster. The fear was that if such a large bank failed, "the contagion would have spread to other banks as well, threatening the entire financial system," reported *The New York Times*. Thus, it is becoming increasingly difficult to ward off catastrophe. In fact, with each passing year the observation of England's *Guardian* takes on added force: "The world is on the verge of a human catastrophe and a political disaster . . . Whole continents have seen their hopes for the future disappear."—Luke 21: 25, 26.

Technology's Effect on War

¹¹ Technology has made much worse something else that governments are unable to stop: war. It was technology that made World War I such a slaughter with the mass use of machine guns, submarines, warplanes, tanks, and flamethrowers. British author Richard Rees said: "The 1914-18 war brought two facts to light: first, that technological development had reached a point where it could continue without disaster only in a unified

10. How secure is the world's financial situation, bringing to mind what prophecy of Jesus?

11. What additional problem that governments cannot solve has been made much worse by technology?

world and, second, that the existing political and social organizations in the world made its unification impossible." World War II proved his point, as newer weapons killed about 55 million people.

¹² Today war weapons are far more hideous, and governments are far from united. Regarding nuclear weapons, author Herman Wouk said: "The ingenuity, labor, and treasure poured out on this . . . insanity truly stun the mind. If nations did not learn war any more, there would be nothing mankind could not do." Astronomer Carl Sagan said of nuclear war: "There is little question that our global civilization would be destroyed." And while this threat of earth-wide catastrophe hangs over the human family, numerous other conflicts take countless lives. The Center for Defense Information in the United States reported that in 1984 there were 42 different wars and rebellions in progress *at the same time!* Governments cannot even stop the tidal wave of crime and violence in their own lands, much less bring global peace.

¹³ All of this fits the prophecy at Revelation 6:4 about the ride of one of the 'four horsemen of the Apocalypse' since 1914: "And another came forth, a fiery-colored horse; and to the one seated upon it there was granted to take peace away from the earth so that they should slaughter one another; and a great sword was given him."

Why Human Efforts Fail

¹⁴ Why is there reason to fear that human accomplishments will not ward off catastrophe? Indeed, why are humans un-

able to accomplish their aims? The Bible shows one major reason: "Through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men because they had all sinned." (Romans 5:12) Our first parents, Adam and Eve, were created perfect in body and mind. But that perfection depended on their staying inside the boundaries of God's beneficial laws. Within those laws they were given much freedom of choice. But Genesis chapter 3 shows that our first parents took free choice too far. They desired independence from God and his laws, wanting to decide for themselves what was right or wrong, an authority that belongs only to God. After they made that choice, they were on their own. The Bible states: "Jehovah is with you as long as you prove to be with him; . . . but if you leave him he will leave you." (2 Chronicles 15:2) Separated from God, Adam and Eve began to degenerate. Sickness, sorrow, and eventually death overtook them.

—Genesis 2:16, 17.

¹⁵ After our first parents became imperfect, the law of genetics saw to it that all their offspring inherited imperfection. The psalmist acknowledged: "With error I was brought forth with birth pains, and in sin my mother conceived me." (Psalm 51:5) There is no way whatsoever that medical science can overcome the consequences of inherited imperfection. Looking for some medical breakthrough to eliminate sickness and death is looking for something that humans cannot accomplish—ever.

¹⁶ Inherited imperfection also affects our mental condition. We are all born with the tendency to do the wrong thing. Now, this does not mean that humans cannot control their actions. They can if they take

12. What threats confront the human family today?
13. Does global violence in our time fit Bible prophecy?
14, 15. What is a major reason why humans cannot accomplish their aims now?

16. How has imperfection affected mankind's mental condition?

corrective measures. Proverbs 3:6 shows this, saying: "In all your ways take notice of him [Jehovah], and he himself will make your paths straight." However, when humans ignore the proper correction, then they get into deep trouble. And the farther away individuals and nations get from God's laws, the more ruinously they act, feeding the inborn tendency to be selfish. In this regard a *New York Times* editorial commented: "You can hardly take a casual look at today's headlines without wondering where the world is going.... See what happens when men, institutions and nations put their selfish interests ahead of everything else.... The plain fact in all countries is that playing the selfish game is not working."

Satanic Influence

¹⁷ Another major factor that helps to explain why humans cannot achieve their aims and ward off catastrophe is the influence noted at 2 Corinthians 4:4, which speaks of "the god of this system of things." Some who are not familiar with the Bible may think that the god referred to here is Almighty God. But the same verse adds that this god "has blinded the minds of the unbelievers." Surely, the loving Creator would not do that. The god referred to is the same one mentioned at 1 John 5:19, which says: "The whole world is lying in the power of the wicked one."

¹⁸ The god who controls this present world is identified at Revelation 12:9 as "the one called Devil and Satan, who is misleading the entire inhabited earth." The name Satan means "Resister" or "Adversary." The name Devil means "False Accuser," or "Slanderer." These are appropriate terms, for the rebellion of Adam

17, 18. What other major factor helps to explain why humans cannot accomplish their aims?

Questions in Review

- What vital things have humans been unable to accomplish?
- How has technology worsened the effects of war?
- Why do human efforts so often fail?
- In view of man's record, what is the wise course?

and Eve was instigated by this rebel in the spirit realm. It was he who told Eve, in effect: 'You do not need God's laws. You can decide for yourself what is right and what is wrong.' However, by pulling away from God, Satan became mentally debased. This can be seen by his works, for just look at the world under his control! The ugly, evil history of mankind verifies that it has an ugly, evil influence behind it.

What Hope?

¹⁹ Some observers of this chaotic world have made interesting observations about the remedy for mankind's ills. *The Gazette* of Montreal said: "About 150 groups of national politicians pull in different directions, steering planet earth toward chaos. Yet most of the world's major problems are global in scope because transportation and communications technology have shrunk the world into a global community or village." It then recommended: "Some form of world government will be necessary." Sociologist Erich Fromm said that this world's ills can be done away with "only if the whole [social and political] system as it has existed during the last 6000 years of history can be replaced by a

19. What have some observers suggested as remedies for this world's ills?

fundamentally different one."—Italics ours.

²⁰ Such observers do not realize it, but the whole social and political system is going to be "replaced by a fundamentally different one"! There *will* soon be just one world government for all mankind. But it will not come about by human efforts. Humans alone are unable to ward off catastrophe. They surely cannot replace this present system of things with a better one, as history has proved. They cannot get rid of inherited imperfection, sickness,

20. (a) Why will desired goals never come about by human efforts? (b) In whom should we put our trust for the future?

and death. And they cannot get rid of Satan and his demons. Instead, the past course of human events has proved true the inspired words: "It does not belong to man who is walking even to direct his step." (Jeremiah 10:23) Thus God's Word counsels: "Do not put your trust in nobles, nor in the son of earthling man, to whom no salvation belongs." (Psalm 146:3) In whom, then, should you place confidence? Proverbs 3:5 urges: "Trust in Jehovah with all your heart and do not lean upon your own understanding." Why should we have such confidence in Jehovah? Because he can do what man cannot, as the following article will prove.

A Government That Accomplishes What Man Cannot

"Come, you people, and see the activities of God. His dealing with the sons of men is fear-inspiring."

—PSALM 66:5.

JEHOVAH has the power to do what man cannot. To illustrate: Men are in awe of the power of the nuclear bomb; but its power is dwarfed by the tremendous power that exists in our sun. Yet the sun is just one of about 200 billion stars in our

1, 2. (a) How does the visible universe display the awesome power of the Creator? (b) Why should we believe what Jehovah's prophetic Word says about our time?

Milky Way galaxy alone. Astronomers estimate that throughout the universe there may be about 100 billion galaxies, each with billions of stars. What stupendous power it took to create all of that! (Isaiah 40:26) This awesome power of the Creator makes the power of humans pale into insignificance.—Isaiah 40:15.

² Thus no one should doubt that Jehovah can accomplish what he says he will do.

(Isaiah 46:9, 10; 55:11) We should believe it when his prophetic Word tells us that we are nearing the end of the time limit he has allowed for humans to go their independent way. History shows that what people have done to human life and to animal life, as well as to the earth itself, is a disgrace, a blot on God's universe. Thus, Jehovah is fully justified in erasing this blot once and for all.—Hosea 4:1-3; Jude 14, 15.

³ What is taking place on the world scene today is clear evidence that this system of things is indeed in the final part of "the last days" foretold at 2 Timothy chapter 3. Soon Jehovah will crush this system out of existence and immobilize its head, Satan the Devil. That will be followed by an entirely new system of things on earth, controlled by the heavenly government for which Jesus taught his followers to pray when he said: "Let your kingdom come. Let your will take place, as in heaven, also upon earth."—Matthew 6:10; Daniel 2:44; Romans 16:20.

The Principle of Repurchase

⁴ Human governments cannot eliminate sin, sickness, and death. Yet, God's government will do what humans cannot. We get some insight as to how this will work by examining Jehovah's dealings with his people of ancient Israel. Back then, God used the principle of repurchase, or ransom. For instance, if an Israelite became poor, he might have to sell himself as a slave to a non-Israelite. But a close relative could ransom him if he had the adequate purchase price.—Leviticus 25:47-49.

⁵ In a similar way, God has provided for

3. What does Bible prophecy say about the near future?
4. How did Jehovah use the principle of repurchase in ancient Israel?
- 5, 6. (a) How does the repurchase principle work in relieving mankind of inherited sin? (b) Is everyone automatically freed from sin?

the repurchasing of mankind out of slavery to sin. The price had to be the equivalent of what was lost. (Deuteronomy 19:21) Adam lost perfect, eternal human life. Since nothing that sinful humans possess equals that in value, they cannot "redeem even a brother." (Psalm 49:7) However, the Bible foretold the coming of the one who could. That one proved to be Jesus Christ. It was revealed that Jesus had a prehuman existence in heaven. But his life was transferred to the womb of Mary by Jehovah's power. In this way he was born as a human. But with God as his Father, he did not inherit the sinfulness that had crippled all the rest of mankind.—Matthew 1:18-21; John 1:1, 14; 1 Peter 2:22.

⁶ Thus, Jesus possessed the only thing equal in value to a perfect human life—another perfect human life. But unlike disobedient Adam, Jesus remained obedient to God. And when he offered up his life for the human family, Jehovah accepted it as the suitable repurchase price. (Galatians 1:4) But does this mean that everyone is automatically freed from sin and will gain perfection under Kingdom rule? No, for John 3:16 states: "God loved the world so much that he gave his only-begotten Son, in order that *everyone exercising faith in him* might not be destroyed but have everlasting life." Only if we accept the repurchase provision and do something about it will we experience the regeneration of our bodies and minds to perfection in Paradise.—Revelation 21:4.

Education in the New Order

⁷ The mind has a huge potential for learning, even in man's present imperfect condition. But this is only a fraction of what it will be able to learn in the New Order, where sin will not block its functioning. In *The Brain Book* the

- 7, 8. What potential for future learning lies within the human brain?

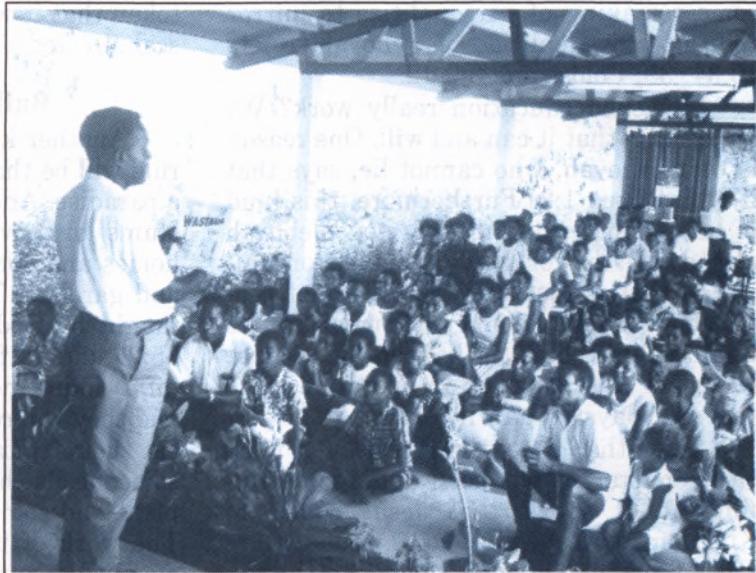
Under Kingdom rule,
truth-loving people
“will all be taught by
Jehovah”

author states: “Within our own heads lies one of the most complex systems in the known universe. Its power and versatility far surpass that of any man-made computer.” He adds: “It is frequently stated that we use only 10 percent of our full mental potential. This, it now appears, is rather an overestimate. We probably do not use even 1 percent—more likely 0.1 percent or less.”

⁸ Imagine what the brain will enable humans to accomplish when it reaches its full potential in the New Order. Think of all the fascinating things that Jehovah has put on this earth about which we can learn, such as its animal, marine, and plant life. Think, too, of learning about the amazing universe with its billions of galaxies. Consider all the skills we will be able to master in art, music, crafts, and a host of other things.

⁹ There is another type of education in the New Order that will bring the greatest benefit of all. Jesus said: “They will all be taught by Jehovah.” (John 6:45) This is the highest level of education. And it will be made available to all the subjects of

9. What type of education will bring the greatest benefits in the New Order?



God’s Kingdom, including those who survive the end of this system of things. (Revelation 7:9, 14) Other Kingdom subjects are noted at John 5:28 and 29, where Jesus said: “The hour is coming in which all those in the memorial tombs will hear his voice and come out.” This resurrection of billions of dead persons—utterly impossible for humans to accomplish—means that a vast educational work will have to be done in their behalf.

¹⁰ Today there are many conflicting systems of education. But in the New Order, God’s heavenly government will provide one worldwide system of education to teach people the truth about Jehovah in a unified way. Part of this will be to teach people about proper human relationships. There will be no teaching of pride of race, nationality, or social standing. Instead, earth’s inhabitants will learn to love one another, respecting one another’s dignity. Such education will also result in a whole-

10. How will education proceed in the New Order?

some remaking of personalities to mirror the superior qualities of Jehovah.—Acts 10:34, 35; Colossians 3:9-12.

¹¹ Can such education really work? We are certain that it can and will. One reason is that Jehovah, who cannot lie, says that it will. (Titus 1:2) Furthermore, this kind of education *is working right now!* Jehovah already has a worldwide teaching organization that is instructing millions of people about his Kingdom government and its requirements. This is happening because Kingdom rule has been in operation since “the last days” began in 1914.

¹² Since that time, the prophecy of Matthew chapter 25 has been undergoing fulfillment. It shows that Jesus comes to Kingdom power while God’s enemies are still on earth. Verse 32 says: “All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another, just as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.” These sheeplike ones are now being taught by Jehovah through his growing, visible organization. Appreciating what they learn, they work to remake their personalities in God’s image. And the fact that this education is affecting millions of persons for the good right now is a sure

11, 12. How can we be certain that such education in the New Order will succeed in its purpose?

token that it will do so on a much grander scale in God’s New Order.

Building a Paradise

¹³ Another kind of work under Kingdom rule will be that of turning this earth into a paradise. And Paradise could not include slums or poverty. People want decent homes and some land with trees, flowers, and gardens. Those who are willing to be taught by God will have just that. Isaiah 65:21 and 22 foretells: “And they will *certainly* build houses and have occupancy; and they will *certainly* plant vineyards and eat their fruitage. They will not build and someone else have occupancy; they will not plant and someone else do the eating. . . . The work of their own hands my chosen ones will use to the full.”

¹⁴ Do not doubt what Jehovah will accomplish with the willing hearts and hands of his people in the New Order. Even today the construction world is amazed at what Jehovah’s Witnesses accomplish in putting up buildings, such as quickly built Kingdom Halls. After one of these was built in the United States, a newspaper editorial said: ‘Something more valuable than a building was created by those 2,000 volunteers. Civic leaders should look closer at what was accomplished last weekend. Enthusiasm, dedication and desire to meet a goal were harnessed with astounding results. If only local groups could bridle those same resources, any goal—be it recycling, crime prevention, or community development—could be within reach. An army of workers proved what potential lies within the soul when a community is unified. We hope the Kingdom Hall is the site for a fountain of inspiration to the congregation of Witnesses. Its existence is al-

In Our Next Issue

■ Armageddon
—From a God of Love?

■ Who Can Read the “Sign” Aright?

■ Can a Blind Man “See”?

13. What grand construction work will take place under Kingdom rule?

14, 15. Why can we be confident that Jehovah’s servants will be able to construct a paradise?

Peace and unity
are already a
reality among
those who
submit to the
Kingdom
government

ready an inspiration to
us all.'

¹⁵ This willingness and growing skill of Jehovah's servants will be employed with even greater benefits in God's New Order. And how enjoyable it will be to replace all undesirable areas with beautiful homes and surroundings! How satisfying it will be to know that every day your efforts will bring the earth one day closer to being a global paradise!

A United Global Family

¹⁶ Nor will the inhabitants of the New Order ever have to feel threatened by crime, rioting, or war. Psalm 46:9 says: "[God] is making wars to cease to the extremity of the earth." The "Prince of Peace," Jesus Christ, will enforce enduring global peace, for "to the abundance of the princely rule and to peace there will be no end." (Isaiah 9:6, 7) With true peace, and with the entire human family educated in the same high standards, all will be united in an unbreakable bond of love. Thus, there will no longer be any divisive national boundaries.

¹⁷ Are such promises too good to be true?

16. Why will inhabitants of the New Order never feel threatened by violence?

17. How far reaching are the peace and unity God's servants have even now?



No, because peace and unity are already a reality among those who loyally submit to Kingdom rule! Consider this: Over two and a half million witnesses of Jehovah are spread around the earth. Yet, they already are fulfilling Isaiah 2:4, which says: "And they will have to beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning shears. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, neither will they learn war anymore." Under no circumstances will Jehovah's Witnesses intentionally take the lives of their brothers, or anyone else, in any land. As the Italian publication *Il Corriere di Trieste* observed: "They are ready to face death rather than violate the basic precept . . . THOU SHALT NOT KILL!" Because of adhering to God's standards, Jehovah's Witnesses have true peace and unity, which it is impossible for this world to attain. And the fact that millions of them enjoy this condition in the midst of this strife-torn world testifies to what will take place when God's Kingdom controls all earth's affairs.—John 13:34, 35; 1 John 3:10-12.

¹⁸ In addition to this international peace and unity, adherence to God's superior standards produces people who care for their neighbor and their neighbor's property. Thus they 'conduct themselves honestly in all things.' (Hebrews 13:18) Regarding this, a French-Canadian columnist, writing in *Le Journal de Montreal*, said of Jehovah's Witnesses: "If they were the only people in the world, we would not at night have to bolt our doors shut and put on the burglar alarm."

¹⁹ These loyal subjects of God's government have no crime problem among themselves, while it is out of hand in the world. Too, since they adhere to the Bible's high moral standards, they are not plagued by the sexually transmitted diseases or abortions that are epidemic in every nation. And Jehovah's servants hold marriage in deep respect, in contrast with the world's permissive view of the marital arrangement. Why can Jehovah's Witnesses maintain such standards? Because Jehovah is guiding his loyal worshipers, and "with God all things are possible."—Matthew 19:26.

Gather to True Worship

²⁰ Whether people realize it or not, the global gathering of sheeplike persons into Jehovah's organization is the most significant movement of modern times. This is fulfilling the remarkable prophecy of Isaiah 2:2, 3: "And it must occur in the final part of the days that the mountain of the house of Jehovah [his exalted true worship] will become firmly established above the top of the mountains, and it will certainly be lifted up above the hills; and to it *all the nations must stream*. And many peoples will certainly go and say: 'Come,

- 18, 19. What are some other benefits that come to those who adhere to God's high standards?
20. What is the most significant movement of modern times?

you people, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, . . . and he will instruct us about his ways, and we will walk in his paths.'

²¹ We encourage all honest-hearted people to be part of this thrilling world movement toward true worship and righteous government. Enjoy blessings that right now come from associating with a people being educated in God's laws and principles. Loyally submit to the Kingdom government that will soon begin to turn this earth into a paradise. Put your trust in that Kingdom and not in the schemes of this world, for as Psalm 127:1 says: "Unless Jehovah himself builds the house, it is to no avail that its builders have worked hard on it." Respond to the invitation of Psalm 66:5: "Come, you people, and see the activities of God. His dealing with the sons of men is fear-inspiring." So come to the God who guarantees the best government for mankind, the government that will accomplish what man cannot, the government that very soon will be the *only one* this earth will have.

21. What are honest-hearted people encouraged to do?

How Would You Answer?

- Why can we be certain that Jehovah will accomplish his purposes?
- How does the principle of repurchase work for relieving one of sin?
- What great education and construction works will there be in the New Order?
- What evidence is there now that peace, unity, and love will exist earth wide in the New Order?

Insight on the News

Threat of "Apocalypse"

According to the nuclear-winter theory, if bombs equivalent to 5,000 million tons of TNT were detonated in a nuclear war, the resulting smoke and soot—particularly from large cities—would plunge the northern hemisphere into months of darkness and freezing, life-threatening weather. "If the analysis is correct," states Nobel laureate Herbert A. Simon in the magazine *Science*, "then no nation can make a major nuclear attack even against an unarmed opponent without committing suicide."

Many experts feel that if this theory is verified, it will be a great incentive for nuclear disarmament. "Recognition of the nuclear-winter problem, awful as it is, seems a piece of immense good fortune at the eleventh hour," writes Thomas Powers in *The Atlantic*. But would this end the arms race? Hardly. Powers maintains that the superpowers would be compelled to construct "a whole new generation of weaponry" with "a much larger number of much smaller, extremely accurate weapons that would allow targets in cities to be destroyed without burning down the cities around them." He concludes that the nuclear-winter problem "does not end the possibility of a big war . . . , but it does push planners in a new direction, away from apocalypse."

Rather than offering hope, the threat of nuclear winter simply raises new fears. Would the superpowers not be more likely to deploy "suicide-proof" weapons to settle their confrontations? In

desperation, might not warring nations still use nuclear weapons at the risk of suicide to avoid defeat? The selfish military strategies that nations employ provide yet another reason for Almighty God to bring about his war of Har-Magedon. This he will do soon, and his Word assures us that "there is no king saved by the abundance of military forces." —Psalm 33:16; Revelation 16: 14, 16.

Armageddon —What Is It?

In a televised debate, U.S. President Ronald Reagan said that no one knows whether Bible prophecies mean "that Armageddon is a thousand years away or day after tomorrow." But summing up some of Reagan's statements, Andrew Lang, research director of the Christic Institute, an ecumenical public-policy center, says: "What we have are a series of repetitions that Armageddon may happen in our generation, that Armageddon may happen in the Middle East and that Armageddon may involve Soviet forces."

The Bible indicates that "the kings of the entire inhabited earth" will be gathered to Armageddon for destruction, though a "great crowd" in God's favor will survive. (Revelation 7:14, 15; 16: 14, 16; 19:19-21) Armageddon (Hebrew, "Har-Magedon," meaning, "Mountain of Megiddo") is not an actual site in the Middle East. Nor could the armies of the nations squeeze into the area surrounding Megiddo, an ancient Biblical city. Armageddon is, therefore, a situation, that is, the world's assembling or lining up in

opposition to Jehovah God. This situation will follow the "sign," which we are presently witnessing. Armageddon will occur in our generation.—Matthew 24:3-15, 21, 34.

Teenage Childbearing

"There is a strong tendency among those of us who are alarmed at the rise in pregnancy and child-bearing among black teenagers to try to solve the problem by focusing on the pragmatic side of it," writes black columnist William Raspberry. What does he mean? Teenage girls are told not to have babies "because it interrupts their education, preempts their career prospects and damages their life chances. Their babies are likely to be of low birth weights and subject to learning disabilities." But, says Raspberry, "what fascinates and dismays me is how seldom the question of morality enters any of these discussions."

Indeed, teenagers need to be taught that promiscuity, which often results in pregnancy, violates the Bible's moral laws. (Galatians 5:19-23) They should also be taught principles in God's Word that deal with marriage and child rearing. The apostle Paul indicates that Christians should cultivate self-control and wait until they are "past the bloom of youth," when sexual desires first bloom, or become strong, before they get married. (1 Corinthians 7:8, 9, 36) Modern-day studies, which indicate that mature people make the best parents, confirm these moral laws and principles.

“Kingdom Increase” Conventions —What Rich Spiritual Feasts!



JEHOVAH promised that ‘the little one would become a thousand and the small one a mighty nation.’ He himself would “speed it up in its own time.” (Isaiah 60:22) And in some lands since World War II, Kingdom proclaimers have increased a thousandfold. To this very day, Jehovah’s Witnesses are experiencing splendid increases in Brazil, Italy, Japan, Mexico—indeed around the earth. How appropriate, then, that their recent assemblies should be called “Kingdom Increase” District Conventions!

More important than numerical increases, of course, are the rich spiritual blessings we enjoy as witnesses of Jehovah. And how many we enjoyed at this convention! A review of program highlights should refresh our minds, gladden our hearts, and strengthen our determination to apply the fine counsel.

The Overall Effect

In the contiguous United States alone, 117 conventions were held. A total of

1,159,898 were present (35,828 more than last year), and 10,625 were baptized. The four days were filled with spiritual feasting and rejoicing, and the program was like a trumpet sounding distinct notes—Scriptural counsel to strengthen the heart and conscience.

“The talks zeroed in on every facet of life,” said one conventioner. Heard, too, were comments like these: ‘On getting home, I will have more to think about than I have had after any other convention.’ “It always seems that this year’s convention is better than last year’s, but this year’s was the best ever!” Yes, the program truly was outstanding.

These conventions also served to advertise Jehovah’s name and Kingdom. For instance, this was done when many Kingdom proclaimers shared in the field ministry on Friday afternoon. Then, too, there was much good coverage by the media. Newspaper, radio, and television reports focused on convention activities and the beliefs of Jehovah’s Witnesses.

"The Little One Becomes a Thousand"

Based on Isaiah 60:22, this was the theme of the opening day. The talk "Listen and Become Wise in Your Future" urged conventioners to listen to counsel especially applicable to them and work on those points when they returned home. (Proverbs 19:20) Then came the chairman's talk "Together Let Us Exalt God's Name," a most encouraging discussion of Psalm 34. Exalting Jehovah's name means praising it under all circumstances and showing respect for all the Creator's spiritual provisions. And how grateful we should be for the superb spiritual provisions he makes through his organization!

Heartwarming, indeed, was the feature "Declaring Jehovah's Works to the Next Generation." For years, the older ones among us have experienced God's goodness and therefore have much to tell those who are younger. And elderly Witnesses do not retire. Why, all members of the Governing Body keep very active although their ages range from 59 to 91 years! Moreover, Scriptural and modern-day examples show how fitting it is for the younger generation to respect and cooperate with older servants of Jehovah.

The importance of holiness was emphasized in the talk "Keeping Spotless, Unblemished and in Peace." (2 Peter 3:14) To keep spotless, we must avoid the world's immorality and greed. Maintaining peaceful relations with others requires that we be yielding as regards our preferences and that we conduct ourselves as lesser ones.

Next, conventioners were urged to be "Talking About the Glory of His Kingship." For instance, we can witness informally if we carry tracts and other literature, make good use of our opportunities and cultivate a positive frame of mind. The feature entitled "The Increase Is On" showed that large numbers are responding to the good news. Why, in 40 years Jeho-

vah's Witnesses have increased from about 126,000 to more than 2,842,500, with over 7,416,900 attending the Memorial! Encouraging expressions were heard from some who shared in this grand increase.

The first day's program ended with the stirring talk "Survivors Into a New Earth" and the release of a new book entitled *Survival Into a New Earth*. It focuses attention on 47 prophetic patterns and descriptions of people who will survive the end of this system and inherit the earthly realm of God's Kingdom. This publication certainly was received with great enthusiasm.

"Declaring Abroad the Kingdom"

The second day of the convention had this as its theme, and the program emphasized our privilege of declaring the Kingdom message. Pioneers interviewed during the talk "Will You Enter the Large Open Door?" told about the sacrifices they made to become full-time ministers but testified that entering this large door had resulted in deep satisfaction and the blessing that makes one truly rich. (Proverbs 10:22) Those not in the full-time ministry had reason for serious reflection when the speaker asked: "Do our circumstances permit us to enter the pioneer service?"

As aptly shown in the next talk, the apostle Paul was "Intensely Occupied With the Kingdom Good News." (Acts 18:5) Since preaching the good news is one of the main reasons for the existence of the Christian congregation, each present-day witness of Jehovah may wisely ask: "Am I a zealous proclaimer of the Kingdom? Is there any reason why I cannot share regularly each week in some feature of Kingdom preaching?"

The talk "In Your Training Aim for Godly Devotion" showed that such devotion means being personally attached to



Modern-day applications of Bible principles give convention dramas added impact

Jehovah. And while some secular education is necessary, we may well ask: What is my goal, a secular career or trying to please Jehovah?

Secular education also was considered in the modern-day drama *Divine Education Increases Kingdom Fruitage*. This highlight contrasted the dangers common to attending college with the rewards of full-time service. Youths appreciated the straightforward counsel, and one young man remarked: "That drama was not an exaggeration."

A delightful surprise that morning was the release of *Kingdom Melodies* No. 5. And ever so many expressed appreciation for the new songs used on the program.

The afternoon program began with the keynote address "Kingdom Fruitage Increasing in All the World." It interwove a verse-by-verse discussion of Isaiah chapter 60 with a review of Kingdom increase since 1919, noting such high points as the adoption of the name Jehovah's Witnesses

in 1931 and the proper identification of the "great crowd" in 1935. (Isaiah 43: 10-12; Revelation 7:9) Attention was drawn to the increases we enjoyed during World War II and since then, fulfilling Isaiah 60:22.

All of this was an apt prelude to the talk "A Joyful People—Why?" What reasons we have for joy! Ours is a happy God, and joy is a fruit of his spirit. We enjoy the light of truth, the protection of Bible-based morality, the finest association, and the privilege of making Jehovah's heart glad by maintaining our integrity and preaching the good news. In fact, many conventioners joyfully shared in the Kingdom-preaching work that afternoon, following a talk that heightened appreciation for the great variety of printed material so helpful in our ministry.

"Practicing the Things We Learn"

The third day began with two elders discussing the daily text and focusing attention on the foregoing theme. Then came a symposium entitled "Measuring Up as a Christian Family." First considered was the responsibility of the Christian husband, who needs to answer such questions as these: **Are you careful never to use your headship for selfish ends? Do**

you set a fine example by keeping material interests in their proper place as you teach your children to put the Kingdom first in life? Are weekends viewed merely as times for recreation or primarily as opportunities to share in sacred service?

The next talk, "A Wife Who Shows Deep Respect," pointed out that the wife's Scriptural role originates with a wise, just, and loving God who knows what is best for all. Of course, a wife should also be accorded respect. It may not always be easy for a woman to show deep respect for her husband, because he is not perfect. But showing such respect gains Jehovah's approval, results in family harmony, and will bring a woman happiness.

Especially did young people benefit from the talk "Children Who Honor Their Parents." Honoring parents requires obeying them from the heart and guarding against wrong inclinations. So a Christian youth may wisely ask: Is what I am doing bringing honor to God, my parents, and me?

Further counsel for young people was presented in the feature "Youths, Do Not Be Deceived." It included several fine interviews and emphasized the need to resist the Devil's attempts to deceive us. This was fol-

lowed by the talk "Sons Who Make Jehovah's Heart Glad," which showed that Jesus, David, and others gladdened Jehovah's heart in their youth. Similarly, by fine conduct and zealous service, many youths among us are making Jehovah's heart glad today. (Proverbs 27:11) What a privilege!

The baptism talk, "Subjecting Ourselves Under Jehovah's Mighty Hand," emphasized the fact that a person is loyal either to God's organization or to Satan's. Dedication and baptism require changes in the way we think, speak, and act and call for regular presence at meetings and a full share in the Christian ministry.

Three main responsibilities of overseers were driven home in the afternoon discourse "Elders, Imitate the Great Shepherd." (1) Elders must take seriously the obligation to feed God's flock, avoiding last-minute preparation. (2) By example and precept they must protect the flock

The thousands
baptized have
subjected
themselves
under Jehovah's
mighty hand



from such dangers as permissiveness, excessive pleasures, illicit sex, and apostasy. (3) Elders need to share regularly in the shepherding work.

A discussion between an elder and a ministerial servant next clarified "What It Means to Submit to Kingdom Authority." The root of disregard for rightful authority is selfishness, which got its start with the Devil. Submitting to Kingdom authority means following Bible principles and being submissive to those appointed to take the lead among us.

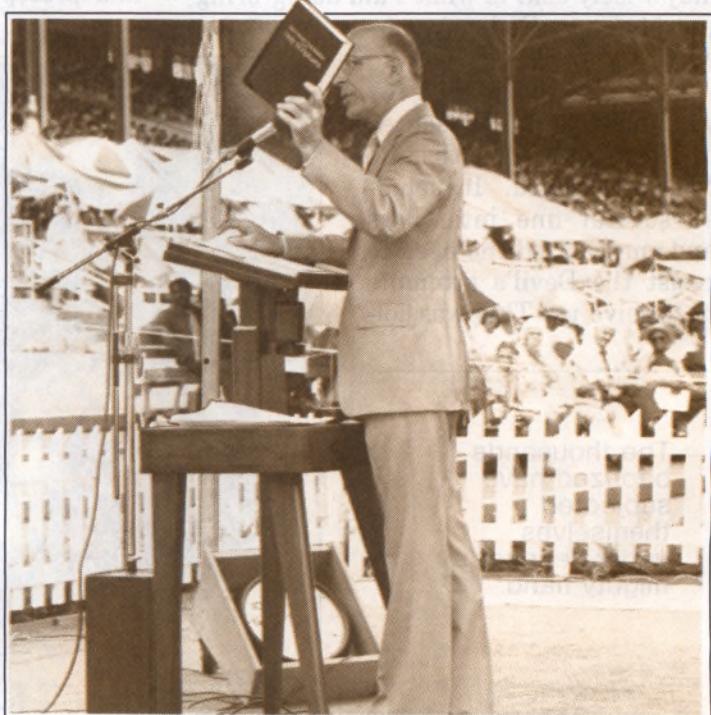
Yet what if a close friend tells us that he has committed a gross sin but wants us to keep it secret? The soul-searching talk "Do Not Share in the Sins of Others" stressed the need to be loyal to Jehovah and his organization. If we are unable to persuade our conscience-stricken friend to confess to the elders, we should go to them about the matter. Actually, this is for the wrongdoer's own spiritual well-being, and reports indicate that a number of individuals have acted in harmony with this counsel.

A talk that elicited much favorable comment was the one entitled "At Which Table Are You Feeding?" By extending the principle of the apostle Paul's counsel at 1 Corinthians 10:

Conventioners were thrilled to receive the superb reference edition of the *New World Translation*

14-22, we realize that to feed at Jehovah's table means to give God the worship due him and to feed on his truths. We must therefore avoid "the table of demons" by being on guard against such things as illicit sex, materialism, improper entertainment, and philosophies critical of God's Word. Limiting ourselves to Jehovah's table results in joy, contentment, and a sure hope.

The third day's closing talk was entitled "The Sacred Scriptures Increase Our Accurate Knowledge of God." After tracing the Watch Tower Society's record in printing various Bibles, the speaker thrilled his listeners by announcing the release of the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures—With References*. It contains over 125,000 cross-references, very helpful footnotes, and a valuable appendix. What a boon to Bible students!





A stirring Bible drama underscored the need to guard against disgraceful folly

"No End to the Abundance of Kingdom Rule"

This was the theme of the convention's fourth and final day. The first major talk centered attention on the question "Do You Abhor What Is Bad?" We need wisdom to determine what is bad and must actually hate, or loathe, badness, for following a wrong course brings Jehovah's disfavor and can harm us and others. (Romans 12:9) Moreover, we need to realize that when Jehovah says something is bad, *it really is bad* and should be avoided.

Next, it was stressed that "Kingdom Increase Adds Responsibility." Yes, great increase places an obligation on all those who have been in the truth longer. They have to care for the spiritual interests of newer ones. Among other things, this can be done by showing hospitality and by setting a fine example in all forms of sacred service.

Guard Against Disgraceful Folly was the title of the second drama. Effectively

portrayed were the bad consequences of Achan's greed. (Joshua, chapter 7) The drama also showed how a similar incident of disgraceful folly could impede the flow of God's holy spirit in a congregation. How this underscored the need to do our part to keep the organization clean while guarding our own hearts against temptation!

The afternoon began with the public talk "A Government That Accomplishes What Man Cannot." You can read information from this heartening message on pages 10 through 20 of this issue of *The Watchtower*.

Next came the talk "The Honor of Bearing Jehovah's Name." It was based on the brochure *The Divine Name That Will Endure Forever*, released that forenoon. The speaker noted that the Bible's most important truth is not the ransom or the hope of life in Paradise but the fact that Jehovah is the one true God. As bearers of Jehovah's name, we must acknowledge that he is the Great Purposer, love his qualities, and do our best to imitate them, making his name known at every opportunity.

In the final talk, "Kingdom Organization Geared for More Increase," the speaker stressed our great privilege to be living in this time of increase. However, we must

Works of Faith Promote Kingdom Increase

KINGDOM INCREASE is a reality today because Jehovah is blessing his faithful witnesses. Some idea of the works of faith that are promoting this theocratic growth can be gleaned from experiences related at the recent "Kingdom Increase" conventions. Among them were the following:

Outstanding works of faith are being shown in the field ministry. For instance, a recently baptized brother in Korea wanted to share fully in the subscription campaign. So he contacted his business associates and obtained 76 subscriptions to *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* in just one month. He was so encouraged that in nine months he placed 656 subscriptions—as many as 164 in a single month!

How fine it is when our young ones take Kingdom preaching very seriously! In Japan a young Kingdom publisher in the third grade heard that his class was going to a Shinto shrine for an art lesson. With his mother's help, he prepared a letter to his teacher and then telephoned her to explain why he would not be going. Greatly impressed, the teacher told his mother that she had been a publisher while in school but had given up because of family opposition. What resulted from the young boy's stand? Why, the teacher has become an active Witness once again!

One five-year-old in Kenya told his mother, who is a pioneer, that he wanted to become a special pioneer. She felt that he could not even be a regular pioneer since he was not conducting a Bible study. Her suggestion was that he take *My Book of Bible Stories* and try to teach other children. So he invited some youngsters to study the Bible with him, and before long ten were doing so regularly. If the young students could not answer the review questions he asked at the end of the study, he would go over the material again. Soon eight of the children were attending congregation meetings. But what about the other two? Well, they were just too small.

Places to meet are essential as Kingdom increase continues. However, when certain Witnesses in Chad decided to build a Kingdom Hall, it so upset the church people who met across the street that several times they broke down what the brothers had put up. Finally, the opposers became so ashamed of their unchristian conduct that they stopped hindering the Witnesses, and the hall was completed. How thrilled that small congregation was when 73 people came to the Memorial!

Other evidence of faith in action also contributes to Kingdom increase. For instance, in Papua New Guinea a group of interested people, including 15 husbands, wives, and children, were determined to attend a district convention to be held 70 miles (110 km) from their homes. To get there they had to go by dugout canoe with an outboard motor to power it. But when the weather turned bad, they faced powerful river currents and rough seas. They had to bail out water furiously, but they finally made it to their destination after ten hours. And just think—the one who organized this expedition is blind! But how their faith was rewarded at that rich spiritual feast!

maintain the quality of our worship, and individually we should keep moving forward. As one speaker said in closing: "With Jehovah and his Son giving us divine support, let us go forward as a Kingdom organization geared for more increase. We have every reason to exalt

God's name together, now and forevermore."

So it was that the "Kingdom Increase" District Conventions struck a positive and spiritually stimulating note. From beginning to end, they truly were rich spiritual feasts.

How Do You View Jehovah's Name?

THIS challenging question was raised for delegates at the "Kingdom Increase" District Conventions of Jehovah's Witnesses. It was occasioned by the release of a new brochure, *The Divine Name That Will Endure Forever*. Why was the question important?

Right from the earthly history of creation, the name Jehovah was used to refer to the only true God. (Genesis 2:4; 4:1) "Jehovah's friend" Abraham used it freely. (James 2:23; Genesis 18:30-33) Moses learned that Jehovah is the Creator's name "to time indefinite." (Exodus 3:15) Jesus made God's name manifest to his followers. (John 17:6) And his disciples traveled far and wide to help people 'call on the name of Jehovah and be saved.'—Acts 2:21.

Others, though, dishonored the name. Israelites who failed to keep Jehovah's law profaned his name. (Leviticus 18:21; 19:12) Those Israelites at the foot of Mount Sinai who used God's name in connection with their worship of the golden calf brought reproach upon his name. (Exodus 32:4, 6) Similarly, the Jews who later superstitiously refused to pronounce God's name dishonored it, as did the Jewish mystics who viewed it as a magic symbol.

Uninformed professing Christians, too, covered over the name when, like the Jews, they ceased to use it and even removed it from the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures. And this, in turn, has led to a modern abuse. People today ignore God's name, viewing it as unimportant or nonessential for worship.

Keep Honoring the Name

In fact, only Jehovah's Witnesses today follow the example of Jesus' early disciples and help people worldwide to 'call on the name of Jehovah and be saved.' They alone can truly be called "a people for his name." (Acts 15:14) Is it possible, though, that we, too, may brush aside Jehovah's name?

Well, if we break Jehovah's laws and practice unrighteousness, we are in fact dishonoring his name. (2 Timothy 2:19) And if we use Jehovah's name in our worship, but our actions show that our real hope for the future is based on material things or something similar, we are not very different from those ancient Israelites who used Jehovah's name but actually were worshiping a golden calf. Moreover, Jehovah's name is not a charm. If we were to display it as the Tetragrammaton or in modern spelling in our house or on our vehicle in the hope that it would protect us or bring us "good luck," how would we differ from those superstitious Jews who viewed it as a magic symbol?—Exodus 20:7.

Thus, how we view God's name is important. The name Jehovah is God's eternal memorial. (Exodus 3:15) It represents his changeless qualities and purposes. (Deuteronomy 32:3-43) Jehovah richly blesses those who fear him and honor his name. (Malachi 3:16) The new brochure, *The Divine Name That Will Endure Forever*, with its in-depth discussion of the divine name, its meaning and correct use, will surely help thousands more to honor the name of their Creator, Jehovah.—Revelation 4:11.



The Bible—A Book to Be Read

THE Bible is by far the most widely circulated book in all history. It is the most translated, the most quoted, and the oldest book. Yes, and it is also the book that has survived the most violent opposition. Unhappily, though, it is unlikely that the Bible is the most *widely read* book in the world.

Yet the Bible *should* be read. Consider some facts about it.

Why Read It Regularly?

Our English word "Bible" comes from the Greek term *biblia*, meaning "little books." This reminds us that the Bible is made up of a number of books—though some are not so "little"! These were written over a period of more than a thousand years. Although written by men, they were inspired by a higher Source. Even today, millions agree that "all Scripture is inspired of God and beneficial." (2 Timothy 3:16) Yes, these "little books" are filled with the thoughts of Jehovah God himself. (Isaiah 55:9) No wonder they have endured so long!

The practice of reading the Scriptures regularly has certainly been beneficial in times past. Kings of Israel were to make personal handwritten copies of the Law, now an important part of the Bible. They were to read in it daily, as a constant reminder to serve humbly and adhere to God's commandments. (Deuteronomy 17:18-20) Surely, we can derive similar benefits from regular Bible reading.

And how important to pay attention to Bible prophecy! Because of the prophet Daniel's personal study of the Scriptures, he was able to discern that an important prophecy in the book of Jeremiah was about to be fulfilled.—Daniel 9:1, 2; Jeremiah 29:10.

When John the Baptizer was preaching, "the people were in expectation" of the Messiah. (Luke 3:15) This suggests that many among them were familiar with the prophecies about the Christ that had been recorded in the Scriptures. This is very interesting, since books were not readily available in those days. Copies of Bible books had to be made painstakingly by hand. So how did people become familiar with them?

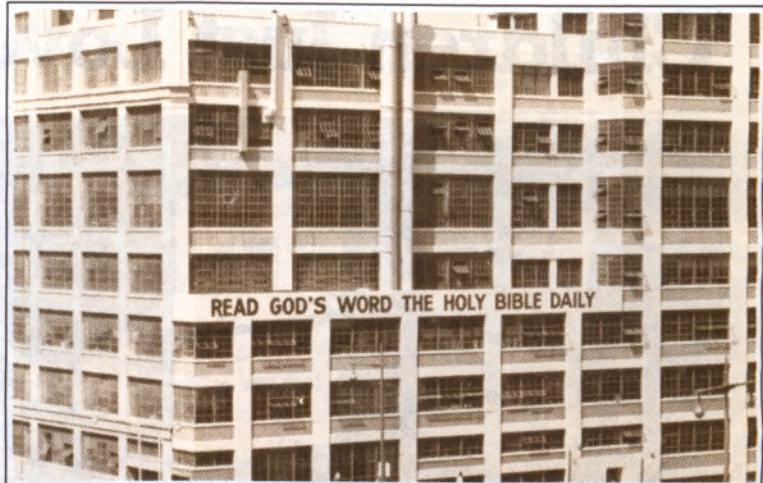
In many cases by public reading. The disciple James remarked: "From ancient times Moses has had in city after city those who preach him, because he is read aloud in the synagogues on every sabbath."—Acts 15:21.

Today it is easy for individuals to own a personal copy of the Bible, and at least some of the "little books" are available in the languages of 97 percent of the world's population. Thus it is sad that many are not very interested in finding out what the Bible has to say to them.

Encouraged to Read It

Jehovah's Witnesses have made it a prominent part of their work to encourage regular reading of the Bible. In bold letters

For years, a sign on the Watchtower Society's printing plant at 117 Adams Street, Brooklyn, New York, has urged passersby to read the Holy Scriptures



on one of their printing plants at their world headquarters in Brooklyn, New York, appears the statement "READ GOD'S WORD THE HOLY BIBLE DAILY."

In the more than 46,000 congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses throughout the world, there is the weekly Theocratic Ministry School. Public reading of a selected portion of the Bible each week is a part of the course. All in attendance have a weekly assignment to read a few Bible chapters in the privacy of their own home, and those who keep up with this schedule eventually read the whole Bible.

This is in harmony with the *Theocratic Ministry School Guidebook*, one of the textbooks used in this course. It states: "Your personal schedule should include time for reading the Bible itself. There is great value in reading it right through from cover to cover. . . . However, your goal in reading should never be just to cover material, but to get the overall viewpoint of it with the intention of remembering. Take time to ponder on what it says."—Page 21.

Jehovah's Witnesses feel that modern-day Christians should be knowledgeable about the Bible. With this in mind, they

have promoted a 20th-century version of public Bible reading. They have recorded readings of many of the "little books" of the Bible on cassette tapes. Thus those who feel that they cannot take the time to sit down and read for long periods can now listen to recordings of Bible books while working around the house, while driving, or doing a number of other things. Of course, the tapes are also a fine help when we do sit down to read the Bible. It is a delightsome experience to listen to a reading of the Scriptures while following along in your own copy of the Bible.

By all means, avail yourself fully of the spiritual guidance provided in true Christian publications provided by God through "the faithful and discreet slave." (Matthew 24:45-47) But why not also make it *your* habit to read the Bible daily. The benefits will be great, as was noted in the command given long ago to the Israelite leader Joshua: "This book of the law should not depart from your mouth, and you must in an undertone read in it day and night, in order that you may take care to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way successful and then you will act wisely."—Joshua 1:8.

'Children Just Love Them'



Millions of families have enjoyed *My Book of Bible Stories*. Its 116 Bible accounts give the reader an idea of what the Bible is all about. Now this 256-page *Bible Stories* book has been recorded on four cassette tapes with a heartwarming appeal for children. A mother from Vancouver, British Columbia, writes:

"I cannot tell you how much joy we've received from having these tapes in our home. We have 2 girls, ages 10 and 6, and they just love following the stories with their

books in their hands. I also find it a great aid in helping my younger one to read, as she can follow most of the words in the book. She can follow about 30 stories and still can't get enough."