

The **WATCHTOWER**

Announcing
**JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM**

MARCH 15, 1970

Semimonthly

**HEAVENLY SUPPORT
OF KINGDOM PREACHING**

WHERE IS THE TRUTH?

**JEHOVAH—AN AWE-INSPIRING
YET LOVING GOD**

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

THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER"

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Dy - Catholic Douay version
JP - Jewish Publication Soc.

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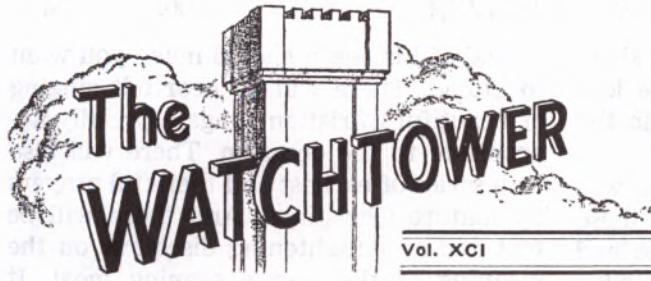
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Announcing
JEHOVAH'S
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Your Invitation TO THE LORD'S EVENING MEAL

YES, the Christian witnesses of Jehovah throughout the earth invite you to attend their celebration of the Lord's evening meal.

But you may ask, What kind of meal is it? When and where will it be served? What is its purpose, and why should I want to be present?

The Lord's evening meal is also known as the memorial of Christ's death and, more commonly, as the Lord's Supper. The manner of its celebration is recorded for us in the Bible at 1 Corinthians 11:23-25: "The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took the bread, gave thanks to God, broke it, and said, 'This is my body which is given for you. Do this in memory of me.' In the same way, he took the cup after the supper and said, 'This cup is God's new covenant, sealed with my blood. Whenever you drink it, do it in memory of me.' "

—Today's English Version.

Where will this meal take place? At

the local Kingdom Halls of Jehovah's witnesses. When? Jesus instituted it on Nisan 14, according to the Biblical calendar. It was right after he and his apostles had celebrated the annual passover commemorating the deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage. (Matt. 26:2, 17-20) So once each year on Nisan 14 the Christian witnesses of Jehovah meet in obedience to Jesus' command. This year the date, on the Gregorian calendar, is March 22 after sundown.

What is the purpose of this evening meal? It has the same purpose as any memorial. And that is to keep from forgetting an important event. And what event does the Lord's evening meal commemorate? On Nisan 14, 33 C.E., Jesus Christ as "the Lamb of God" died to 'take away the sin of the world.' (John 1:29) Certainly no more important event for humankind has taken place than the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ. By means of it all men exercising faith can become free from sin and death and gain everlasting life.—John 3:16.

The Lord's evening meal serves a special purpose for those anointed footstep followers of Jesus Christ with whom he has made a covenant for a heavenly kingdom. (Luke 22:28-30) By partaking of the unleavened bread and fermented red wine they indicate their oneness with their Head and their determination to continue faithful. As the apostle Paul noted: "The cup

of blessing which we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of the Christ? The loaf which we break, is it not a sharing in the body of the Christ?"—1 Cor. 10:16.

Although the Lord's evening meal was originally instituted for the benefit of these who partake of the bread and wine and who are known as a "little flock," today they are by no means the only ones welcome. (Luke 12:32) In fact, last year more than 2,700,000 attended in the more than 25,600 congregations that met world wide to celebrate the Lord's evening meal. However, less than 10,400 of all of these attenders professed to be of the "little flock" with heavenly hopes and indicated this by partaking of the bread and wine.

Christian witnesses of Jehovah who do not profess to be of the "little flock" look forward, not to life in the heavenly kingdom, but to everlasting life on a paradiseic earth when God's will is done on earth even as it is in heaven. (Matt. 6:10; Rev. 21:4) They are described by Jesus as his "other sheep," who today comprise a "great crowd" out of all nations. These attend the Lord's evening meal as observers because of their appreciation of what Jehovah and Jesus Christ have done for them.—John 10:16; Rev. 7:9-17.

But Jehovah's witnesses, with either heavenly or earthly prospects, are not the only ones welcome to this memorial of Christ's death. In fact, with about 1,300,000 active Witnesses world wide and a memorial attendance last year of over 2,700,000, it can be seen that there were more visitors present than Witnesses themselves! All lovers of truth and righteousness are welcome as well as all who are "conscious of their spiritual need."—Matt. 5:3.

Why should you want to attend? How do you stand to benefit? The very fact that Jesus Christ commanded that his followers come together to observe this me-

morial of his death should make you want to attend. There will be heartfelt singing of beautiful Christian songs especially appropriate to the occasion. There will also be a series of earnest and thankful prayers by mature Christians. And there will be featured an enlightening discourse on the meaning of the Lord's evening meal. It will trace the faithful course that Jesus took while on earth: being obedient even to the shameful and painful death on the torture stake. For this reason his Heavenly Father resurrected and highly exalted him, so that now he is in position to administer the benefits of his sacrifice to all humankind.—Phil. 2:5-11.

Since this will be such a joyful and meaningful occasion, you are bound to benefit from attending it. You will grow in your understanding and appreciation of the goodness and love of Jehovah God and Jesus Christ. And doubtless you will get a clearer picture than you ever had before of just what it means to be a real Christian, a genuine follower of Jesus Christ.—1 Pet. 2:21.

So please consider this as your personal invitation to attend the Lord's evening meal with the Christian witnesses of Jehovah at one of their Kingdom Halls. You will be in the company of a large group of friendly Christians who will extend to you a warm welcome. As a visitor you will not be asked to say anything during the meeting, nor will you have a collection plate passed in front of you. Jehovah's Christian witnesses heed Jesus' words: "You received free, give free," and have learned to appreciate that "there is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving." If you do not know the location of the Kingdom Hall nearest you, ask any witness of Jehovah you may happen to know or write to the publishers of *The Watchtower*. (See inside cover for the address.)—Matt. 10:8; Acts 20:35.

Where IS THE Truth?

The truth will set you free, but where can you find it?

WHEN Jesus Christ was on trial before Roman governor Pontius Pilate, his answer to the false charges that had been laid against him was summed up in his statement, "For this I have been born, . . . that I should bear witness to the truth." The governor replied with a question: "What is truth?"

Pilate was appointed to govern an area that for centuries had been the center of Jewish worship. And now the chief priests of the Jews had him under severe pressure to put to death a man of whose innocence Pilate was evidently convinced. He had reason to ask, "What is truth?"

But there is nothing to indicate that Pilate really pursued a search for the truth. He turned Jesus over for execution and washed his hands of the affair. He was no doubt disturbed, but not disturbed enough.—John 18:37, 38; 19:12-16.

There are many persons like Pilate: confused and disturbed about this matter of truth. When the subject of truth comes up one may think of one's own church, one's own religion. But lately so many things have been happening in religious circles that people are genuinely perplexed. Reports of what is happening in the churches create serious doubts in the minds of many sincere people as to whether their church really does have the truth or not. They still believe in God, but is God in their church? Was he ever in their church? Have thoughts like these crossed your mind?

RECOGNIZING THE TRUTH TODAY

But is truth really so hard to recognize? Perhaps you have heard someone use the expression that some statement or belief has the "ring of truth." Just what does that mean? Well, it means that something sounds right. Truth is "conformity with the facts." And when you hear of some new thought that you know to be in harmony with other ideas based on facts, you at once want to say, "That's right." It sounds reasonable. You have no difficulty in accepting it.

It could also be that the source of the information has some influence on your acceptance of it. If it originates from a source that you have always known to be reliable, unbiased and well-informed, you have little difficulty in hearing the ring of truth in what is said.

Now, would you say that the things you hear and read in connection with your own church give you this kind of confidence? Do you find the things you are being taught easy to harmonize with facts? Do they sound reasonable to you? Are you convinced that your religious leaders are sincere? Do they themselves live in harmony with what they teach? More and more people are having difficulty in answering Yes to questions like these.

A BOOK OF TRUTH

But does this mean that there is no truth to be found anywhere? Not at all. You are probably a member of your church because you have always felt that it belonged to God and taught his Word the

Bible. It could be that you are now just beginning to read the Bible for yourself and are having difficulty in harmonizing what you read with what your clergyman has been teaching.

Perhaps you have thought of your religion as the right one because it is so old. But the Bible is older, and all it says still conforms with the facts. What it teaches is still reasonable. Its writers have lost nothing of that peerless sincerity that stamps them as being honest. It has never been successfully contradicted, and the truthfulness of its prophecies is proved as each day goes by. It was the Holy Scriptures that Jesus spoke of when he said in prayer to God, "Your word is truth." And it was this same Word that he recommended to his hearers when he said, "You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."—John 17:17; 8:32.

Who were the people to whom Jesus spoke those words? They were people who thought they were free and that they knew the truth. They thought they were still following the worship of their forefather Abraham and that because their religion was so "old" it had to be right. But in fact their leaders had departed far from what Abraham believed; they had amassed traditions and philosophies that had the people in bondage. Just how deeply into error they had gone was shown by Jesus when he rebuked them: "But now you are seeking to kill me, a man that has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do this."—John 8:40.

MEN OF TRUTH

But not all of those who listened to Jesus speak the truth opposed him. Maybe you are like the men who became his disciples. They, too, belonged to an old traditional religion that had its roots in past centuries. But they were able to discern that their religious leaders had departed

from the Scriptures and were not acting honestly. They could see their commercial greed, their ambitions, their meddling in politics, their disposition toward violence.

Much has been said about the intellectual capacity of these disciples of Jesus. The Jewish rulers spoke of them as "unlettered and ordinary" men, and yet this was on an occasion when the simplicity and boldness with which they spoke caused these rulers to wonder. They began to "recognize about them that they used to be with Jesus." Why? No doubt because the things these men said and the straightforward way in which they reasoned had the same "ring" as Jesus' speech.—Acts 4:13.

It is interesting to note that some religious leaders of today still reason like the Jewish rulers and priests. In his book, *Whereon to Stand: What Catholics Believe and Why*, Roman Catholic writer John Gilland Brunini speaks of Jesus' apostles and says: "Before Christ's death, Peter and his brethren were guided far more by faith than by knowledge and understanding. However much Jesus instructed them, they stumbled over lessons with which Christian school children today have little difficulty." But just how accurate is this appraisal of the situation?

The writer immediately goes on to illustrate his point by saying: "The idea that they were associated with a Man who was unique and was truly Man and truly God came through to them with slowness." In other words, their backwardness was demonstrated in that they did not appear to believe in a trinity. According to the writer they got over this backwardness when 'the Holy Spirit later supplied them with grace.' Is this in harmony with the facts? Read through their inspired writings after they received the holy spirit from God and see if you can find the slightest trace of evidence that they now ac-

cepted the Trinity teaching. You can find none.

How about you? Do you believe in a mysterious God made up of three persons, all of them coequal? Just how does this fit with reason and facts? More important, is it in harmony with the Bible? Peter identified Jesus, not as God, but as "the Son of the living God." The beloved apostle John speaks of him as being God's "only-begotten Son," and "the beginning of the creation by God." The apostle Paul shows that Jesus' relative position is that of "mediator between God and men." All of this has the ring of truth. It is reasonable. Above all, it agrees with what Jesus himself taught. There is nothing hard to grasp about his plain statement, "The Father is greater than I am."—Matt. 16:16; John 3:16; Rev. 3:14; 1 Tim. 2:5; John 14:28.

QUALITIES AKN TO TRUTH

Did you notice too in the dispute between Jesus and those Jews who thought they had the truth that those men were disposed to violence? Their anger at Jesus for speaking 'the truth he heard from God' made them want to kill him. For that reason he told them they were sons of the original liar and manslayer, Satan. The Bible teaches that those who have the real truth from God would be peaceable. "The wisdom from above is . . . peaceable," says the disciple James. (Jas. 3:17) Now, is your church promoting peace? If you are a Catholic, how do you feel when you read reports from Brazil, considered to be the largest Catholic country in the world, that tell of the arrest of priests, monks and

seminarians because of alleged subversive activities? Does it make you wonder when one of that nation's security chiefs states that he has "conclusive proof" that at least three of the arrested religious leaders have strong ties with Brazil's communist terrorist organization? (*El Universo, Guayaquil, Ecuador, November 9, 1969*) But with regard to Christendom's religions in general, have not people of the same reli-

gion killed one another in wartime? Yet Jesus indicated that his true followers would be noted for their love and peaceableness.—John 13:35; Matt. 5:9.

James also said that the wisdom from above "is first of all chaste." (Jas. 3:17) Now, unchastity is rampant everywhere. The causes are many, but not least of them is ignorance of what the Bible teaches on morals. And those who should have been teaching this kind of truth have to shoulder their share of the responsibility. An *Outline-History of Latin America*, speaking of religious life in that part of the world, says:

"The practice of religion in the Spanish colonies and in Brazil was often superficial, . . . The clergy were frequently illiterate, . . . and often immoral as well. Hence they sometimes set a bad example for the people, who in some cases lost all respect for the clergy . . . In every community the populace was appealed to by the Church through the use of religious festivals, processions and celebrations of all descriptions. Especially in Indian towns, the ceremonies of the Church appeared inseparable from the old pagan forms of idol worship. It may be safely said that in many communities in the colonies the Roman Catholic religion had broken down and had become devoid of much of its European significance by grafting upon it many non-Christian practices."

THE NEXT ISSUE

- The Truth About God's Kingdom.
- Going from Door to Door for the First Time.
- Building Disciples Having the Quality of Endurance.

This was in the days of the Spanish colonies, but things are not much different today. The same religious processions, with the participants masquerading as demons, angels and animals while at the same time using images and other artifacts of the modern church, are still a regular spectacle throughout the Indian population of South America. The festivals are still characterized by drunken, immoral orgies that frequently end in bloodshed, and the Catholic priests still officiate at them through the mass. Many sincere Catholics who see these things for the first time are disturbed to know about such practices in "their" religion. They have reason to be.

You see, all of these things we have discussed go together. Truthfulness, reasonableness, peace, chastity; they belong with one another. If one is missing, we doubt the others. And if they are missing in your church, you have reason to look elsewhere. But where can one look?

SATISFYING THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH

Well, Jesus said that the kind of people that God is looking for are those who would worship him "with spirit and truth." (John 4:23, 24) If there are such people—and there are—they will teach reasonable, Scriptural doctrines. They will be at peace with one another and you will find them living in a way that recommends them as Christians. We would like to invite you to look more closely at Jehovah's witnesses. You may know at least one of them, since you are reading this magazine. Perhaps this person is known to you personally, or you may know of others of Jehovah's witnesses in your neighborhood. Have you not noticed that they are usually the kind of people we have described?

Of course, we do not expect you to accept without personal investigation what

we say. You may have your religion and you may still feel it is the best one. If you are sincere, you should. But you should also want to be right and have the truth. As has been said, "It is one thing to want the truth to be on our side, but another very different thing sincerely to want to be on the side of the truth."

You see, the truth is not popular. It was not in Jesus' day. The Jews wanted to kill him because he was speaking the truth. It angered them because it was different from what they taught. That is why Jehovah's witnesses are not usually very popular. What they teach is different, because the truth is different. You do not find them taking part in politics. But you will find that they do pay their taxes, live by the moral standards of the Bible and do not fight with their neighbors.

Of course, this is not all there is to the matter of having the truth in your life. When one knows what truth is, he should not be afraid to tell it to others even though it may be different. That is why you also find Jehovah's witnesses at your door so often.

Perhaps the one who left you this magazine will be back to see you, because Jehovah's witnesses are interested in talking with people who have investigating minds. Why not invite him in and discuss the matter further. Remember that the important thing is to establish the truth. And there is only one truth. If you have it, then please use it to help others become free from falsehood. But if your mind is tangling with a religion that you cannot reconcile with reasonableness, chastity and peace, then you have reason to be disturbed. Do not wash your hands of the affair as Pilate did. Pursue your search for the answer to the question, "What is truth?"

JEHOVAH - AN AWE-INSPIRING YET LOVING GOD

NO DOUBT you, like the vast majority of persons, acknowledge belief in God. But what does God mean to you? What qualities or characteristics does he have? How would you describe him?

First of all, it is good to realize that God has a name—not one given to him by men, but a name that he has given to himself. Perhaps you have seen that name, Jehovah, in your own copy of the Bible.—Ps. 83:18; Isa. 42:8, AS.

If you have reasoned on the matter, you probably concluded that God has always existed and that he is responsible for all creation. You no doubt found this more logical to believe than that the universe brought itself into existence and, without any guiding intelligence, produced the marvelous results you see all around. Therefore you have reason to agree with the acclaim given to God by heavenly creatures: "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."—Rev. 4:11.

You undoubtedly accept the idea of infinity—that something can be limitless, without beginning or end. You realize, for instance, that time is infinite, and that space has no beginning or end as far as man can determine. Thus, you can accept the fact that Jehovah God is the "King of eternity," and that, as the Bible says, he has no beginning and will have no end.—1 Tim. 1:17; Ps. 90:2; Rev. 10:6.

AWE-INSPIRING, MAGNIFICENT

But what does God look like? How would you describe him?

Since Jehovah is a Spirit, and thus is beyond the power of humans to see, any description of his appearance in human terms can only approximate his incomparable glory. (John 4:24) Jehovah says: "To whom can you people liken me so that I should be made his equal? . . . Raise your eyes high up and see. Who has created these things? It is the One who is bringing forth the army of them even by number, all of whom he calls even by name."—Isa. 40:25, 26.

Thus is emphasized the greatness and incomparable glory of the Creator of this marvelous material universe. Perhaps you have seen motion pictures of a powerful nuclear explosion with all its awe-inspiring brilliance and magnitude. Yet the thousands of millions of stars, or distant suns, that Jehovah created and calls individually by name give off tremendous flares that dwarf in brilliance and energy anything that man can produce. How awe-inspiring and magnificent the Creator of these innumerable suns must be!

No wonder that Jehovah God cannot be fully comprehended by mere humans. Really, for the Almighty Jehovah to set down for us a description of himself in spirit terms would be like supplying advanced algebraic equations to persons having only the most elementary knowledge of mathematics. Or it would be like trying to ex-

plain colors to a person born blind.—Job 37:23, 24.

Nevertheless, certain of Jehovah's servants were given inspired visions of his heavenly courts, although they did not actually see God. (John 1:18) Their description of his presence portrays, not only great dignity and awesome majesty, but also serenity, order, beauty and pleasantness. These descriptions employ metaphors and similes, likening Jehovah's appearance to things known to humans, such as jewels, fire and a rainbow. But, of course, such descriptions are never to be taken literally.—Ezek. 1:26-28; Rev. 4:1-3.

DESCRIBED AS IF HAVING HUMAN FEATURES

Similarly, Jehovah God is described in the Bible as if having certain human features. For example, the Christian apostle Peter wrote: "The *eyes* of Jehovah are upon the righteous ones, and his *ears* are toward their supplication; but the *face* of Jehovah is against those doing bad things." (1 Pet. 3:12; Ezek. 20:33; Ex. 15:6; Luke 11:20) Such expressions are often necessary for the description to be humanly comprehensible. But they are not to be taken literally, any more than metaphorical references to God as being a "sun," "shield" or "Rock" are to be taken literally.—Ps. 84:11; Deut. 32:4, 31.

"But does the Bible not say that man was made in 'God's image'?" you may inquire. "And does not that indicate that God has body parts that are similar to those of humans?"—Gen. 1:27.

Bible references to man's being made in God's image do not mean that the first human was created physically in Jehovah's likeness. Rather, they refer to man's being created with the same attributes or qualities possessed by Jehovah God, such as love, thinking ability, a sense of justice, and so forth. That physical likeness is not meant is indicated by Jehovah's specific

warning to the nation of Israel through his spokesman Moses: "You must take good care of your souls, because *you did not see any form* on the day of Jehovah's speaking to you in Horeb out of the middle of the fire, that you may not act ruinously and *may not really make for yourselves a carved image, the form of any symbol*, the representation of male or female."—Deut. 4:15, 16.

This shows that it is impossible for any humans to make a likeness of Jehovah God, because no human knows what he looks like, that is, what form of likeness he has. We do know that God and his spirit creations are altogether different from humans. Their perception, for instance, is not dependent on eyes and ears such as humans possess.

For example, Jehovah God, even without the benefit of light rays, can see deeds done in utter darkness. (Ps. 139:1, 7-12; Heb. 4:13) In fact, his vision can encompass all the earth. (Prov. 15:3) And he needs no X-ray equipment to see the growing embryo within the human womb.—Ps. 139:15, 16.

Furthermore, Jehovah's hearing is not dependent on sound waves in an atmosphere, for he can "hear" expressions though uttered voiceless in human hearts. (Gen. 24:42-45; Ps. 19:14) Man cannot successfully measure the vast physical universe, yet even as the physical heavens do not embrace or enclose the place of Jehovah's residence, much less does some earthly house or temple. (1 Ki. 8:27) Really, what a great God we worship!

LOVE MANIFESTED IN CREATIVE WORKS

How grateful we can be that the awe-inspiring, magnificent Jehovah is outstandingly a God of love! In all his dealings this quality is apparent.

Jehovah showed love in granting his first-created spirit Son the privilege of

sharing with him in all further works of creation, generously causing this fact to be made known, with resultant honor to his Son. (Gen. 1:26; Col. 1:15-17) He thus did not weakly fear the possibility of competition, but rather displayed complete confidence in his own rightful Sovereignty as well as in his Son's loyalty and devotion. And, lovingly, Jehovah allows his spirit sons relative freedom in the discharge of their duties, on occasion even permitting them to offer their views on how they might carry out particular assignments.—1 Ki. 22:19-22.

Jehovah's love was further demonstrated in his arranging for the bringing into existence of earthly creatures. Since man was made "in God's image," it follows that the joy a human father finds in his child, particularly one who shows filial love and acts with wisdom, reflects the joy that Jehovah finds in his intelligent creatures who love and wisely serve Him. (Prov. 27:11; Matt. 3:17; 12:18) This pleasure comes, not from any material or physical gain, but from seeing his creatures willingly hold to his righteous standards and show unselfishness and generosity.—Ps. 147:10, 11; Heb. 13:16.

Certainly the first man Adam in his perfection had reason to feel awesome respect and love for his Creator. He could certainly concur with the later words of the Bible psalmist: "I shall laud you [Jehovah] because in a fear-inspiring way I am wonderfully made. Your works are wonderful, as my soul is very well aware."—Ps. 139:14.

Adam's own body—outstandingly versatile among earthly creatures—as well as the things he found around him, offered good reason to laud Jehovah. Each new bird, animal and fish, each different plant, flower and tree, every field, forest, hill, valley and stream that the man saw would

impress upon him the depth and breadth of his Father's wisdom and the colorfulness of Jehovah's personality as reflected in the grand variety of his creative works. All of man's senses—sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch—would communicate to his receptive mind the evidence of a most generous and thoughtful Creator.

Nor were Adam's intellectual needs, his need for conversation and companionship, forgotten, as his Father provided him with an intelligent feminine counterpart. (Gen. 2:18-23) They both could well have sung to Jehovah, as did the Bible psalmist: "Rejoicing to satisfaction is with your face; there is pleasantness at your right hand forever." (Ps. 16:8, 11) Having been the object of so much love, Adam and Eve should certainly have known that "God is love."—1 John 4:16.

Most importantly, Jehovah God supplied man's spiritual needs. He revealed himself to his human son Adam, communicating with him, giving him divine assignments of service, the obedient performance of which would constitute a major part of man's worship. (Gen. 1:27-30; 2:15-17) Even when the first human pair rebelled against His law, Jehovah did not cease to exercise love.

Mercifully God made provision for Adam's offspring to recover the forfeited human perfection and prospect of eternal life. The Bible explains: "God loved the world [of mankind] so much that he gave his only-begotten Son, in order that everyone exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) Are you not grateful to Jehovah for this loving provision?

GOD'S STANDARDS AN EVIDENCE OF LOVE

We can also be thankful to Jehovah for the stability he established in his creative works. The regular cycle of day and night,

the steady downward course of rivers in response to the force of gravity, and countless other things give proof that earth's Creator is a God, not of confusion, but of order. (1 Cor. 14:33) Man surely finds this helpful in carrying out his activities. He is thus able to plan and work with confidence, free from anxious uncertainty. How loving and thoughtful for Jehovah to provide such standardization in laws and works of creation!

Commenting on these standards *The Encyclopædia Britannica* makes these interesting comments:

"Man's accomplishments [in establishing standards] . . . pale into insignificance when compared with standards in nature. The constellations, the orbits of the planets, the changeless normal properties of conductivity, ductility, elasticity, hardness, permeability, refractivity, strength, or viscosity in the materials of nature, the orbits of electrons within the atom or the structure of cells, are a few examples of the astounding standardization in nature."

And showing the importance of such standardization, this reference goes on to say:

"Only through the standardization found in nature is it possible to recognize and classify . . . the many kinds of plants, fishes, birds or animals. Within these kinds, individuals resemble each other in minutest detail of structure, function and habits peculiar to each. If it were not for such standardization in the human body, physicians would not know whether an individual possesses certain organs, where to look for them . . . In fact, without nature's standards there could be no organized society, no education and no physicians; each depends upon underlying, comparable similarities."

—Vol. 21, pp. 306, 307, 1959 edition.

In view of such standardization in Jehovah's marvelous material creations, it should not seem strange to us that Jehovah should set standards governing man's conduct and his relations with his Creator. Especially stressed as essential is the

standard of *obedience* to God's instructions. Such obedience to God is how we can return the love that Jehovah has shown us. His Word says: "This is what the love of God means, that we observe his commandments."—1 John 5:3.

Do you think that such obedience to God may in some way restrict you, somehow interfering with your happiness and enjoyment of life? You can dismiss entirely any such ideas. For within the bounds of Jehovah's requirements for his earthly creatures are limitless opportunities for pleasure. As the encyclopedia article on standards, mentioned earlier, observes regarding the material universe:

"Yet with this overwhelming evidence of standards none charges nature with monotony. Although a narrow band of spectral wave lengths forms the foundation, the available variations and combinations of colour to delight the eye of the observer are virtually without limit. Similarly, all the artistry of music comes to the ear through another small group of frequencies."

Likewise, Jehovah's requirements for human creatures allow them all the freedom that a righteous heart could desire. True, due to human imperfection and exposure to the degraded thinking and practices of this devilish world, it may not always be easy to conform to God's requirements. (Ps. 51:5; 1 John 5:19) But when the effort is made and when one remains within the safe bounds that Jehovah has set to govern human conduct, genuine contentment, satisfaction and happiness are realized.

Truly there is every incentive for us to want to come to know better this great, awe-inspiring and yet loving God, Jehovah. Are you not further encouraged to study the Bible wherein Jehovah reveals himself to us? What a privilege Jehovah God has made available to us—to know and serve him!

Keep the Right View of Kingdom Preaching

"This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come."—Matt. 24:14.

EARLY Christians did not simply think of theirs as just another religion, one they personally happened to prefer. Not at all! They firmly believed that they possessed the truth about Jehovah God and his purposes, and that others needed this knowledge for salvation. (John 17:3) Their conviction moved them to vigorous preaching activity. The inspired Bible record says: "Every day in the temple and from house to house they continued without letup teaching and declaring the good news about the Christ, Jesus." (Acts 5:42) Do you, too, profess to be a Christian? If so, do you exhibit this same zeal and enthusiasm for sharing in the preaching work? Is Kingdom preaching really a required activity for true Christians?

² The founder of Christianity, Jesus Christ, viewed the preaching work in this way; in fact, as the primary reason why he came to earth. He explained to his followers: "Let us go somewhere else, into the village towns nearby, that I may preach there also, for it is for this purpose I have gone out." (Mark 1:38) And showing clearly what message it was that he came to preach, he said: "I must declare the good news of the kingdom of

God, because for this I was sent forth."—Luke 4:43; 8:1.

³ Yes, Kingdom preaching was Jesus' primary work; it was God's purpose for him to advertise this heavenly government that will eventually rid the earth of all unrighteousness, and will see that God's will is done here. (Matt. 6:9, 10) And Jesus always demonstrated the right view of the work his Father gave him to do. On one occasion Jesus illustrated its importance to him by saying: "My food is for me to do the will of him that sent me and to finish his work."—John 4:34.

⁴ Included in Jesus' work was the training of his followers to share in Kingdom preaching. This, too, was to be their primary work. Jesus indicated this when he instructed twelve of those to whom he had given special training: "As you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of the heavens has drawn near.'" The Kingdom could be said to have "drawn near" because the designated king of God's heavenly kingdom, Jesus Christ, was then in their midst. So Jesus told his disciples to call right at the homes of the people with this vital message. He even explained to them how to greet the household and present the Kingdom message. Later, he sent out seventy

1. What attitude toward their faith did early Christians have, and what were they therefore moved to do? 2, 3. How did Jesus show the way he viewed the preaching work?

4, 5. (a) How did Jesus show clearly that his followers must also be Kingdom preachers? (b) How effective was the preaching of early Christians?

trained disciples with similar instructions. (Matt. 10:5-7, 11-14; Luke 10:1-11) Even after his death and resurrection, Jesus appeared to his followers to urge them to carry on the preaching.

⁵ To "upward of five hundred brothers," who had apparently gathered at a post-resurrection appearance in Galilee, Jesus said: "Go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations . . . teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you." (1 Cor. 15:6; Matt. 28:10, 19, 20) And finally to those disciples who witnessed his departure heavenward, he said: "You will be witnesses of me . . . to the most distant part of the earth." (Acts 1:8) How filled with fervor and enthusiasm were those early Christians after being encouraged by the resurrected Christ! They had the right view of the work, and their zealous Kingdom preaching produced remarkable results. Historian Edward Gibbon, no friend of Christianity, admitted: The "zeal of Christians . . . diffused them through every province in almost every city of the [Roman] empire."^{6*}

KINGDOM PREACHING TODAY

⁶ But what about today? Are Christians who are living now also under obligation to be Kingdom preachers? Is there provision for training them to carry on the preaching work, as there was in the first century? Will God's kingdom really bring righteous conditions to earth?

⁷ Nineteen centuries ago Jesus Christ pointed forward to his invisible second presence in Kingdom glory, and the "conclusion of the system of things." Among other things, he foretold: "Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be food shortages

and earthquakes in one place after another. All these things are a beginning of pangs of distress." (Matt. 24:3-13) War unparalleled in scope and magnitude, followed by food shortages, earthquakes, increased lawlessness, and so forth, were among the evidences that would signal Christ's heavenly second presence and the time of the end of this system of things.

⁸ Have we entered the momentous time in history of which Jesus spoke? Have we seen in our day the things that he foretold would mark his second presence in Kingdom glory? Yes, we have! The events of the past generation since 1914 are the very ones that Jesus and his disciples prophesied would occur. The coming to pass of all these things in such unprecedented doses proves beyond a doubt that we are now living during Christ's second presence and the "last days" of this system of things. (2 Tim. 3:1-5; 2 Pet. 3:3, 4) Therefore, an important message concerning God's kingdom must now be preached, as Jesus foretold: "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come." And "this good news" is being preached.—Matt. 24:14.

⁹ The present-day "good news" concerning God's kingdom is that it has been established in heaven in this very generation; yes, that Jesus Christ has been enthroned there and is ruling in the midst of his enemies. This means that Satan the Devil has been cast from heaven to the vicinity of the earth, and that he will soon be abyssed and his entire wicked system of things destroyed. What good news! (Ps. 110:1, 2; Rev. 12:7-12; 20:1-3) Included in the "good news" is also the fact that

* *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Edward Gibbon, Modern Library Edition, Vol. 1, c. 16, p. 451.

6. What questions are raised in connection with a modern-day preaching work?

7. What are some of the evidences that were to mark Christ's coming in Kingdom glory?

8. (a) What proof is there that we have entered the time of Christ's second presence and the "last days" of this system? (b) What important work must be done before "the end" comes?

9. What is the "good news" concerning God's kingdom that must now be preached?

those who serve God will survive this system's end and will enjoy eternal life and peace under the Kingdom rule. (1 John 2:17; Ps. 37:9-11, 29) Happily, we have reached the days of which the Bible prophecy speaks: "In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be brought to ruin. . . . It will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, and it itself will stand to times indefinite."—Dan. 2:44.

¹⁰ Do you believe that we have reached the day for the fulfillment of these Bible prophecies? Do you really believe that the end of wickedness and the ushering in of a new system of things under God's kingdom is near at hand? Do you confidently look forward to the fulfillment of the Bible promises concerning the end of sickness, suffering and death? (Rev. 21:3, 4) You do? Well, surely, then, you will want to tell "this good news" to others! Really, the right view is that there is not a more important work on earth that a person could do. Kingdom preaching is the work Jehovah God, man's Creator, has commanded to be done. For this reason Jehovah's witnesses are devoted to this activity; more than 1,250,000 of them now regularly sharing in telling "this good news" in 203 lands. And like the early Christians, they are prepared to train and assist others to preach the Kingdom message. Their con-

gregation meetings are designed for this very purpose.

OBSTACLES TO KEEPING RIGHT VIEW

¹¹ However, some of those who have started out in the Kingdom preaching have found it difficult to continue. Obstacles have interfered with their keeping a right view. 'What is the use?' some have felt. 'No one wants to listen to the message of

God's kingdom.' The indifference of people toward the "good news" discourages them. Do you, too, ever become discouraged because householders are unresponsive to the Kingdom message? But, then, should you expect it to be otherwise? Is it customary for the majority to respond favorably to the message carried by God's ministers?

¹² For example, what was the attitude of people toward the Kingdom message in Jesus' day? Why, the vast majority were unresponsive even though Jesus himself spoke the good news to them. In fact, Jesus

said: "For the heart of this people has grown thick, and with their ears they have heard with annoyance, and they have shut their eyes; that they might never see with their eyes and hear with their ears and get the sense of it with their hearts and turn back, and I heal them." (Matt. 13:15) Yet, despite the unreceptive response of most, Jesus maintained his zeal



In 203 lands Jehovah's witnesses are preaching the good news of God's kingdom

10. (a) What is the right view toward Kingdom preaching? (b) How have Jehovah's witnesses demonstrated this right view?

11, 12. (a) Why have some found it difficult to continue in the preaching work? (b) After our considering the response of many to Jesus' preaching, should we be discouraged when receiving an unreceptive response?

for the work his Father assigned to him. It was God's will that he preach the Kingdom message; so Jesus was determined to carry on regardless of how people responded. We need to cultivate the same right view that Jesus demonstrated. Even if no one to whom we preach becomes a true disciple, it does not mean that our ministry is a failure or that God is displeased with us.

¹³ Consider the ministry of the prophet Jeremiah. Jehovah God had commissioned him to preach to his rebellious, stiff-necked countrymen who had turned from the true worship of God. Jehovah said: "You must speak to them all these words, but they will not listen to you; and you must call to them, but they will not answer you." (Jer. 7:27) Really, could any people to whom we might preach be more unreceptive? Yet, even though those Israelites were extremely cold toward God, Jeremiah faithfully continued preaching to them for some forty years. True, he got discouraged. (Jer. 20:9) Nevertheless, he maintained a right view of the importance of preaching, and Jehovah was pleased with his faithful endurance. Jehovah God now purposed that "a witness to all the nations" be given before the end comes, and so He also is pleased if we continue preaching in obedience to His command.

¹⁴ However, a cold, unreceptive response is not the only thing that causes some who have started out in the work to slow down or even cease preaching "this good news of the kingdom." Other obstacles also can interfere with keeping a right view of the importance of Kingdom preaching. One of them may simply be the increasing bur-

den of what Jesus called the "anxieties of life."—Luke 21:34.

¹⁵ In today's highly competitive society you may experience increased responsibilities and more and more demands on your time. Perhaps added pressure is exerted upon you by your employer. Also, there may be unexpected expenses, and the anxiety of trying to meet them all. Perhaps reduced health and energy accentuate the pressures. So, in view of all this, you may think that God is not pleased with the little time and effort you have left to devote to God's service. However, this is not the case. Jehovah God does not require more from his servants than they are able to give. He is greatly pleased even with the 'widow's mite' when this is all one is able to offer. (Luke 21:1-4; Matt. 11:28, 29) So the right view is that a Christian should do what he can in the preaching work. This is all that God requires.

¹⁶ Kingdom preaching is the most vital work on earth today, yet there are still other obstacles that can interfere with keeping this right view. For example, materialistic desires or pursuits can prove a real hindrance. This was so with the apostle Paul's missionary companion Demas, who left Paul "because he loved the present system of things." (2 Tim. 4:10) Perhaps, too, something, or someone, has come into your life with an appeal so strong that you feel that you just cannot resist. (1 John 2:15-17) On the other hand, the obstacle to keeping a right view may be opposition from relatives or friends in the form of ridicule or ostracism. (Matt. 10:33-38) Or, maybe the threat of severe physical abuse and persecution is causing you to lose sight of the importance of faithfully continuing in the preaching work. (2 Tim. 3:12) Or the obstacle to keeping a right view may be that one has

13. How did Jeremiah demonstrate the right view toward his preaching assignment, and what can we learn from his example?

14, 15. (a) What other obstacle can interfere with keeping a right view of Kingdom preaching, and, as a result, what might one wrongly think is God's view of his service? (b) What does God require from his servants, and therefore what is the right view?

16. What are still other obstacles that have interfered with persons' keeping a right view of Kingdom preaching?

taken personal offense at something someone has said or done. Instead of straightening out the trouble in the Scripturally prescribed way, the offended one allows the matter to become such a big issue in his mind that he fails to keep a proper view of Kingdom preaching.—Matt. 18:15-17; Ps. 119:165.

SOURCE OF WRONG VIEWS

¹⁷ Why are there so many hindrances to keeping a right view of this most important work on earth? A prominent factor is our inborn imperfections and weaknesses. These work against our obediently doing the will of God. (Ps. 51:5; Rom. 7:18-21) Also, however, there are very real and powerful forces whose purpose is to cause us to develop a wrong view and to quit preaching about God's kingdom. Describing these enemies, the apostle Paul wrote to Christians: "Stand firm against the machinations of the Devil; because we have a fight, not against blood and flesh, but against . . . the world rulers of this darkness, *against the wicked spirit forces in the heavenly places.*" (Eph. 6:11, 12) These are real spirit persons! What is more, they have been cast from heaven by God's king Jesus Christ in this very generation since 1914, and they are now in a last-ditch vengeful struggle against us. The Bible prophecy points forward to this very generation and says: "Woe for the earth and for the sea, because the Devil has come down to you, having great anger, knowing he has a short period of time."—Rev. 12:9, 12.

¹⁸ So what are you going to do? Give up and quit? Will you succumb to the efforts of the Devil and his demons to stop you from preaching? Or will you fight against them with everything you have,

letting nothing deter you from continuing in the most important work on earth today? The apostle Paul said that Christians must wage strenuous spiritual warfare, "overturning reasonings and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God." (2 Cor. 10:3-5) We cannot let any wrong views that the Devil might sponsor slow us up or stop us from doing God's will.

¹⁹ The apostle Peter also pointed to the Devil as a real enemy, and said: "Take your stand against him, solid in the faith, knowing that the same things in the way of sufferings are being accomplished in the entire association of your brothers in the world." (1 Pet. 5:8, 9) How are you affected by this knowledge that your brothers throughout the world are facing the very same difficulties you are, and are remaining faithful? Is it not a real encouragement? Is it not a reassurance that you, too, can faithfully continue preaching despite the obstacles you may face? Yes, if they can remain faithful under test, so can you!

HOW TO KEEP THE RIGHT VIEW

²⁰ But, you may ask, how can one find happiness and contentment in the preaching work when experiencing trials and difficulties? Oh, it may not be that there is much actual opposition, but just a lot of apathy in the territory where you are working, and you feel discouraged. Under such circumstances, how can one keep the right view?

²¹ What will help is to consider why you are doing the preaching. Did you dedicate your life to a *work*, undergoing water baptism as a symbol of your dedication to the work of Kingdom preaching? Or, rath-

17. Why is it so difficult to keep a right view of the preaching work?

18. What attitude should we properly have toward the Devil's efforts to stop us from preaching?

19. How should we be affected by the knowledge that our brothers are remaining faithful despite all that the Devil brings against them?

20, 21. Even though one experiences trials and difficulties, how will a proper view of dedication to God help one find happiness in preaching?

er, did you dedicate your life to a *person*, The Person, Jehovah God, to do his will, whatever that may prove to be? Why, of course, you dedicated your life to Jehovah, and you preach because it is God's will that the message of his established kingdom now be proclaimed earth wide. (Matt. 24:14) Does this not help to draw matters into proper focus? Yes, for by keeping closely in mind our precious relationship with Jehovah we can find real pleasure in doing whatever He says. It is natural to enjoy doing what pleases and benefits a loved one, and since Jehovah God is the one whom we dearly love, we can find delight in preaching about the kingdom that will vindicate his name and purposes.

²² Considering our dedication to Jehovah also reminds us that much more is involved in pleasing Him than just preaching. It is necessary, too, that we mold our lives to conform to God's perfect example. This means cultivating the fruits of His spirit, including love, kindness, mildness and self-control, always exercising them in our dealings with others. (Gal. 5:22, 23) Also, we must live moral lives, not committing fornication or adultery, nor getting drunk, or lying or stealing, because Jehovah hates all of such practices. (1 Cor. 6:9, 10) So, although Kingdom preaching is the most important work on earth, we appreciate, as a result of a proper view of our dedication, that sharing in it is valueless in God's sight unless we preserve our close personal relationship with him by obeying his other requirements as well.

²³ Thus, it is vital to keep in proper perspective the preaching work and our precious dedicated relationship with Jehovah.

22. What besides faithfully preaching the Kingdom good news is necessary in order to win Jehovah's pleasure?

23, 24. How can a consideration of the marriage relationship help us to appreciate the relative importance between the work of Kingdom preaching and our dedicated relationship with Jehovah God?

vah God. An illustration can help us to appreciate the relative importance between relationship and work. Consider: When a mature woman enters the marriage relationship she knows that in the care of the home and the rearing of children there is important work ahead of her and plenty of it. But she finds pleasure in the work, not necessarily because of the work itself, but because she appreciates that the faithful performance of it plays an important part in preserving and building up the close bond between her and her husband.

²⁴ Likewise, we, too, can find pleasure in the work of Kingdom preaching for a similar reason. The pleasure, of course, does not come because of the apathetic, unkind or vicious response at times received in the ministry. Rather, it is because we know that obedience to Jehovah's command to preach builds up and strengthens our close relationship with Him. So by always cherishing our precious dedicated relationship with Jehovah we will maintain a mature view of the preaching work. We will zealously engage in it with the right motive, because we really love Jehovah and desire to exalt his name.

—1 John 5:2, 3.

²⁵ Yes, what will help us to keep a right view of Kingdom preaching is to consider this work as an opportunity to prove our love and devotion to Jehovah God. This is the way Jesus viewed matters. He said: "To do your will, O my God, I have delighted." (Ps. 40:7, 8; Heb. 10:5-10) Jesus said this even though doing God's will meant ridicule, reproach and eventual death on a torture stake for him. (Ps. 22:7, 8, 16; Isa. 53:5, 7) He found delight in the preaching work because it provided him opportunity to prove his unbreakable love for God, and also because in doing

25. (a) How was Jesus able to find delight in doing God's will even though doing it involved terrible suffering for him? (b) What grand privilege do we have today?

this work faithfully he could furnish his Father a reply to Satan's taunt that humans will not willingly serve God because they love Him. (Prov. 27:11; Job chapters 1 and 2) We, too, can find delight in doing God's will for the same reasons. It is indeed a privilege to share in the vindication of God's name, and to engage in work that truly makes his heart glad!

²⁶ Another thing that will help us to keep a right view of Kingdom preaching is to maintain a genuine love for our fellow humans, to remember how they can be benefited by our work. Think of it! By faithfully preaching we can be instrumental in rescuing persons heading for certain death at the fast-approaching end of this system of things, even as the Bible proverb encourages: "Deliver those who are being taken away to death; and those staggering to the slaughter, O may you hold them back." (Prov. 24:11) The apostle Paul, too, emphasized the lifesaving nature of our work, saying: "Pay constant attention to yourself and to your teaching. Stay by these things, for by doing

26. How can genuine love for fellow humans help us to keep a right view of Kingdom preaching?

this you will save both yourself and those who listen to you." (1 Tim. 4:16) To be instrumental in saving fellow humans is certainly a marvelous way to be able to show love!

²⁷ Really, to be able to share in Kingdom preaching is the grandest privilege one could enjoy at this time. Keeping busy in it will serve as a real protection to us. Our minds will be focused on God and doing his will, and thus will not be turned aside to activities condemned by God. (Gal. 5:19-21) Furthermore, we will be working closely with God in His work, and what a privilege this is! (1 Cor. 3:5-9) And remember, too, the grand reward with which Jehovah God will bless all of his faithful servants. His promised blessing is survival through the end of this system of things, and everlasting life in perfect health in His righteous new order. (1 John 2:17; 2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:3, 4) Truly, there is every reason to want to serve Jehovah and carry out his will to preach this good news of His kingdom before "the end" comes.

—Matt. 24:14.

27. What benefits do we receive, both now and in the future, for faithfully serving God and preaching the good news of His kingdom?

Heavenly Support of KINGDOM PREACHING

"Jehovah's angel opened the doors of the prison, brought them out and said: 'Be on your way, and . . . keep on speaking to the people.'"—Acts 5:19, 20.

IT IS a comforting, reassuring thought that one is being supported in what one is doing by Almighty God and his invisible, heavenly angels. Certain knowl-

edge of this fact can infuse a person with

1. (a) Knowledge of what fact can inspire a person to press on zealously in his work? (b) What, therefore, have worldly leaders done, but why is God not supporting them?

such courage and zeal that no obstacle, regardless of its size, is able to slow him down or stop him from pressing on with the work. It is understandable, therefore, that religious and political rulers of the world have often endeavored to inspire their people to greater efforts by telling them that God is backing them up. They frequently do this during wartime, and the result is that each opposing side claims Almighty God's support. However, these men have no certain evidence of heavenly support of their activities. To the contrary, because they seek their own ends and refuse to heed God's laws, even their "prayer is something detestable" to Him.—Prov. 28:9; Jas. 4:1-3.

² On the other hand, Jesus Christ, who faithfully submitted to God's will and preached His kingdom message, was confident of God's support. On the last night of his earthly life, while in the garden of Gethsemane, he told his apostle Peter: "Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father to supply me at this moment more than twelve legions of angels?" (Matt. 26:53) Not only did Jesus profess to have heavenly support, but he had certain knowledge of it. Why, just some minutes before speaking to Peter out there in the garden, "an angel from heaven appeared to [Jesus] and strengthened him." Also, three and a half years earlier, at the beginning of his earthly ministry, "angels came and began to minister to him." (Luke 22:43; Matt. 4:11) The reason why Jesus received this help from heaven is that he was doing the will of God. Jehovah God was keenly interested in his Son's activity of Kingdom preaching, and supported him.

³ That God actually shares in the ministerial activity of his servants is shown

2. (a) What evidence is there that Jesus received heavenly support? (b) Why did Jesus receive this help from heaven?

3. What Scriptural assurance is there that Jehovah supports and protects his servants?

by the inspired writings of the apostle Paul concerning the preaching work: "What, then, is Apollos? Yes, what is Paul? Ministers through whom you became believers, even as the Lord granted each one. I planted, Apollos watered, but God kept making it grow; so that neither is he that plants anything nor is he that waters, but God who makes it grow. For we are God's fellow workers." (1 Cor. 3:5-7, 9) How wonderful to know that Jehovah God backs up and supports his ministers! His fellow workers can confidently sing, as did the Bible psalmist: "Jehovah is on my side; I shall not fear. What can earthling man do to me? Jah is my shelter and my might, and to me he becomes salvation."—Ps. 118:6, 14.

JEHOVAH PROVIDES HEAVENLY SUPPORT

⁴ Do you really believe that Jehovah God backs up his servants and uses his heavenly angels to support them? Persons who are not closely acquainted with the works of Jehovah might have doubts that he does. There was a man in the nation of Israel in the tenth century B.C.E. who apparently had no thought of this. He was the attendant of Jehovah's prophet Elisha.

⁵ The Israelites were God's chosen people, and so when the nation of Syria became involved in war with Israel, Jehovah revealed to his servant Elisha what military maneuvers the king of Syria was planning. By thus receiving advance warning from Elisha, the Israelites were able repeatedly to avoid traps prepared for them. When the Syrian king finally learned who was revealing his well-laid military stratagems, he sent out a heavy military force to capture Elisha. The Bible record explains: "They proceeded to come by night

4. Who might have doubts that God's servants enjoy heavenly support, and who in ancient times apparently had no thought of this?

5, 6. (a) Why did the Syrian king want to capture Elisha? (b) Although he was surrounded, how was it that Elisha and his attendant were rescued?

and close in upon the city. When the minister of the man of the true God [Elisha] rose early to get up, and went out, why, there a military force was surrounding the city with horses and war chariots. At once his attendant said to him: 'Alas, my master! What shall we do?'”—2 Ki. 6:14, 15.

⁶ It appeared that the Syrians were about to capture Elisha. He and his attendant were surrounded. There was no way of escape. Or was there? Elisha was confident of heavenly support, and so told his attendant: "Do not be afraid, for there are more who are with us than those who are with them." And Elisha began to pray and say: 'O Jehovah, open his eyes, please, that he may see.' Immediately Jehovah opened the attendant's eyes, so that he saw; and, look! the mountainous region was full of horses and war chariots of fire all around Elisha." (2 Ki. 6:16, 17) Yes, powerful angelic forces were backing up Elisha! They rescued him and his attendant, striking blind all the enemy troops. The Bible psalm certainly is true: "The angel of Jehovah is camping all around those fearing him, and he rescues them."—Ps. 34:7; 91:11.

⁷ However, it was not just this once, but on many other occasions in the past that Jehovah God used his heavenly angels to support and rescue his faithful servants. There was the time in Babylon that the three Israelites Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego refused to bow down and worship a huge gold image that King Nebuchadnezzar commanded to be set up. In faithfulness to Bible law they would worship only Jehovah God. (Ex. 20:3-5; Deut. 6:5) Therefore, King Nebuchadnezzar had the three of them thrown into a superheated fiery furnace. It was so hot that even the strong men throwing them in were

killed. But what of the three Israelites?

⁸ Looking into the flames, King Nebuchadnezzar exclaimed: "Was it not three able-bodied men that we threw bound into the midst of the fire?" They were answering and saying to the king: 'Yes, O king.' He was answering and saying: 'Look! I am beholding four able-bodied men walking about free in the midst of the fire, and there is no hurt to them, and the appearance of the fourth one is resembling a son of the gods.'" It was amazing! Divine support was provided for these faithful servants of Jehovah! After petitioning them to come out, and observing that they were not even singed nor had the smell of fire, Nebuchadnezzar said: "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who sent his angel and rescued his servants that trusted in him."—Dan. 3:24-28.

⁹ Just a few years later Jehovah God provided similar angelic support for his Israelite servant Daniel. By this time Babylon had been overthrown by the Medes and Persians, and Daniel had been appointed a top official in the new government. However, his successiveness caused other officials to seek his downfall. Wickedly, they induced the king to pass a law that prohibited for thirty days petitions to any god or man except the king, a law Daniel could not abide by. Thus the king was forced to have Daniel thrown into the lions' pit, since Daniel could not even for one day cease worshiping Jehovah God.—Dan. 6:1-17.

¹⁰ That night the king could not sleep. Finally, at dawn, he hurried to the lions' pit and cried out with a sad voice: "O Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God whom you are serving with constancy been able to rescue you from the lions?" Daniel answered: "My own God sent his

7, 8. (a) Why were three Israelites in ancient Babylon thrown into a fiery furnace? (b) What protection did these men receive, and from whom?

9, 10. (a) Why was Daniel thrown into a lions' pit? (b) How was he protected there, and by whom?

angel and shut the mouth of the lions, and they have not brought me to ruin." (Dan. 6:18-22) Truly, the heavenly angels served in a wonderful way to support God's faithful servants in times past.

HEAVENLY SUPPORT OF EARLY CHRISTIANS

¹¹ In time Jehovah transferred his favor from the unfaithful Israelite nation and bestowed it upon the followers of his sent-forth Son, Jesus Christ. And just as God's angelic forces supported and strengthened Jesus and faithful Israelites before him, so they did also the members of the Christian congregation. These certainly needed support, for the message they preached concerning Jesus and the heavenly kingdom of God was extremely unpopular with the first-century religious leaders.

¹² Why, shortly after Jesus' resurrection and the outpouring of holy spirit upon the 120 of his followers at Pentecost during the year 33 C.E., the apostles Peter and John one evening were arrested and taken into custody. Although this was their first time in prison, they were not afraid. The next day they gave a bold witness to the religious leaders who had them arrested. To their orders to stop preaching, the apostles said: "Whether it is righteous in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, judge for yourselves. But as for us, we cannot stop speaking about the things we have seen and heard." What courage! What boldness! God's Son Jesus Christ had commanded them to preach, and they were not going to allow anyone or anything to stop them! Frustrated by the apostles' determination, the religious rulers further threatened them and let them go.—Acts 4:1-22; Matt. 28:19, 20; Acts 1:8.

11. (a) To whom did Jehovah transfer his favor? (b) Why did these ones need heavenly support?

12. What opposition did Peter and John receive, and how did they respond?

¹³ Peter and John immediately went and reported on these matters to their fellow Christian preachers. After hearing of this opposition to the preaching work, the faithful band of Christians raised their voices to God and requested: "Jehovah, give attention to their threats, and grant your slaves to keep speaking your word with all boldness." As soon as they made this supplication, the Bible says, "the place in which they were gathered together was shaken; and they were one and all filled with the holy spirit and were speaking the word of God with boldness." Their prayer was answered! Yes, this manifestation of support from heaven infused them with zeal and boldness to continue on with the preaching work regardless of the opposition they might face! "With great power the apostles continued giving forth the witness," the Bible record says.—Acts 4:23-33.

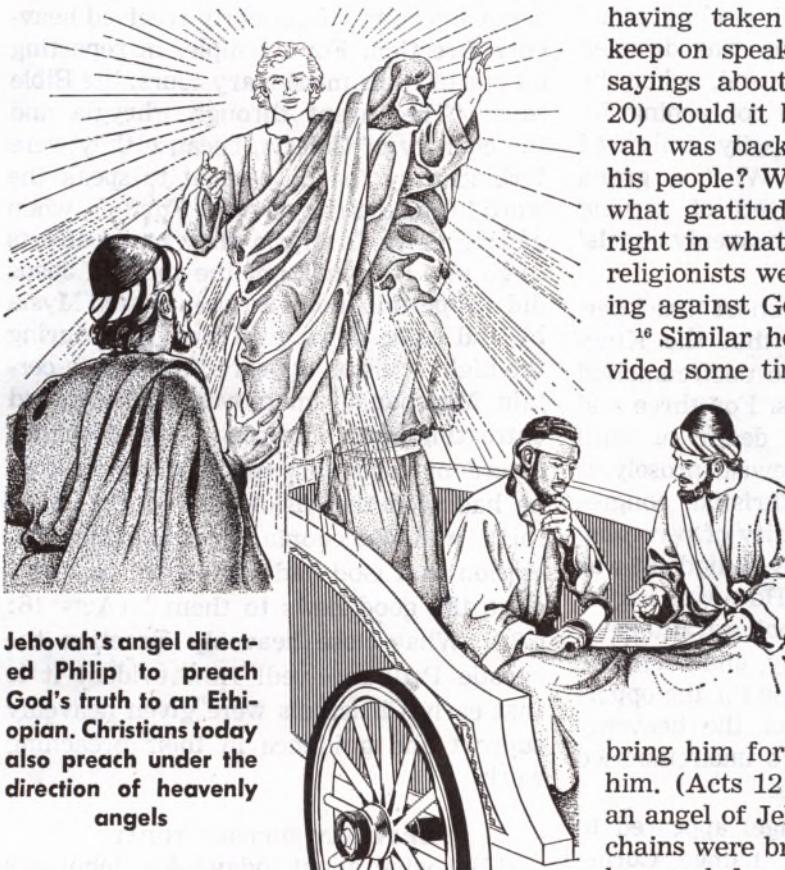
¹⁴ The results were marvelous. "Believers in the Lord kept on being added, multitudes both of men and of women," the Bible says. (Acts 5:14) Many persons in Jerusalem were interested in hearing about Jesus Christ and the kingdom of God. But not the religious leaders; they were outraged. They were determined to stop the preaching work. So "the high priest and all those with him, the then existing sect of the Sadducees, rose and became filled with jealousy, and they laid hands upon the apostles and put them in the public place of custody." (Acts 5:17, 18) This was Peter and John's second imprisonment, but this time they had company. The rest of the apostles were locked up with them. However, it was not for long.

¹⁵ A remarkable release occurred during

13, 14. (a) After the release of Peter and John, for what did the Christians pray? (b) What response was there to the bold, fearless witnessing of the apostles?

15. (a) While in prison, what thoughts about angels might have passed through the apostles' minds?

(b) What did the angel's appearance and instructions there in the prison make plain to the apostles?



the night to reaffirm that God was backing them up in the preaching work. The apostles were acquainted with the Bible psalms that said that God "will give his own angels a command . . . to guard you in all your ways," and that His angel is camping "all around those fearing him, and he rescues them." (Ps. 91:11; 34:7) They knew about the miraculous angelic rescues in times past. Also they would remember Jesus' words: "I tell you that their angels in heaven always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven." (Matt. 18:10) While in prison these thoughts about God's angels may have gone through their minds. Even so, how startling it must have been when "during the night Jehovah's angel opened the doors of the prison, brought them out and said: 'Be on your way, and,

having taken a stand in the temple, keep on speaking to the people all the sayings about this life'!" (Acts 5:19, 20) Could it be any plainer that Jehovah was backing up the preaching of his people? What joy, what confidence, what gratitude was theirs! They were right in what they were doing! Those religionists were wrong and were fighting against God.

¹⁶ Similar heavenly support was provided some time later when strong opposition again arose against the preaching work. King Herod Agrippa had the apostle James slain by the sword. He also went on to have Peter arrested, and thrown into prison. This time Peter's life was really in danger. Herod planned to bring him forth, and no doubt execute him. (Acts 12:1-5) But that very night an angel of Jehovah stood by Peter, the chains were broken from his hands, and he was led past the guards to freedom. (Acts 12:6-10) Yes, Peter was miraculously delivered so that he could continue to take a lead in advancing the preaching work!

¹⁷ Not only did God's angels act to preserve His earthly servants, but they also took a direct part in the preaching work, assisting Christians to come in contact with righteously disposed persons. For example, on one occasion "Jehovah's angel spoke to Philip, saying: 'Rise and go to the south to the road that runs down from Jerusalem to Gaza.' . . . With that he rose and went, and, look! an Ethiopian eunuch . . . was

16. How did Peter later receive similar heavenly support?

17. What direct part did angels take in the preaching work as shown in Philip's meeting of the Ethiopian eunuch?

sitting in his chariot and reading aloud the prophet Isaiah." Philip was directed to approach the chariot, and, when he explained the Bible truths concerning Jesus Christ, the man happily embraced them and was baptized. What a grand privilege Christians enjoyed of serving under the direction of the heavenly angels!

—Acts 8:26-38.

¹⁸ On another occasion a short time later, Jehovah's angel directed that the Kingdom message be carried to uncircumcised non-Israelites or non-Jews. For three and a half years after Jesus' death, or until 36 C.E., only Jews and Jewish proselytes were accepted into the Christian congregation. Thus, the opportunity of becoming members of the heavenly kingdom was limited to these persons. However, only a limited number of Jews took advantage of this marvelous opportunity, and therefore in 36 C.E. it was God's time for the opportunity to become heirs of the heavenly kingdom to be extended to uncircumcised persons of all nationalities.

¹⁹ So in a vision an angel appeared to the God-fearing non-Jew named Cornelius. The angel told Cornelius to send for the apostle Peter and have Peter come to preach to him so that he might come in contact with Jehovah's Christian congregation. Cornelius obeyed, and when his messengers found Peter they explained to him: "Cornelius . . . was given divine instructions by a holy angel to send for you to come to his house and to hear the things you have to say." (Acts 10:1-22) Peter responded to the heavenly direction, and had the privilege of accepting the first uncircumcised non-Jews into the Christian congregation.

²⁰ The apostle Paul and his missionary

18, 19. What part did God's angel have in directing that the preaching also be done to non-Jews?

20. How did the apostle Paul receive heavenly direction in his preaching work?

companions, too, frequently received heavenly direction. For example, in reporting on one of their missionary tours, the Bible says: "They went through Phrygia and the country of Galatia, because they were forbidden by the holy spirit to speak the word in the district of Asia. Further, when getting down to Mysia they made efforts to go into Bithynia, but the spirit of Jesus did not permit them. So they passed Mysia by and came down to Troas. And during the night a vision appeared to Paul: a certain Macedonian man was standing and entreating him and saying: 'Step over into Macedonia and help us.' Now as soon as he had seen the vision, we sought to go forth into Macedonia, drawing the conclusion that God had summoned us to declare the good news to them." (Acts 16: 6-10) What close heavenly direction the apostle Paul received! How evident it is that early Christians were given heavenly support and guidance in their preaching work!

HEAVENLY SUPPORT TODAY

²¹ But what about today? Are Jehovah's Christian witnesses who are obeying His command to preach the good news of the Kingdom receiving heavenly support and direction? There can be no doubt that they are. Attempts to stamp out their preaching work have been just as unsuccessful as were such efforts in the first century. For example, over thirty years ago the tyrant Adolf Hitler swore: "This brood will be exterminated from Germany."* Yet, despite concentration camps and brutal persecution, Jehovah's witnesses survived

* Taken from a sworn account by Karl R. A. Wittig, who, in 1934, was a German government worker who was present when Hitler made this statement. On November 13, 1947, this account was signed before a notary public in Frankfort on the Main.

21. What evidence is there that Jehovah's Christian witnesses have enjoyed heavenly support in modern times?

and are now tens of thousands strong and still preaching in Germany, while Hitler and his party are dead and gone. Also in many other lands in recent years, such as Portugal, Spain, Cuba, Malawi, the United Arab Republic, and so forth, scores of Jehovah's witnesses have been arrested and imprisoned, yet the Kingdom message continues to be preached. Jehovah's angels clearly have had an important part in making this possible, even as they did in the first century.

²² The Scriptures indicate that the angels would have a very direct part in the preaching work in these "last days" also. The Bible prophecy says that Christ would "send forth his angels" to "gather his chosen ones together." (Matt. 24:31) Yet, not only have the angels been instrumental in gathering the "chosen ones," who will eventually become members of Christ's heavenly bride, but they are also sharing in separating people of the nations, as Jesus explained: "When the Son of man arrives in his glory, and all the angels with him, . . . he will separate people one from another, just as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats."—Matt. 25:31-33; see also Revelation 14:6-10.

²³ Is there evidence of this angelic participation in the Kingdom preaching today? Consider: A few years ago there was a young couple that had received copies of the *Watchtower* magazine and enjoyed reading them. The more the husband read, the more he believed that the magazine contained Bible truth. Then one Saturday night he and his wife knelt down and prayed that if this was God's truth, would God please send a minister to explain to them His ways. The very next morning

22. How do the Scriptures indicate that angels would have a part in the preaching work in these "last days"?

23-25. What modern-day experiences indicate that the angels are sharing in the present-day Kingdom preaching?

one of Jehovah's witnesses called at their door with the Kingdom message! The couple were astounded, but probably no more so than was the minister who was literally grabbed, pulled into the house, given a seat, and asked for Bible knowledge. This man is now a ministerial servant in one of the congregations of Jehovah's witnesses.

²⁴ In a similar experience, a minister of Jehovah's witnesses recently was invited inside, and was asked: "Who sent you?" The minister inquired why the householder wanted to know, and was told: "Last night I prayed to God to send someone to help me understand the Bible." A Bible study was immediately started with this sheep-like person.

²⁵ Also at a semiannual assembly of Jehovah's witnesses in Texas not long ago a Witness related: "Normally my daughter rides to school with a neighbor, but one morning in January for some reason I decided to take her myself. As I was returning home I saw a lady walking, and, as it was cold, I offered to take her to her destination. She noticed my witnessing bag and asked what kind of books were in it. When told one was a Bible and another a Bible-study aid she became extremely excited. The night before she had prayed for God to lead her to His people. Now she asked me to start a Bible study with her and insisted that I come in right then."

²⁶ Another experience evidencing heavenly direction began at a laundromat in Cleveland, Ohio, a couple of years ago. Two women were engaged in a conversation regarding world conditions. The discussion concluded with one woman saying to the other, a person who she did not know was one of Jehovah's witnesses: "It would be nice if you could visit me at my home to continue this discussion." Unfor-

26, 27. What experience involving two women who met at a laundromat further evidences angelic direction?

tunately, however, the Witness misplaced the address. Two months later she discovered it, and immediately made the call. The woman was so pleased to see her, explaining: "I have wished every day that you would come to see me. But I didn't have your name, so I couldn't call." The woman had recently lost her father and had been in much grief over this and other problems. A Bible study was immediately started with her, and she progressed rapidly in Bible knowledge and in a short time was sharing the good news with others.

²⁷ Later, this woman explained that on the very day the Witness called at her home she had decided to take her life because of her mounting troubles. But before she went through with it, she asked God in prayer to send the lady she had talked with at the laundromat, for perhaps she could help. Almost immediately the doorbell rang, and there was the Witness! And, remember, it was only shortly before that the Witness had found the misplaced address of the woman! Surely the

angels today have an active part in directing God's servants to sheeplike persons, even as they did in the first century. What a privilege it is to share under heavenly direction in preaching the good news of the Kingdom!

²⁸ We have every reason to keep the right view that Kingdom preaching is the most important work on earth today. Only God's kingdom can usher in stable government and the peace that mankind so desperately needs. Therefore, whatever obstacles there may be, do not let them slow you up or stop you from preaching "this good news of the kingdom." Always remember: Jehovah God and his heavenly angels are backing you up in this work. It is with God that you are a fellow worker. (1 Cor. 3:9) So never become afraid, discouraged or despondent. Rather, "be of good courage and say: 'Jehovah is my helper.'" He is indeed supporting you.—Heb. 13:6.

²⁸ Why do we have every reason to keep a right view of Kingdom preaching?

REJOICING in the Kingdom Hope

As told by Alex Kellaris

ONE day when I was but eight years of age, while kneeling at prayer, the words "Thy kingdom come" became deeply riveted in my mind. I jumped up and went to my mother, asking: "What do those words mean?" Instead of answering my question as she usually would, she told me that I had better ask the priest. Since we always went to the Greek Orthodox Church in

our village of Lutron, in Greece's province of Corinth, I decided I would do what mother suggested.

We had always been regular church attenders. In fact, my father was one of the directors of the local church. And by reason of his great interest in religion I received considerable religious training, later even serving as an altar boy. So there

was every reason to go to the priest with my question, confident of a good answer. However, he not only failed to answer my question, but rebuked me, saying: "You have no right to ask a priest questions. A priest takes neither orders nor questions from others." Needless to say, I was quite taken aback. And to think that my mother's fondest hope was that I would one day be a priest!

As I grew older I never forgot that question, and kept asking people about it, especially those who seemed to be religiously inclined. But no one could give me any real satisfaction. It seemed strange to me that we should be saying those words over and over in prayer and not know what they really meant.

In 1912, when I was sixteen years of age, my parents gave me permission to emigrate to the United States of America, where I could join my brother in Toledo, Ohio. That started a new life for me, in more ways than one. It happened one day, as I looked out the window of the restaurant where I was working for one of my relatives, that I saw a horse-drawn wagon with placards mounted on its sides. The driver was ringing a bell to attract attention. It was an announcement of a showing of the "Photo-Drama of Creation"—a picture show that promised to tell all about the Bible's true-life story.

Since I was unfamiliar with the city, I persuaded my uncle to take me to the place where this film would be presented. After the showing, which was a real revelation to me, I asked the one in charge of the meeting, A. H. Macmillan: "What does 'Thy kingdom come' mean?" He was amused at my youthful earnestness, and asked me to read Daniel 2:44, not once, but twice. When he saw that I still did not grasp it, he explained: "The kingdom of God is his hammer by which he will

destroy all the kingdoms of the world and bring blessings to all survivors."

SHARING KINGDOM HOPE WITH OTHERS

That answer gave me just what I wanted. On the next day I eagerly told my friends and relatives about what I had seen and learned. And for the next three evenings I went back for the remainder of the Drama's showings.

Longing to know more about this newfound hope, I visited a number of bookstores looking for books on the subject. At one of these I was delighted to obtain Volume One of *Studies in the Scriptures*, on the topic "The Divine Plan of the Ages." It was in Greek and cost me only ten cents! But what a valuable source of knowledge it proved to be, and what joy it brought me!

As opportunity afforded I was able to get the other six volumes of this series of "Studies" from itinerant colporteurs. The more I read the more I felt obligated to share this wonderful Kingdom hope with others.

Soon World War I came, and, to my amazement, the seventh volume of *Studies in the Scriptures* was banned by the government. Agents seeking copies of the banned publication began to harass me, so I decided to move to Springfield, Ohio, where I had some relatives. It turned out to be the right move, for there I was soon in touch with the Bible Students, as Jehovah's witnesses were then known, and I was able to associate regularly with them in Bible study. In those days we met quietly in the attic of a seven-story office building where one of the Bible Students was an elevator operator. Among those I met here was Chester Goings, with whom at a later date I was to serve in the headquarters of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society.

I kept on witnessing to people about the Kingdom hope, especially among Greek-speaking people. I recall at least two families who took their stand for God's kingdom.

Speakers from Columbus, Ohio, came to deliver public lectures, adding much to our knowledge of God's will. At first I did not understand the need for being baptized again. But as I matured, I recognized that that former dipping in water in infancy was of no effect. So I was baptized on December 31, 1923, at Wheeling, West Virginia.

KINGDOM JOY OR WORLDLY SUCCESS?

I was always keen to expand my service of the Kingdom interests, having begun the race "for the prize of the upward call of God by means of Christ Jesus." (Phil. 3:14) Often I wished that I could be of some help at the Society's headquarters in Brooklyn, New York. But someone told me that they could use only experienced help, so I set aside the idea for the time being.

Then, on one occasion, a "Pilgrim" brother, or traveling representative of the Society, W. J. Thorn, visited our congregation. When I was out in house-to-house preaching with him, he inquired: "Brother, why are you not serving the Kingdom with all of your time at Bethel?" "Because I don't know how to make books," was my reply. "Don't worry," he said, "they will show you how," and with that he handed me an application. Joyously I filled in the form and mailed it off to the Society's office.

I was certainly free to go, for I had just sold my share of a certain business. But then, suddenly, came one test after another. First, I received a most tempting and lucrative business offer. But I was through with materialism, so I turned it down. Next, a lifelong friend and Chris-

tian brother planned to visit his folks in Greece and asked that I care for his business while he was gone. For some months I had been awaiting some response to my Bethel application. I told him: "If in two weeks I do not hear from the Society, I will look after your business." But in a few days a special-delivery letter came. I was requested to report for service at Bethel.

That settled it! On March 17, 1930, I walked into the Bethel Home to commence a period that has abounded with joyous privileges for me—a period that has so far embraced almost forty happy years.

SERVING THE KINGDOM AT BETHEL

Despite my lack of experience I was soon shown how to work in the bookbinding department, on the casing-in machine. I really liked the work. In fact, before I knew it I had been twenty-three years on that same job. Many were the younger men I was privileged to train, encouraging them to stick to their service of the Kingdom.

Added to the satisfactions of Bethel service have been the many opportunities to share in all the features of the Kingdom-preaching work. Right up to this time I have been able to keep up with house-to-house privileges of preaching, making return visits on interested people and conducting Bible studies with them. Offering Bible-study magazines on the streets has also been a joy. In the Riverside congregation of Jehovah's witnesses in West Manhattan there is one book-study group held in the home of a Greek family. Since it was first organized in 1937 I have had the great pleasure of serving as the study servant.

Imagine my satisfaction during the years at seeing "children" and even "grandchildren" from this group become proclaimers of the message of God's kingdom!

To me a very significant event in Bethel history was the start of the Theocratic Ministry School for Bethel workers. That was in 1942. I enrolled right away, and I still attend classes and give student talks. The marvelous training provided by that School has equipped many, including myself, to give public lectures.

A BROADER VIEW OF GOD'S GRAND WORK
Serving at Bethel headquarters all these years has certainly done much to broaden my view of the Kingdom interests and the marvelous work Jehovah is having done in all the earth. Witnesses from all parts of the United States and from all other parts of the world have come to visit here or to attend the Gilead School for missionary training. It has been wonderfully strengthening to see people of all nationalities with the same zeal for God's service.

Especially has this been noted at large assemblies of God's people; for example, those I was privileged to attend in Europe in 1955. There was the delightful trip across the ocean on a ship chartered by the Society, the Arosa Star. Then came the never-to-be-forgotten assemblies, and then to Greece, where the Kingdom work was being carried on under great difficulties. In my little hometown I spoke to many about the Bible's message of hope—even gave two public talks in the town square and one in the home of an elder in the Greek Orthodox Church. Night after night I would chat with my Christian brothers until two or three in the morning.

I had the opportunity to visit some invalid Witnesses in Sparta. One of them, upon hearing of my coming, got up and dressed and, as I entered the house, threw his arms around me and said, "Now I can die happy, for I have met one of the Lord's anointed from Brooklyn headquarters." The doctors had not given him much hope, but he lived for five more years after that.

Letters I had written to my father, I now learned, had borne more fruit than I had supposed. One day a Witness, pursued by a violent mob, fled to his house. My father met the mob with a gun and threatened to shoot anyone who got too close. Though he never did take his stand for God's kingdom, he had learned that intolerance against those who preach the Bible's message is not the way of the true Christian.

Then came the exciting year 1969, when once more I had the great joy of traveling to Europe, this time by air. The thrilling assembly in Nuremberg, Germany, was the highlight. Here I had the joy of meeting and sharing assembly sessions with Witnesses from all parts of Greece, from Australia, France, Belgium, and many other lands. The love among the brothers was manifest on every hand. I can truly say that I have never had another experience that was so upbuilding.

Again I visited Greece and exchanged greetings with fellow Witnesses in Athens, Corinth, and Sparta. It was truly enjoyable to hear of their many experiences. For example, one elderly Greek pioneer minister told of coming upon a group of workers eating their noonday lunch. They invited him to share their meal, and meantime all were listening to a Communist who was telling them about the "Red Paradise." When the man got through with his speech, the pioneer minister tactfully told him: "I am 87 years of age, and if you can stop this aging process and hold off my death, I am willing to go along with you." Of course, the man could give no such guarantee. So the pioneer minister went on to explain Jehovah's provision for all mankind. The man eagerly listened, accepted the Kingdom message, and is now a zealous Witness.

In one small village, a visitor asked the local priest: "What is going on in this

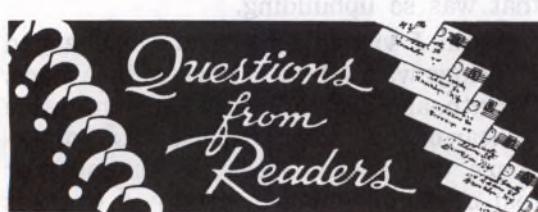
village? Everyone seems to belong to the Witnesses!" The priest answered: "Perhaps pretty soon I will be one of them too."

One Witness was haled into court by a priest on the charge that he was going about like a "wolf in sheep's clothing." The accused said to the judge: "Your Honor, I wear clothing just like everyone else wears. The priest is the one who wears different clothing." At that the priest left, while the judge dismissed the case.

All in all, it was grand to see the zeal of the Witnesses in Greece. Men of responsibility in the congregations and throughout the country spend long hours shepherding the flock of God, their work rendered doubly hard by all the restrictions. But they are joyful, and they surely have great love for the brothers at the Society's headquarters who work hard to keep them supplied with spiritual nourish-

ment. I am truly thankful that the Society made it possible for me to go and visit so many of our European fellow servants of the Kingdom.

More than ever, even at the age of seventy-two, I appreciate that the Kingdom for which I prayed as a boy is indeed mankind's only hope. I am thankful for the measure of health and strength that makes it possible to go on serving daily in the Bethel Home and, in addition, to spend some fifteen to twenty hours each month in activities having to do with the Riverside, New York, Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses—a zealous group of Kingdom publishers. To young people particularly I would say: While you have strength of youth, expend it in the interests of the Kingdom! No other activity can bring such satisfaction and peace of mind.



- What is the meaning of the prayer to God: "Do not bring us into temptation"?—E. D., U.S.A.

This is part of Jesus' familiar 'model prayer.' After urging his disciples to pray for forgiveness, Christ concluded the prayer: "And do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the wicked one."—Matt. 6:12, 13; Luke 11:4.

Some have wondered whether this means that unless one asks God to do otherwise God is going to tempt one to sin. But that absolutely cannot be, for Jehovah inspired Jesus' half brother James to write: 'When under trial, let no one say: "I am being tried by God." No; for with evil things God cannot be tried nor does he himself try anyone.' (Jas 1:13) Jesus' words must be understood in the light of this verse and in harmony with it.

The experience of Adam and Eve illuminates what Christ meant. God permitted them to eat

to satisfaction from "every tree desirable to one's sight and good for food." However, they were not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and bad.—Gen. 2:9, 16, 17.

That was a test on them, true. Yet it was not an evil test designed to hurt them. God was not like the religious enemies of Christ who schemed to test him so as to trap him and thus have an excuse to have him killed. (Matt. 22: 15-18; Mark 11:18; 12:13; John 11:53) By this simple test of Adam and Eve, Jehovah could make plain what they really were, whether as free moral agents they truly wanted to obey and serve their Creator.

But note what a fine thing God did: To help Adam and Eve avoid error, in effect, to 'bring them not into temptation.' He explained that to disobey would be wrong and would lead to death. Surely warning a person against evil is not tempting him with it. Was it not the Devil who tempted the first pair? He saw an opportunity to tempt them to go beyond the boundaries that God had set for them. His false description of the outcome of eating from the tree created a wrong desire, which in turn led to sin.—Gen. 3:1-6; Jas. 1:14, 15.

As he did with Adam and Eve, God leads Christians today 'not into temptation' by warn-

ing us against evils and by advising us what the outcome will be if we share in such things. We are thus aided to avoid temptations to do wrong.

For instance, Jehovah clearly tells us that adultery is a sin and to be shunned. (Ex. 20:14; Rom. 13:9, 10) That is a warning so that we are not ignorant of what is wrong. Also, He states what the results would be if a Christian practiced that wrong; he would defile the marriage bed, be judged adversely and not inherit the Kingdom. (Heb. 13:4; 1 Cor. 6:9, 10) Plainly, Jehovah is not tempting Christians into adultery. On the contrary, observe the splendid counsel at 1 Corinthians 7:5. To married couples who might, by mutual consent, abstain from marital relations for a time, went the advice that then they should 'come together again, that Satan may not keep tempting them' toward adultery. The temptation would not be from God, who had alerted and forewarned them, but from Satan through the operation of wrong desire.

Similarly, at 1 Timothy 6:9, 10 Jehovah warns that the love of money is dangerous and that it can lead to all sorts of injurious things. And he states that the outcome of this love and the determination to be rich can include being led astray from the faith and suffering many pains. So we are notified of what is wrong and made aware of the harm that can result if we fall into this temptation.—2 Cor. 2:11.

One who prays not to be brought into temptation obligates himself to do his best to avoid temptations. That would include shunning thoughts that build up wrong desires as well as situations where temptations are likely to arise. Also he must let Jehovah strengthen him by studying God's Word so that he can discern good from evil.

Consequently, Jesus' words "Do not bring us into temptation" do not imply that God tempts us or brings us into situations that tempt us with evil, and hence the necessity of begging Him to do otherwise. Rather, they constitute a request that God not leave us ignorant of evil things that might be a temptation, but that he warn and strengthen us so that we can avoid the temptation or endure it.

● May dedicated Christians attend church funerals of other religious organizations?—C. S., U.S.A.

Some Christians may feel obligated to attend a church funeral because of a debt of gratitude, because a close relative is involved or due to

pressures from an unbelieving mate. But before doing so each one should consider the various factors involved and the possible alternatives. While doing so is not forbidden by the Christian congregation, such a course is certainly fraught with dangers and problems.

First of all, it is well to remember that a church funeral is not held primarily to afford friends an opportunity to console the bereaved family. Usually that is done in the funeral parlor beforehand or by visiting the family in their home. The church funeral is really a religious service. It therefore is likely to involve a sermon advocating such unscriptural ideas as the immortality of the soul and that all good people go to heaven. It may also involve unscriptural practices such as making the sign of the cross and most likely the joining in united prayer with a priest or minister of another religion. Of course, a Christian could not take part in such, in view of the command at Revelation 18:4.

In this regard Japanese funerals represent a real test for dedicated Christian wives with unbelieving husbands. If they attend the funeral, their name is called out and they are expected to go up and offer incense and a prayer to the dead. So, many of such Japanese Christians have decided that it is better not to attend these funerals.

Some dedicated Christians have attended church funerals because they wanted to stay close to the immediate family and support them. So they went to the funeral parlor, to the church funeral and then even to the grave. They might have been able to do all that without personally committing any false religious act. There are, of course, spiritual hazards in going to any place of false worship.

True, a Christian wife whose husband is an unbeliever and who wants her to attend a church funeral might look to the example of Naaman. He was the Syrian general who was cured of leprosy by bathing himself seven times in the Jordan River at the command of the prophet Elisha. Because of this miraculous cure Naaman was determined never to worship any other god than Jehovah. But that would be a hard thing for him to do because he was still in the service of his king. He helped the king get around and so would have to go with him into the house of the pagan god Rimmon. He might even have to help the king bow down. So he asked that Jehovah God forgive him and not hold this against him. Naaman, who had

become a true worshiper of Jehovah, was not himself worshiping this false god; he was only there under orders.—2 Ki. 5:1-19.

And so with the Christian wife who has an unbelieving husband. If her husband insisted that on a certain occasion she go with him to a church funeral of a relative or family friend she might feel that she could act in a way similar to that in which Naaman did—be present on that occasion but not share in any acts of false religion. But whether she went would be up to her to decide. She would have to resolve the conflict between respect for her husband's wishes and obedience to Jehovah and the dictates of her conscience, trained by God's Word.—1 Pet. 3:16.

Yes, her conscience would be involved. Why? Because others might see her, one of Jehovah's witnesses, entering the church, and they might be stumbled. She would therefore have to consider that possibility. As the apostle Paul wrote: "Make sure of the more important things, so that you may be flawless and not be stumbling others up to the day of Christ."—Phil. 1:10.

Better it would be if such a wife tried to explain her position to her husband. She would do well to pick a time when he was relaxed and in a good frame of mind, taking a lesson from Queen Esther, and then tactfully try to explain why she felt she could not attend such a church

funeral. Among other things, she could point out that if she attended and did not take part in the ritual it might be very embarrassing to others, and especially to her husband. So an unbelieving husband might agree, out of love for his wife, respect for her religious scruples and a desire to avoid embarrassment.—Esther 5:1-8.

But might one offend the bereaved family by not attending? Only if one ignored the death entirely. One would not need to do that. A person could do things to show that he was sympathetic and interested in helping. He could go to the funeral parlor beforehand, express condolences to the family and offer practical help. A person could bring over food if need be, or cook a meal there for the family, or watch the children, relieving the adults of that responsibility temporarily. Then the family would not think that the person was unloving just because he did not attend the church funeral.

Thus there is no need for a Christian to feel obligated to go to a church funeral of another religious organization, where there may be the temptation to give in to pressure and follow the crowd when everyone else is performing some false religious act. Thus also the danger of performing an act of apostasy and displeasing Jehovah God can be avoided. But each one must decide for oneself on the basis of circumstances and one's own conscience.

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FIELD MINISTRY

When a building is constructed, diligent effort is exerted to make certain that there is a good foundation. Likewise a solid, right kind of foundation is necessary on which to build Christian

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April 12: Keep the Right View of Kingdom Preaching. Page 173. Songs to Be Used: 103, 89.

April 19: Heavenly Support of Kingdom Preaching. Page 179. Songs to Be Used: 92, 80.