

# THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



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## UKRAINE

**COVER:** Witnessing to university students from foreign lands in the city of Lviv

POPULATION

**45,561,000**

PUBLISHERS

**150,887**

**1,737** congregations and **373** groups in **15** languages, including Hungarian, Romanian, Russian, Russian Sign Language, and Ukrainian

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## STUDY ARTICLES

### ■ Worship Jehovah, the King of Eternity

This article will confirm that Jehovah has always been King and will reveal how he has expressed his kingship to his heavenly and earthly creatures. It will also encourage us to follow past examples of those who chose to worship Jehovah, the King of eternity.

### ■ 100 Years of Kingdom Rule—How Does It Affect You?

This article will deepen our appreciation for what the Messianic Kingdom has accomplished during its first 100 years. It will also encourage each of us to be a loyal subject of the Kingdom, and it will stimulate meditation on the full meaning of our yeartext for 2014.

### ■ Making Wise Choices During Youth

### ■ Serving Jehovah Before the Days of Distress Come

What will I do with my life? This is a vital question for anyone who has dedicated himself to Jehovah. In these articles, we will discuss principles that can guide young Christians to serve God fully, as well as opportunities that older Christians have to expand their ministry.

### ■ “Let Your Kingdom Come”—But When?

Today, many people are distracted by world conditions or by a pursuit of their own interests. This article reviews three lines of evidence that help Christians to be confident that God’s Kingdom will soon bring this wicked system to its end.

 **THE WATCHTOWER®**  
ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

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THEY OFFERED  
THEMSELVES  
WILLINGLY



# in West Africa



WHILE growing up in a poor neighborhood in Côte d'Ivoire, **Pascal** longed for a better life. Being an amateur boxer, he wondered, 'Where can I get a chance to become a sports star and become rich?' When he was in his mid-20's, he concluded that Europe was the place. But having no travel documents, he would have to enter Europe illegally.

In 1998, at age 27, Pascal began his journey. He crossed the border into Ghana, traveled through Togo and across Benin, and finally reached the town of Birni Nkonni in Niger. Now the really risky part of the journey was about to begin. To travel north, he needed to hop on a truck and cross the Sahara Desert. Then, upon reaching the Mediterranean, he would board a boat to sail to Europe.

Pascal serving in Niger



That was the plan, but two things happened in Niger that stopped him.

First, he ran out of money. Second, he met Noé, a pioneer, who started a Bible study with him. What he learned touched him deeply and changed his view of life. His material goals were replaced by spiritual interests. In December 1999, Pascal was baptized. To show his gratefulness to Jehovah, in 2001 he began to pioneer in **Niger**—in the very town where he had learned the truth. How does he feel about his service? He exclaims, "I am getting the best out of life!"

## GETTING MORE OUT OF LIFE —IN AFRICA

Like Pascal, many have found that getting more satisfaction out of life centers on pursuing spiritual goals. To reach such goals, some have left Europe and have moved to Africa to serve in areas where there is a greater need for Kingdom proclaimers. In fact, some 65 Witnesses from Europe—between the ages of 17 and 70—moved as "need greaters," as they are often described, to the West African countries of Benin, Burkina Faso, Niger, and Togo.\* What motivated them to make such a big move, and how did it turn out for them?

**Anne-Rakel** from Denmark relates: "My parents served as missionaries in Senegal. They always talked so enthusiastically about missionary life that I wanted that kind of life too." About 15 years ago, when Anne-Rakel was in her early 20's, she moved to **Togo** where she serves in

\* The Benin branch oversees the work in all four lands, where French is spoken.



a sign-language congregation. How did her move encourage others? She says: “Later my younger sister and my brother followed me to Togo.”

**Aurele**, a 70-year-old married brother from France, states: “Five years ago, when I became a pensioner, I had a choice: live a quiet life in France and wait for Paradise to come or take steps to expand my ministry.” Aurele did the latter. About three years ago, he and his wife, **Albert-Fayette**, moved to **Benin**. “Making ourselves available to serve Jehovah here is the best thing we ever did,” says Aurele. “As it turned out,” he adds with a smile, “parts of our territory along the coast remind me of Paradise.”

**Clodomir** and his wife, **Lysiane**, moved from France to **Benin** 16 years ago. Initially, they greatly missed family and friends in France, and the couple feared that they would not be able to adapt to their new life. However, their fears were unfounded. They experienced much joy. “In these 16 years,” says Clodomir, “we have had the privilege of helping, on average, one person per year to accept the truth.”

**Sébastien** and **Johanna**, a married couple from France, moved to **Benin** in 2010. “There’s so much to do in the congregation,” says Sébastien. “Serving here is like attending an accelerated theocratic training course!” How is the response in the ministry? Johanna says: “People thirst for the truth. Even when we’re not out preaching, people stop us in the street to ask us Bible questions and to get our publications.” How has the move affected their marriage? Sébastien notes: “It has strengthened our marriage. It’s a pleasure to spend whole days in the ministry with my wife.”

**Eric** and his wife, **Katy**, serve as pioneers in sparsely populated northern **Benin**. Some ten years ago, while living in France, they began reading articles about serving where there is a greater need and talking to full-time servants. This gave them the desire to move abroad, which they did in 2005. The growth they witnessed has been impressive. Says Eric: “Two years ago, our group in the town of Tanguiéta had 9 publishers; now we have 30. On Sunday, between 50 and 80 attend the meeting. What an incomparable joy it is to observe such growth!”



## How to Provide Training

**Pascal**, a pioneer and Christian elder from France, has served in **Benin** for over 12 years. He states, “Seeing the brothers and sisters progress spiritually is a blessing.” How has he contributed to the progress of some?

“I adapt my training to each individual. In the ministry, I learned from the local brothers how to approach and greet people. What did some learn from me? To take notes. Many streets have no names, and the houses have no numbers. Some publishers made no notes and thus failed to make all their return visits. I showed them how even a simple

note reminds us of the interested person and where he lives; it also serves as an incentive for us to make the return visit.

“People here learn best by listening. They master a number of languages without ever having a textbook in their hand, but reading can be a challenge for them. I practiced reading aloud with a couple of young brothers. The more they progressed, the more they enjoyed reading. Then I showed them how to do research. They made rapid progress and were soon appointed as ministerial servants.”



1



2



3

## IDENTIFY AND OVERCOME CHALLENGES

What challenges have some “need greaters” faced? **Benjamin**, aged 33, is Anne-Rakel’s brother. In 2000 in Denmark, he met a missionary who served in Togo. Benjamin recalls: “When I told the missionary that I wanted to pioneer, he said: ‘You know, you could pioneer in Togo.’” Benjamin thought about it. He says: “I wasn’t even 20 years old at the time, but my two sisters were already serving in **Togo**. That made it easier for me to go there.” So he moved. Still there was a challenge. Explains Benjamin: “I didn’t know one word of French. The first six months were tough because I couldn’t really communicate.” In time, though, he made progress. Benjamin now serves at Bethel in **Benin**, delivering literature and helping in the computer department.

Eric and Katy, mentioned earlier, served in a foreign-language field in France before moving to Benin. How was West Africa different? Says Katy: “It wasn’t easy to find a suitable place to live. For months we lived in a house without electricity and running water.” Adds Eric: “Loud music blared in the neighborhood until late at night. You have to be patient with things like that and be willing to adapt.” Both agree: “The joys of serving in an almost virgin territory outweigh any difficulties.”

**Michel** and **Marie-Agnès**, a married couple from France in their late 50’s, moved to **Benin** about



4



5

five years ago. They initially felt anxious. Says Michel: “Some compared our move to a tight-rope walker pushing a wheelbarrow—and we were sitting in the wheelbarrow! It could be scary if you didn’t know that the tightrope walker was Jehovah. So we made the move *for* and *with* Jehovah.”

## HOW TO PREPARE YOURSELF

Those with experience as “need greaters” stress the importance of preparing oneself by taking these steps: Plan ahead. Learn to adapt. Stick to a budget. Rely on Jehovah.—Luke 14:28-30.

Sébastien, mentioned earlier, relates: “Before moving, Johanna and I saved for two years by cutting down on expenses for entertainment and not making unnecessary purchases.” To continue serving abroad, they work in Europe each year for a few months, which allows them to pioneer in Benin for the rest of the year.



**Marie-Thérèse** is one of the some 20 single sisters from abroad who serve as “need greaters” in West Africa. She worked as a bus driver in France; however, in 2006 she took a year’s leave to pioneer in **Niger**. Before long, she knew that this was the kind of life she really wanted to pursue. Says Marie-Thérèse: “After returning to France, I talked to my employer about my desire to adjust my work schedule, and he was willing to change it. Now, from May to August, I work as a bus driver in France, and from September to April, I serve as a pioneer in Niger.”

Those “seeking first the Kingdom” can trust that Jehovah will provide them with ‘all other necessary things.’ (Matt. 6:33) To illustrate: Consider what happened to **Saphira**, a single sister from France who is in her late 20’s and serves as a pioneer in **Benin**. In 2011 she was back in France to earn enough money to be able to support herself for another year (her sixth) in Africa. Saphira relates: “It was a Friday, my last day on the job, but I still needed another ten days of work to earn enough for the coming year. I had only two more weeks left in France. I prayed to Jehovah, explaining my situation. Shortly thereafter, an employment agency phoned me and asked if I could replace someone for two weeks.” On Monday, Saphira went to the job location to be trained by the

worker she was to replace. She relates: “What a surprise it was to find out that she was a Christian sister who needed ten days off to attend the Pioneer Service School! Her boss had refused to give her a leave unless a replacement could be found. She had begged Jehovah to intervene—just as I had.”

## A SOURCE OF TRUE SATISFACTION

Some brothers and sisters have served in West Africa for many years and have made it their home. Others have been able to stay for a few years and have then returned to their country of origin. But even today, such former “need greaters” still benefit from the years they served abroad. They learned that true satisfaction in life comes from serving Jehovah.



(6) Johanna and Sébastien  
(7) Katy and Eric  
(8) Marie-Agnès and Michel  
(9) Saphira



# Worship Jehovah, the King of Eternity

*“To the King of eternity . . . be honor and glory forever.”*

—1 TIM. 1:17.

KING SOBHUZA II of Swaziland ruled for nearly 61 years. That was quite a record for a modern-day monarch. As impressive as the length of King Sobhuza’s rule may be, there is a king whose reign is not limited by the short life span of humans. In fact, the Bible refers to him as “the King of eternity.” (1 Tim. 1:17) A psalmist identified this Sovereign by name, proclaiming: “Jehovah is King forever and ever.”—Ps. 10:16.

<sup>2</sup> The length of God’s reign makes his rule unlike that of any human. However, it is Jehovah’s way of ruling that draws us to him. A king who ruled over ancient Israel for 40 years praised God with these words: “Jehovah is merciful and compassionate, slow to anger and abundant in loyal love. Jehovah has firmly established his throne in the heavens; and his kingship rules over everything.” (Ps. 103:8, 19) Not only is Jehovah our King but he is also our Father—our loving, heavenly Father. This raises two questions: In what way has Jehovah acted as a Father? How has Jehovah exercised his kingship since the rebellion in Eden? The answers to these questions will move us to draw closer to Jehovah and worship him with all our heart.

**1, 2.** (a) Who is “the King of eternity,” and why is that title appropriate? (See opening image.) (b) What is it about Jehovah’s kingship that draws us to him?

## HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

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Why are we drawn to  
Jehovah’s way of ruling?

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How has Jehovah always  
shown a loving interest in his  
human family?

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What moves you to worship  
the King of eternity?

## THE KING OF ETERNITY PRODUCES A UNIVERSAL FAMILY

<sup>3</sup> What pleasure Jehovah must have had when he brought forth his only-begotten Son! God did not treat his first-born as a lowly subject. Rather, he loved him as a Son and invited him to share in the joy of creating other perfect subjects. (Col. 1:15-17) These came to include myriads of angels. Described as “his ministers who do his will,” the angels serve God with joy, and he dignifies them by calling them his “sons.” They are part of Jehovah’s universal family.—Ps. 103:20-22; Job 38:7.

<sup>4</sup> Once he had created the physical heavens and earth, Jehovah expanded his universal family. After preparing the earth as a beautiful, self-sustaining home, Jehovah put the crowning touch on his earthly works by creating the first man, Adam, in His own image. (Gen. 1:26-28) As Creator, Jehovah could rightly expect Adam to be obedient. As Father, Jehovah conveyed all of his instructions with love and kindness. In no way did those directives unduly restrict man’s freedom.—**Read Genesis 2:15-17.**

<sup>5</sup> Unlike many human monarchs, Jehovah is pleased to delegate responsibility to his subjects, treating them as trusted members of his family. For example, he gave Adam authority over other living creatures, even assigning him the enjoyable and challenging task of naming the animals. (Gen. 1:26; 2:19, 20) God did not create millions of indi-

vidual perfect humans to populate the earth. Rather, he chose to create a perfect complement for Adam—the woman Eve. (Gen. 2:21, 22) Then he gave this couple the opportunity to fill the earth with their children. Under flawless conditions, humans could progressively extend the boundaries of Paradise until it covered the globe. United with the angels in heaven, they could worship Jehovah forever as part of his universal family. What a wonderful prospect! And what an expression of Jehovah’s fatherly love!

## REBELLIOUS SONS REJECT GOD’S KINGSHIP

<sup>6</sup> Sadly, Adam and Eve were not content to have Jehovah as their Sovereign. Instead, they chose to follow a rebellious spirit son of God, Satan. (Gen. 3:1-6) Life apart from God’s rule brought pain, suffering, and death to them and their offspring. (Gen. 3:16-19; Rom. 5:12) God no longer had obedient subjects on the earth. Did this mean that he had lost control, that he had relinquished sovereignty over the earth and its inhabitants? Absolutely not! He exercised his authority by driving the man and woman out of the garden of Eden, and to prevent their return, he assigned cherubs to stand guard at the entrance. (Gen. 3:23, 24) At the same time, God showed his fatherly love by confirming that his purpose to have a universal family of devoted spirit sons as well as human sons would be accomplished. He promised an “offspring” who would bring an end to Satan and undo the effects of Adam’s sin.—**Read Genesis 3:15.**

<sup>6.</sup> (a) In what way did rebellion in God’s family begin? (b) Why did rebellion not mean that Jehovah had lost control?

3. Who was the first member of Jehovah’s universal family, and who else were created as God’s “sons”?

4. How did God’s universal family come to include humans?

5. What arrangement did God make to fill the earth with his human children?



<sup>7</sup> In the centuries that followed, some men chose to be loyal to Jehovah. Among them were Abel and Enoch. However, the majority of humans rejected Jehovah as their Father and King. By the time of Noah, the earth had become “filled with violence.” (Gen. 6:11) Did this mean that Jehovah no longer had control of earth’s affairs? What does the historical record reveal?

<sup>8</sup> Consider the account of Noah. Jehovah gave him detailed architectural plans and instructions to build a massive ark that would save Noah and his immediate family. God also showed great love for his entire human family when he commissioned Noah to be “a preacher of righteousness.” (2 Pet. 2:5) Noah’s message no doubt included a call for repentance and warnings of impending destruction, but it fell on deaf ears. For decades, Noah and his family lived amid a violent and grossly immoral world. Jehovah, as a caring Father, protected and blessed those eight loyal souls. By bringing a global Flood, Jehovah exercised dominion over the rebellious humans and wicked angels. Yes, Jehovah was definitely in control.—Gen. 7:17-24.

#### JEHOVAH’S KINGSHIP AFTER THE FLOOD

<sup>9</sup> As Noah and his family took their first steps on the cleansed earth and inhaled the fresh air, their hearts were certainly filled with gratitude to Jehovah for his care and protection. Immediately, Noah built an altar and offered sacrifices to worship Jehovah. God blessed Noah

and his family and gave them instructions to “be fruitful and become many and fill the earth.” (Gen. 8:20-9:1) Once again, mankind had the opportunity to unite in worship and to fill the earth.

<sup>10</sup> The Flood, however, did not wash away imperfection, and humans still had to cope with the invisible influence of Satan and the rebellious angels. It was not long before rebellion against Jehovah’s benevolent rule again flared up. For example, Noah’s great-grandson Nimrod took opposition to Jehovah’s rule to new heights. Nimrod is described as being “a mighty hunter in opposition to Jehovah.” He built great cities, such as Babel, and set himself up as a king “in the land of Shinar.” (Gen. 10:8-12) What action would the King of eternity take toward this rebel king and his efforts to thwart God’s purpose to “fill the earth”? God confused the people’s language, causing Nimrod’s frustrated subjects to be scattered “over the entire face of the earth.” They took their false worship and pattern of human rulership with them.—Gen. 11:1-9.

<sup>11</sup> Even though many worshipped false gods after the Flood, some faithful men continued to honor Jehovah. One was Abraham, who obediently left the comforts of his home city of Ur and dwelled in tents for years. (Gen. 11:31; Heb. 11:8, 9) During the time of Abraham’s nomadic life, he was often surrounded by human kings, many of whom lived in walled cities. But Jehovah safeguarded Abraham and his family.

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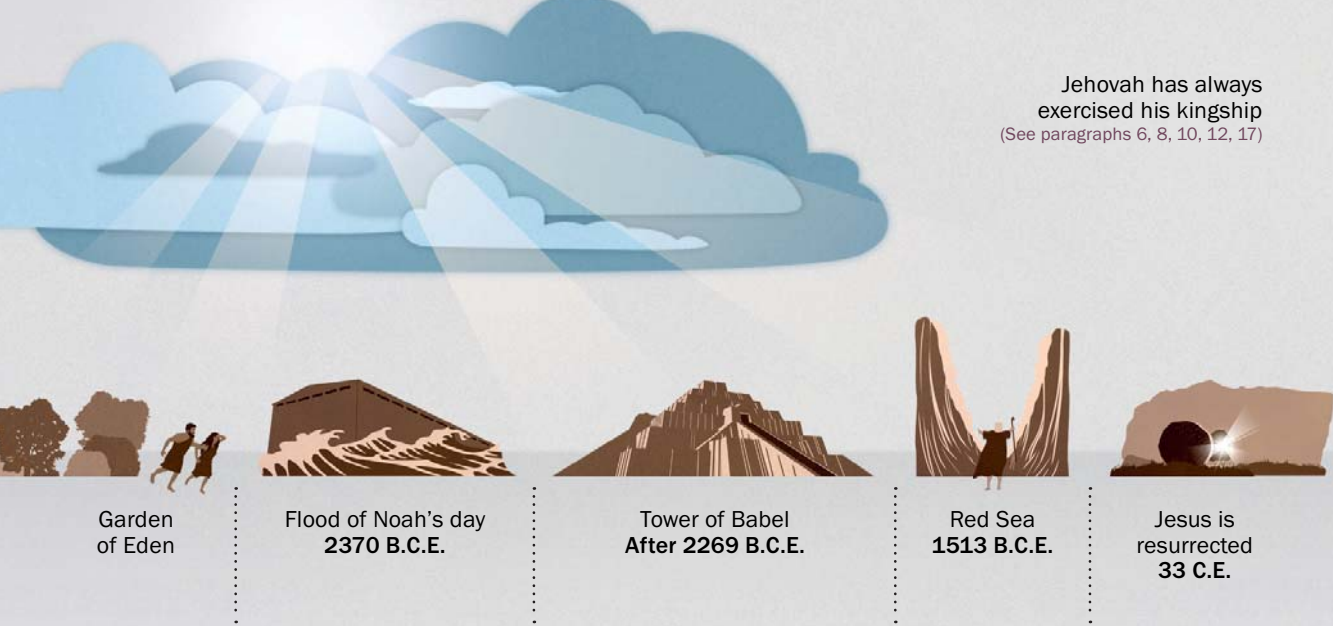
7, 8. (a) How bad had conditions become by the time of Noah? (b) What arrangements did Jehovah make to cleanse the earth and to preserve the human family?

9. What opportunity did Jehovah give mankind after the Flood?

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10. (a) Where and how did rebellion against Jehovah flare up after the Flood? (b) What action did Jehovah take to ensure that his will was done?

11. How did Jehovah show loyalty to his friend Abraham?



Regarding Jehovah's fatherly protection, the psalmist declared: "[God] did not allow any man to oppress them, but on their account he reproved kings." (Ps. 105:13, 14) Out of loyalty to his friend, Jehovah promised Abraham: "Kings will come from you."—Gen. 17:6; Jas. 2:23.

<sup>12</sup> God repeated to Abraham's son Isaac and grandson Jacob his promise to bless them, which would include producing kings from their descendants. (Gen. 26:3-5; 35:11) However, prior to producing kings, Jacob's descendants became slaves in Egypt. Did this mean that Jehovah would not fulfill his promise or that he had relinquished his sovereignty over the earth? Not at all! In his due time, Jehovah demonstrated his divine power and expressed his sovereignty over stubborn Pharaoh. The enslaved Israelites put their faith in Jehovah, who delivered them in a grand way through the Red Sea. Obviously, Jehovah was still the Universal Sovereign, and as a caring Father, he used his great power

to protect his people.—**Read Exodus 14: 13, 14.**

#### JEHOVAH BECOMES KING TO ISRAEL

<sup>13</sup> Immediately following their miraculous deliverance from Egypt, the Israelites sang a victory song of praise to Jehovah. That song, recorded in Exodus chapter 15, includes this declaration in verse 18: "Jehovah will rule as king forever and ever." Indeed, Jehovah became King over the new nation. (Deut. 33:5) However, the people were not content to have Jehovah as their invisible Ruler. About 400 years after leaving Egypt, they asked God to set up a human king, such as their pagan neighbors had. (1 Sam. 8:5) In spite of this, Jehovah was still King, a fact that was manifest during the reign of David, Israel's second human king.

<sup>14</sup> David brought the sacred ark of the covenant to Jerusalem. During this joyous occasion, the Levites sang a song

**12.** How did Jehovah express his sovereignty over Egypt, and how did this affect his chosen people?

**13, 14.** (a) In song, what did the Israelites proclaim about Jehovah's kingship? (b) What promise regarding kingship did God make to David?

of praise that contained a noteworthy statement, recorded at 1 Chronicles 16:31: “Declare among the nations: ‘Jehovah has become King!’” One might wonder, ‘Since Jehovah *is* the King of eternity, how is it that he *became* King at that time?’ Jehovah *becomes* King when he expresses his rulership or establishes an agency to represent him at a certain time or to deal with a specific situation. This aspect of Jehovah’s kingship has far-reaching significance. Before David died, Jehovah promised him that his kingship would continue indefinitely: “I will raise up your offspring after you, your own son, and I will firmly establish his kingdom.” (2 Sam. 7:12, 13) In the final outworking of matters, this “offspring” of David appeared more than 1,000 years later. Whom did this prove to be, and when would he become King?

#### JEHOVAH APPOINTS A NEW KING

<sup>15</sup> In the year 29 C.E., John the Baptist began preaching that “the Kingdom of the heavens [had] drawn near.” (Matt. 3:2) When Jesus was baptized by John, Jehovah anointed Jesus as the promised Messiah and the future King of God’s Kingdom. Jehovah expressed fatherly affection for Jesus with the words: “This is my Son, the beloved, whom I have approved.”—Matt. 3:17.

<sup>16</sup> Throughout his ministry, Jesus glorified his Father. (John 17:4) He did this by preaching about the Kingdom of God. (Luke 4:43) He even taught his followers to pray for that Kingdom to come. (Matt. 6:10) As King-Designate, Jesus could declare to his opposers: “The Kingdom of God is in your midst.” (Luke 17:21) Later, on the evening before his death, Jesus

**15, 16.** When was Jesus anointed as the future King, and while on earth, what arrangements did Jesus make for his rule?

concluded ‘a covenant for a kingdom’ with his followers. He thereby gave some of his faithful disciples the prospect of joining him as kings in God’s Kingdom. —Read Luke 22:28-30.

<sup>17</sup> When would Jesus begin to rule as King of God’s Kingdom? He could not do so immediately. The very next afternoon, Jesus was executed and his followers scattered. (John 16:32) However, as in times past, Jehovah remained in control. On the third day, he resurrected his Son, and on the day of Pentecost 33 C.E., Jesus established a spiritual kingdom over the Christian congregation of his anointed brothers. (Col. 1:13) Still, Jesus would have to wait to take up full kingly power over the earth as the promised “offspring.” Jehovah told his Son: “Sit at my right hand until I place your enemies as a stool for your feet.”—Ps. 110:1.

#### WORSHIP THE KING OF ETERNITY

<sup>18</sup> For millennia Jehovah’s kingship was challenged in heaven and on earth. Jehovah never relinquished his sovereignty; he remained in control. As a loving Father, he protected and cared for such loyal subjects as Noah, Abraham, and David. Does this not move us to submit to our King and to draw closer to him?

<sup>19</sup> But now we may ask: How has Jehovah become King in our day? How can we prove to be loyal subjects of Jehovah’s Kingdom and become perfect sons in his universal family? What does it mean when we pray for God’s Kingdom to come? These questions will be answered in the next article.

**17.** In what limited way did Jesus begin to exercise his kingship in the first century, but for what would he have to wait?

**18, 19.** What are we moved to do, and what will we learn in the next article?



Our yeartext for 2014:  
“Let your Kingdom come.”  
—Matthew 6:10



## 100 Years of Kingdom Rule How Does It Affect You?

*“Great and wonderful are your works, Jehovah God, . . .  
King of eternity.”*—REV. 15:3.

### CAN YOU ANSWER?

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How did Jehovah become King in 1914, and what were some of the Kingdom’s early accomplishments?

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How has Jesus used the Messianic Kingdom to refine, educate, and organize God’s loyal subjects on earth?

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When will our prayer “let your Kingdom come” be answered fully, and what will that mean?

ON A mountain near Capernaum in the spring of 31 C.E., Jesus Christ taught his followers to pray: “Let your Kingdom come.” (Matt. 6:10) Today, many doubt if the Kingdom will ever come. However, we are confident that our sincere prayers for God’s Kingdom to come will be answered.

<sup>2</sup> Jehovah will use the Kingdom to unify his family in heaven and on earth. That divine purpose will be realized. (Isa. 55:10, 11) In fact, Jehovah has already become King in our day! The thrilling events of the past 100 years are proof of this. God is performing great and wonderful works in behalf of millions of loyal subjects. (Zech. 14:9; Rev. 15:3) And yet, Jehovah’s becoming King is not the same as the coming of God’s Kingdom for which Jesus taught us to pray. How do these events differ, and how do they affect us?

### JEHOVAH’S ENTHRONED KING GOES INTO ACTION

<sup>3</sup> Toward the end of the 19th century, light began to shine on a 2,500-year-old prophecy recorded by Daniel: “In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed.” (Dan. 2:44) The Bible Students spent decades pointing out that the year 1914 would be sig-

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- 1, 2. What will God’s Kingdom accomplish, and why can we be confident that the Kingdom will come?
  3. (a) When was Jesus enthroned as King, and where? (b) How would you prove that the Kingdom was established in 1914? (See footnote.)

nificant. Many people at that time were optimistic. As one writer states: "The world of 1914 was full of hope and promise." With the outbreak of World War I later that year, however, Bible prophecy came true. The subsequent famines, earthquakes, and pestilences as well as the fulfillment of other Bible prophecies proved conclusively that Jesus Christ had begun to rule in heaven as King of God's Kingdom in 1914.\* By enthroning his Son as the Messianic King, Jehovah had, indeed, become King in a new sense!

<sup>4</sup> The first mission of God's newly installed King was to wage war against his Father's chief Adversary, Satan. Jesus and his angels cast the Devil and his demons out of heaven. This brought great rejoicing in heaven but a time of unprecedented calamity to the earth. **(Read Revelation 12:7-9, 12.)** Next, the King turned his attention to his earthly subjects to refine, educate, and organize them to do God's will. Let us consider how their positive response to these three functions of Kingdom rule sets a good example for us today.

#### THE MESSIANIC KING REFINES HIS LOYAL SUBJECTS

<sup>5</sup> After the enthroned King purged the heavens of the corrupting influence of Satan and his demons, Jehovah directed Jesus to inspect and refine the spiritual condition of his followers on earth. The prophet Malachi described this as a spiritual cleansing. (Mal. 3:1-3) History

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\* See the book *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* pages 88-92.

4. What immediate action did the newly enthroned King take, and to whom did he next turn his attention?

5. What cleansing took place between 1914 and early 1919?

shows that this took place between 1914 and the early part of 1919.\* To be part of Jehovah's universal family, we must be clean, or holy. (1 Pet. 1:15, 16) We must keep free from any contamination by false religion or the politics of this world.

<sup>6</sup> Jesus then used his kingly authority to appoint a "faithful and discreet slave." This slave would provide a regular supply of wholesome spiritual food to all who make up the "one flock" under Jesus' care. (Matt. 24:45-47; John 10:16) Since 1919, a small group of anointed brothers have loyally carried out the weighty responsibility to feed the "domestics." The abundant spiritual food provided through this channel nourishes us so that we can grow in the faith. It fortifies our resolve to remain spiritually, morally, mentally, and physically clean. This spiritual food also educates us and equips us to have a full share in the most important work being done on earth today. Are you taking full advantage of these provisions?

#### THE KING EDUCATES HIS SUBJECTS TO PREACH WORLDWIDE

<sup>7</sup> When Jesus began his ministry on earth, he announced: "I must also declare the good news of the Kingdom of God to other cities, because for this I was sent." (Luke 4:43) For three and a half years, Jesus made this work the focal point of his life. He instructed his disciples: "As you go, preach, saying: 'The Kingdom of the heavens has drawn

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\* See the July 15, 2013, issue of *The Watchtower*, pages 22-23, paragraph 12.

6. How is spiritual food provided, and why is it vital?

7. What important work did Jesus start when he was on the earth, and until when would it continue?

### REFINEMENT 1914 to 1919

Jesus inspects and refines the spiritual condition of his followers on earth. In 1919, Jesus appoints “the faithful and discreet slave”

**1919**  
Service director  
is appointed

**1927**  
House-to-house  
work on Sunday  
is organized

**1938**  
Servants begin  
to be appointed  
theocratically

**1972**  
Congregation  
oversight is  
assigned to a  
body of elders

**1943**  
Bible School  
of Gilead and  
Theocratic  
Ministry School

**Publishers Worldwide:**

**6,000**

**17,000**

**328,572**

**851,378**

1910

1914

1920

1930

1940

1950

1960

near.’” (Matt. 10:7) After his resurrection, Jesus foretold that his followers would spread this message “to the most distant part of the earth.” (Acts 1:8) He promised them that he would personally be involved in this vital work right down to our day.—Matt. 28:19, 20.

<sup>8</sup> By 1919, the “good news of the Kingdom” had taken on added meaning. (Matt. 24:14) The King was ruling in heaven, and he had gathered a small group of cleansed earthly subjects. They eagerly responded to Jesus’ rousing instructions: Preach the good news of God’s established Kingdom in all the earth! (Acts 10:42) For example, close to 20,000 Kingdom supporters convened for an international convention in Cedar Point, Ohio, U.S.A., in September 1922. Just imagine their excitement when Brother Rutherford delivered the talk entitled “The Kingdom” and declared: “Behold, the King reigns! You are his publicity agents. Therefore advertise, advertise, advertise, the King and his kingdom.” Two thousand delegates responded by sharing in a special “Service Day,” visiting homes up to 45 miles (72 km) away from the convention site. Stirred to action, one delegate exclaimed: “Never will I forget the call to advertise the

**8.** How did the King rouse his earthly subjects to action?

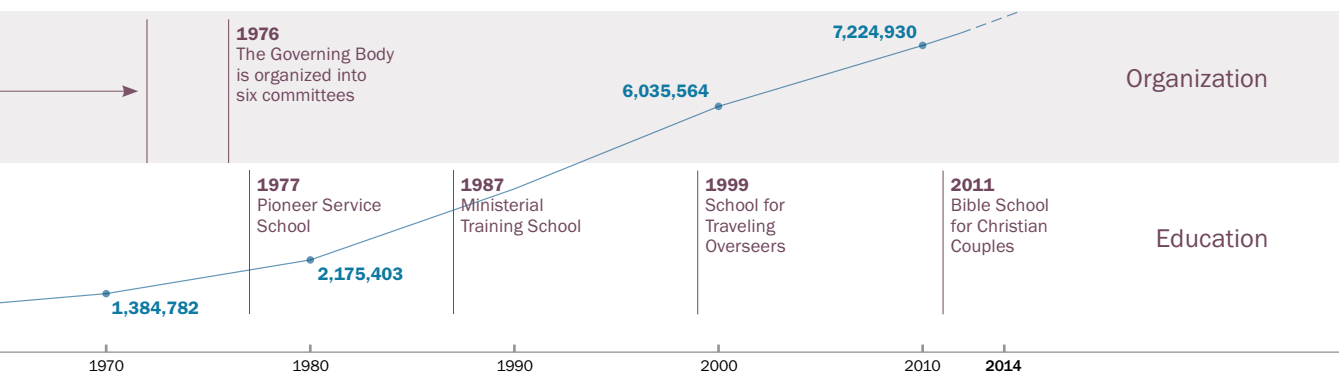
Kingdom and the zeal of the assembled throng!” He was not alone.

<sup>9</sup> By 1922, more than 17,000 Kingdom proclaimers were active in 58 lands around the world. However, they needed training. In the first century, the King-Designate gave his disciples clear directions on what, where, and how to preach. (Matt. 10:5-7; Luke 9:1-6; 10:1-11) Following this pattern today, Jesus sees to it that all who share in the Kingdom-preaching work receive instructions and have the tools they need to preach effectively. (2 Tim. 3:17) Through the Christian congregation, Jesus is training his subjects for the ministry. One way he trains them is by means of the Theocratic Ministry School, which is conducted in each of the more than 111,000 congregations throughout the earth. By taking advantage of this instruction, more than seven million preachers are now equipped to preach and teach in a way that appeals to “people of all sorts.”—**Read 1 Corinthians 9:20-23.**

<sup>10</sup> In addition to the Theocratic Ministry School, other Bible schools have been established to train congregation elders,

**9, 10.** (a) What arrangements have been made to train Kingdom proclaimers? (b) How have you personally benefited from this training?





pioneers, single brothers, Christian couples, Branch Committee members and their wives, traveling overseers and their wives, and missionaries.\* The students of one class of the Bible School for Christian Couples expressed their appreciation for the school in this way: “The specialized training we received has deepened our love for Jehovah and has better equipped us to help others.”

<sup>11</sup> This extensive Kingdom-preaching and teaching effort has not gone unnoticed by the enemy Satan. He uses direct as well as subtle attacks on the Kingdom message and its messengers to try to stop the work. But the enemy’s efforts are to no avail. Jehovah has seated his Son “far above every government and authority and power and lordship.” (Eph. 1:20-22) As King, Jesus uses his authority to protect and guide his disciples to make sure that his Father’s will is done.<sup>#</sup> The good news is being preached, and millions of honesthearted ones are being taught Jehovah’s ways. What a

\* See the September 15, 2012, issue of *The Watchtower*, pages 13-17, “Theocratic Schools—Evidence of Jehovah’s Love.”

<sup>#</sup> See the December 1, 1998, issue of *The Watchtower*, pages 19-22, for examples of legal victories in various countries.

**11.** How have Kingdom proclaimers been able to endure in spite of opposition?

privilege it is for us to have a share in this grand work!

### THE KING ORGANIZES HIS SUBJECTS FOR GREATER ACTIVITY

<sup>12</sup> Since the establishment of the Kingdom in 1914, the King has refined the way God’s servants are organized to do his Father’s will. (Read **Isaiah 60:17**.) In 1919, a service director was appointed in each congregation to take the lead in the preaching work. Regular house-to-house work on Sundays was organized in 1927. Supporters of the Kingdom were stimulated for greater activity in 1931 when they adopted the Scriptural name Jehovah’s Witnesses. (Isa. 43:10-12) In 1938, democratic elections of responsible men in the congregations were replaced by theocratic appointments. In 1972, congregation oversight was assigned to a body of elders instead of to one congregation overseer. All qualified men were encouraged to reach out to share in ‘shepherding the flock of God under their care.’ (1 Pet. 5:2) In 1976, the Governing Body was organized into six committees to supervise the Kingdom work around the world. Fittingly, Jehovah’s appointed King has progressively

**12.** Describe some of the organizational refinements that have been made since the Kingdom was established.

organized subjects of the Kingdom in a theocratic, or God-ruled, way.

<sup>13</sup> Consider what the Messianic King has accomplished during the first 100 years of his reign. He has cleansed a people for Jehovah's name. He has directed the preaching of the Kingdom good news in 239 lands and has educated millions about Jehovah's ways. He has united more than seven million loyal subjects, each one offering himself willingly to do his Father's will. (Ps. 110:3) Truly, Jehovah's works through the Messianic Kingdom are great and wonderful. Even more thrilling events lie ahead!

### FUTURE BLESSINGS OF THE MESSIANIC KINGDOM

<sup>14</sup> Even though Jehovah crowned his Son, Jesus Christ, as the Messianic King in 1914, this was not the full answer to our prayer "let your Kingdom come." (Matt. 6:10) It had been foretold in the Bible that Jesus would "go subduing in the midst of [his] enemies." (Ps. 110:2) Human governments under Satan's control still stand in opposition to the Kingdom. When we pray for God's Kingdom to come, we are asking God that the Messianic King and his associate rulers come to put an end to human rulership and remove the earthly opposers of the Kingdom. This action will fulfill the words of Daniel 2:44 that God's Kingdom "will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms." It will eliminate the political enemies of the Kingdom. (Rev. 6:1, 2; 13:1-18; 19:11-21) The time for this to happen is very near. How fitting that our yeartext for 2014, the 100th anniversary of the es-

tablishment of God's Kingdom in heaven, is Matthew 6:10: "Let your Kingdom come"!

<sup>15</sup> After the Messianic King destroys God's enemies, he will throw Satan and his demons into an abyss for a thousand years. (Rev. 20:1-3) With that evil influence out of the way, the Kingdom will move ahead to apply the benefits of Jesus' ransom sacrifice and to eradicate the effects of Adamic sin. The King will resurrect countless millions who are sleeping in the grave and will organize an extensive educational program to teach them about Jehovah. (Rev. 20:12, 13) The entire earth will reflect the paradise conditions of the garden of Eden. All faithful humans will be raised to perfection.

<sup>16</sup> By the end of Christ's Thousand Year Reign, the Messianic Kingdom will have achieved its purpose. Then Jesus will hand the Kingdom over to his Father. (**Read 1 Corinthians 15:24-28.**) There will no longer be a need for an intermediary between Jehovah and his earthly children. All of God's sons in heaven and his children on earth will be united with their heavenly Father as part of his universal family.

<sup>17</sup> The thrilling events of 100 years of Kingdom rule assure us that Jehovah is in control and that his purpose for the earth will be fulfilled. May we continue to be his loyal subjects and advertise the King and his Kingdom. We do this with full confidence that Jehovah will soon answer our earnest prayer: "Let your Kingdom come"!

**13.** How have the accomplishments of 100 years of Kingdom rule affected your life?

**14.** (a) What are we asking God to do when we pray: "Let your Kingdom come"? (b) What is our yeartext for 2014, and why is this fitting?

**15, 16.** (a) What thrilling events will take place during the Thousand Year Reign? (b) What will be Jesus' final act as Messianic King, and what will that mean regarding Jehovah's purpose for all of his creation?

**17.** What are you determined to do in regard to the Kingdom?



# Making Wise Choices During Youth

*“You young men and young women, . . .  
praise the name of Jehovah.”—PS. 148:12, 13.*

WE LIVE in momentous times. As never before in history, millions from all nations are turning to true worship. (Rev. 7: 9, 10) Many young people are enjoying thrilling experiences as they help others to understand lifesaving Bible truths. (Rev. 22:17) Some youths are conducting Bible studies, helping people to enjoy a better quality of life. Others are zealously taking the good news into foreign-language territories. (Ps. 110:3; Isa. 52:7) How could you enjoy having a more satisfying share in what Jehovah’s people are doing?

<sup>2</sup> As a youth, you can make choices that may later open up enjoyable opportunities for you in God’s service. For example, Timothy of Lystra evidently made wise choices that led to his receiving a missionary assignment when he was perhaps in his late teens or early 20’s. (Acts 16:1-3) It appears that only a few months later, after violent opposition had forced the apostle Paul to leave the newly formed congregation in Thessalonica, Paul entrusted young Timothy with the mission of returning to Thessalonica to strengthen the brothers. (Acts 17: 5-15; 1 Thess. 3:1, 2, 6) Can you imagine how receiving that

1. What wonderful opportunities are many young Christians enjoying?
2. How does Timothy’s example show that Jehovah is willing to entrust young people with responsibilities? (See opening image.)

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## CAN YOU EXPLAIN?

What can youths do now to enjoy fine opportunities in Jehovah’s service later?

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How have some enjoyed using the years of their youth?

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What Bible principles can help you to make the best choices in life?



assignment must have made Timothy feel?

### YOUR MOST IMPORTANT CHOICE

<sup>3</sup> Youth is a time for making important choices. But one choice is more important than all others—your decision to serve Jehovah. When is the best time to make that choice? Jehovah says: “Remember . . . your Grand Creator in the days of your youth.” (Eccl. 12:1) The only acceptable way to “remember” Jehovah is to serve him fully. (Deut. 10:12) Your decision to serve God with all your heart is the most important choice you will ever make. It will shape your entire future.—Ps. 71:5.

<sup>4</sup> Of course, your choice to serve Jehovah is not the only choice that affects your future. For example, you may also wonder about whether you will marry, whom you might marry, and how you will earn a living. These are vital decisions, but you are wise to choose first whether you want to serve Jehovah as fully as possible. (Deut. 30:19, 20) Why? Because the choices are interrelated. What you decide about marriage and employment will affect how you serve God. (Compare Luke 14:16-20.) Conversely, your desire to serve God will affect your choices about marriage and employment. So decide on matters of primary importance first.—Phil. 1:10.

### WHAT WILL YOU DO IN YOUR YOUTH?

<sup>5</sup> Once you have chosen to serve God,

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3. What is the most important choice you can make in life, and when can you make it?

4. Besides choosing to serve Jehovah, what other key choices in life will affect how you serve God?

5, 6. Illustrate how making the right choices can lead to fine experiences later. (See also the article “What I Chose as a Child” in this issue.)

you can contemplate *what* he wants you to do, and you can decide *how* you will serve him. A Japanese brother writes: “When I was 14, I was out preaching with a congregation elder who noticed that I was not enjoying the ministry. Gently, he said to me: ‘Go home, Yuichiro. Sit down at your desk and think carefully about what Jehovah has done for you.’ I did as he said. In fact, I continued thinking and praying for some days. Gradually, my attitude changed. Soon, I found that I enjoyed serving Jehovah. I enjoyed reading about missionaries, and I began to think about serving God more fully.

<sup>6</sup> “I decided to start making choices that would one day enable me to serve Jehovah overseas,” continues Yuichiro. “For example, I chose to take a course in English. When I left school, I chose part-time work teaching English so that I could pioneer. When I was 20, I started learning Mongolian and I had a chance to visit a Mongolian group of publishers. Two years later, in 2007, I visited Mongolia. When I went out preaching with some of the pioneers and saw that many people were seeking the truth, I wanted to move there and help. I returned to Japan to make my plans. I have been pioneering in Mongolia since April 2008. Life is not easy here. But people are responding to the good news, and I am able to help them to draw close to Jehovah. I feel that what I chose is the very best way of life.”

<sup>7</sup> Each person must make his own choice about how he will spend his life as one of Jehovah’s Witnesses. (Josh. 24:15) We cannot tell you whether to marry, whom to marry, or what employ-

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7. What choices must we make for ourselves, and what example did Moses set for us?

ment to get. Will you choose a job that requires only a little training? Some of you young Christians live in poor villages; others live in prosperous cities. Worldwide, you vary greatly in personality, ability, experience, interests, and faith. You probably differ as much as the Hebrew youths in ancient Egypt differed from young Moses. He had all the opportunities of the royal court, while other Hebrews were slaves. (Ex. 1:13, 14; Acts 7:21, 22) Like you, they lived in momentous times. (Ex. 19:4-6) Each had to choose what he would do with his life. Moses made the right choice.—**Read Hebrews 11:24-27.**

<sup>8</sup> Jehovah helps you to make wise choices during your youth. He provides advice in the form of principles that you can apply in your unique circumstances. (Ps. 32:8) In addition, your believing parents and the congregation elders can help you to reason on how to apply these principles. (Prov. 1:8, 9) Let us consider three basic Bible principles that can help you to make wise choices that will affect your future in a beneficial way.

### THREE BIBLE PRINCIPLES TO GUIDE YOU

<sup>9</sup> *Seek first God's Kingdom and his righteousness.* (Read Matthew 6:19-21, 24-26, 31-34.) Jehovah dignifies us with freedom of choice. He does not say how much of your youth you should devote to preaching about the Kingdom. But Jesus did give us the helpful principle to seek the Kingdom first. The way

you apply what he said will allow you opportunities to express your love for God, your concern for your neighbors, and your appreciation for the hope of everlasting life. As you ponder marriage and employment, consider whether your choices will cause you anxiety over your material needs or will demonstrate your zeal for God's Kingdom and his righteousness.

<sup>10</sup> *Find happiness in serving others.* (Read Acts 20:20, 21, 24, 35.) Jesus kindly taught us this fundamental principle of life. He was a very happy person because he did his Father's will rather than his own. Jesus enjoyed seeing meek people respond to the good news. (Luke 10:21; John 4:34) Perhaps you have already experienced the happiness that results from helping others. If you base your major choices in life on the principles Jesus taught, you will surely bring happiness to yourself as well as to Jehovah.—Prov. 27:11.

<sup>11</sup> Our greatest happiness comes from serving Jehovah. (Prov. 16:20) Jeremiah's secretary, Baruch, apparently forgot that. At one point in time, he was no longer enjoying Jehovah's service. Jehovah told him: "You are seeking great things for yourself. Stop seeking such things. For I am about to bring a calamity on all flesh, . . . and wherever you may go, I will grant you your life as a spoil." (Jer. 45:3, 5) What do you think? What would have made Baruch happy—seeking great things or surviving Jerusalem's destruction as a faithful servant of God?—Jas. 1:12.

8. What help is available for young people who are contemplating their choices in life?

9. (a) How does Jehovah dignify us with freedom of choice? (b) 'Seeking first the Kingdom' creates what opportunities?

10. What made Jesus happy, and what choices will make you happy?

11. Why did Baruch lose his joy, and what counsel did Jehovah give him?

<sup>12</sup> One brother who found happiness in serving others is Ramiro. He states: “I come from a poor family living in a village in the Andes Mountains. So when my older brother offered to pay for my university education, it was a big opportunity. But I had recently been baptized as one of Jehovah’s Witnesses, and I had received another offer—a pioneer invited me to preach with him in a small town. I went there, learned how to cut hair, and opened a barber-shop to support myself. As we offered to teach people the Scriptures, many responded appreciatively. Later, I joined an indigenous-language congregation that had recently been formed. I have been a full-time minister for ten years now. No other profession could give me the joy I experience as I help people

**12.** What choice led Ramiro to enjoy a happy life?

to study the good news in their native tongue.”

<sup>13</sup> ***Enjoy serving Jehovah in your youth. (Read Ecclesiastes 12:1.)*** You need not feel that you must first get a good job so that you can serve Jehovah later. Youth is a fine time to start serving Jehovah fully. Many youths have relatively few family responsibilities and have health and vigor to tackle challenging assignments. What would you like to do for Jehovah during your youth? Perhaps your goal is to be a pioneer. You may want to work in a foreign-language territory. Or perhaps you see ways to serve more fully in your present congregation. Whatever your goal in God’s service, you will need a way to earn a living. How much training will you need? What will you choose?

**13.** Why is youth a fine time to serve Jehovah fully?

Ramiro has been finding joy in serving Jehovah from his youth on  
(See paragraph 12)





## USING BIBLE PRINCIPLES TO MAKE WISE CHOICES

<sup>14</sup> The three Bible principles we have considered can help you to assess your employment options. No doubt your school counselors know something about the local job market. Or there may be a government agency that can tell you what work is in demand locally or where you hope to serve. Information from secular sources can be helpful—but beware. People who do not love Jehovah may try to plant love for the world in your heart. (1 John 2:15-17) When you look at what the world offers, your heart can easily deceive you.—**Read Proverbs 14:15; Jer. 17:9.**

<sup>15</sup> Once you understand your employment options, you need sound advice. (Prov. 1:5) Who can help you to assess employment options in the light of Bible principles? Listen to people who love Jehovah, love you, and know you and your circumstances well. They will help you to analyze your aptitudes and motives. Perhaps what they say will help you to rethink your goals. What a blessing you have if your parents love Jehovah! Also, the elders in your congregation are spiritually qualified men who can guide you. In addition, speak to pioneers and traveling overseers. Why did they make full-time service their choice? How did they get started pioneering, and how do they provide for themselves? What satisfaction results from their ministry?—Prov. 15:22.

<sup>16</sup> Those who really know you well can give you advice with discernment. For example, suppose you want to drop out of high school and start pioneering

mainly because you do not like the hard work that school requires. A person who loves you may discern your motives and help you to realize that school can help you to learn not to give up easily, a vital quality if you want to serve Jehovah fully.—Ps. 141:5; Prov. 6:6-10.

<sup>17</sup> Everyone who serves Jehovah will face spiritual dangers—influences that may draw him away from Jehovah. (1 Cor. 15:33; Col. 2:8) But some types of employment may present more spiritual dangers than others. Have some in your area experienced “shipwreck of their faith” after choosing a particular type of employment? (1 Tim. 1:19) It would certainly be wise to avoid making decisions that endanger your relationship with God.—Prov. 22:3.

## ENJOY BEING A YOUNG CHRISTIAN

<sup>18</sup> If you have cultivated in your heart a desire to serve Jehovah, enjoy the opportunities that come with being a young servant of God. Make choices that will enable you to enjoy serving Jehovah in these exciting times.—Ps. 148:12, 13.

<sup>19</sup> On the other hand, what should you do if you do not yet feel inclined to serve Jehovah? Do not give up trying to strengthen your faith. After the apostle Paul described his efforts to pursue a way of life that God could bless, he wrote: “If you are mentally inclined otherwise in any respect, God will reveal the above attitude to you. At any rate, to the extent we have made progress, let us go on walking orderly in this same course.” (Phil. 3:15, 16) Continue to consider God’s love and his wise advice. Better than anyone, Jehovah can help you to make wise choices during your youth.

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**14.** What must one be cautious of when planning for the future?

**15, 16.** Who can best guide you regarding employment?

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**17.** What decisions must we avoid?

**18, 19.** If anyone does not yet feel inclined to serve Jehovah, what should he do?



## Serving Jehovah Before the Days of Distress Come

*“Remember . . . your Grand Creator.”—ECCL. 12:1.*

### CAN YOU EXPLAIN?

How can experienced Christians benefit younger ones?

What Biblical examples of serving where the need is greater can benefit older Christians today?

How have some Christians started serving God in new ways later in life?

KING SOLOMON was inspired to address young people with the words: “Remember . . . your Grand Creator in the days of your youth, before the days of distress come.” What are “the days of distress”? Solomon used intriguing poetic language to describe the calamitous days of old age—trembling hands, unsteady legs, loss of teeth, dim vision, poor hearing, white hair, and a bent frame. No one should plan on waiting until he arrives at that stage in life before starting to serve Jehovah. **—Read Ecclesiastes 12:1-5.**

<sup>2</sup> Many Christians in their 50’s and older still have plenty of vigor. They may have some gray hair, but likely they do not yet have the frail health described by Solomon. Could these older Christians benefit from the inspired counsel that was addressed to young people: “Remember . . . your Grand Creator”? What does that counsel mean?

**1, 2.** (a) What counsel was Solomon inspired to write to young people? (b) Why is Solomon’s counsel also of interest to Christians in their 50’s and older?

<sup>3</sup> Even though we may have been serving Jehovah for many years, it is good for us to stop occasionally and think appreciatively about how grand our Creator is. Is not life awe-inspiring? The complexity of its design is beyond human understanding. Jehovah's provisions are so rich in variety that we have abundant possibilities for enjoying life. When we contemplate Jehovah's creation, we renew our appreciation for his love, wisdom, and power. (Ps. 143:5) But remembering our Grand Creator also involves pondering our obligations to him. During such reflective moments, we surely feel resolved to express our gratitude to our Creator by serving him as fully as possible for as long as we live.—Eccl. 12:13.

#### UNIQUE OPPORTUNITIES LATER IN LIFE

<sup>4</sup> If you have acquired decades of experience as an adult, you have a key question to ask yourself, 'What will I do with my life now while I still have some energy and strength?' As an experienced Christian, you have opportunities that are not open to others. You can pass on to younger ones what you have learned from Jehovah. You can strengthen others by relating experiences you have enjoyed while serving God. King David prayed for opportunities to do so. He wrote: "O God, you have taught me from my youth . . . Even when I am old and gray, O God, do not abandon me. Let me tell the next generation about your power and about your mightiness to all those who are to come."—Ps. 71:17, 18.

3. What is involved in remembering our Grand Creator?

4. What question can Christians with long experience ask themselves, and why?

<sup>5</sup> How could you make known the wisdom you have acquired over the years? Could you invite younger servants of God to your home for some upbuilding association? Could you ask them to accompany you in the Christian ministry and show them the joy you experience in serving Jehovah? Elihu of ancient times said: "Let age speak, and let a multitude of years declare wisdom." (Job 32:7) The apostle Paul urged experienced Christian women to encourage others by word and example. He wrote: "Let the older women be . . . teachers of what is good."—Titus 2:3.

#### CONSIDER YOUR POTENTIAL FOR HELPING OTHERS

<sup>6</sup> If you are an experienced Christian, you have great potential. Consider what you understand now that you did not know 30 or 40 years ago. You can skillfully apply Bible principles in life. No doubt you have the ability to reach the hearts of others with Bible truth. If you are an elder, you know how to help brothers who take a false step. (Gal. 6:1) Perhaps you have learned how to oversee congregation activities, assembly departments, or Kingdom Hall construction. You may know how to encourage doctors to use health-care strategies that avoid the use of blood. Even if you have only recently learned the truth, you have valuable experience in life. For example, if you have raised children, you will have gained much practical wisdom. Older Christians are a potentially powerful source of encouragement for Jehovah's people by teaching, leading, and strengthening the brothers and sisters.—**Read Job 12:12.**

5. How can older Christians pass on to others what they have learned?

6. Why should Christians with decades of experience not underestimate their potential?



<sup>7</sup> How could you use your potential more fully? Perhaps you could show younger ones how to start and conduct Bible studies. If you are a sister, could you suggest to young mothers how they might keep up with spiritual activities while caring for small children? If you are a brother, could you teach young brothers to give talks with enthusiasm and to be more effective preachers of the good news? Could you show them how you visit elderly brothers and sisters to encourage them spiritually? Even if you do not have the physical power that you used to have, you have splendid opportunities to train younger ones. God's Word says: "The glory of young men is their strength, and the splendor of old men is their gray hair."—Prov. 20:29.

#### **SERVING WHERE THE NEED IS GREATER**

<sup>8</sup> The apostle Paul used his full potential to serve God later in life. By the time he was released from prison in Rome about 61 C.E., he had endured many years of rigorous missionary service, and he could have settled down to preach in Rome. (2 Cor. 11:23-27) The brothers in that large city would no doubt have valued his continued support. But Paul saw that the need was even greater overseas. With Timothy and Titus, he resumed his missionary activity, traveling to Ephesus, then on to Crete, and probably to Macedonia. (1 Tim. 1:3; Titus 1:5) We do not know if he visited Spain, but he intended to do so.—Rom. 15:24, 28.

<sup>9</sup> The apostle Peter may have been over 50 when he moved to where the need was greater. Why may that be true?

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7. What useful training can older Christians provide for younger ones?

8. What did the apostle Paul do later in life?

9. When may Peter have moved to serve where the need was greater? (See opening image.)

If he was about the same age as Jesus or perhaps somewhat older, he would have been about 50 years old when he met with the other apostles in Jerusalem in the year 49 C.E. (Acts 15:7) Some time after that meeting, Peter went to live in Babylon, doubtless to preach to the large population of Jews in that area. (Gal. 2:9) He was residing there when he wrote his first inspired letter, about 62 C.E. (1 Pet. 5:13) Settling in a foreign land can be challenging, but Peter did not allow the fact that he was advancing in age to rob him of the joy of serving Jehovah fully.

<sup>10</sup> Today, many Christians in their 50's and older find that their circumstances have changed and that they are able to serve Jehovah in new ways. Some have moved to where the need is greater. For example, Robert writes: "My wife and I were in our mid-50's when we realized what opportunities lay before us. Our only son had left home, we no longer had aging parents needing care, and we had received a small inheritance. I calculated that the sale of our house would suffice to pay off the mortgage and provide for us until I received income from my retirement pension. We heard that in Bolivia the number of people accepting Bible studies is high but the cost of living is low. So we decided to move. Adapting to our new home was not easy. Everything was so different from what we were accustomed to in North America. But our efforts were well rewarded."

<sup>11</sup> Robert adds: "Our whole life now revolves around congregation activities. Some of the people with whom we studied the Bible got baptized. One family we studied with lives in humble

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10, 11. Relate an experience about someone who later in life moved to serve where the need is greater.

circumstances in a village several miles away. But each week, the members of that family make the difficult journey into town for the meetings. Can you imagine our joy at seeing the family's progress and the eldest boy even taking up the pioneer service?"

### THE NEED IN FOREIGN-LANGUAGE FIELDS

<sup>12</sup> Foreign-language congregations and groups can benefit greatly from the example of older brothers and sisters. Also, such territory can be very enjoyable to work. For example, Brian writes: "My wife and I experienced a lull in life when I reached the British retirement age of 65. Our children had left home, and we rarely found interested people with whom we could conduct Bible studies. Then I met a young Chinese man who was doing research at the local university. He accepted an invitation to our

meeting, and I started studying the Bible with him. After a few weeks, he began bringing a Chinese colleague with him. Two weeks later, he brought a third, and then a fourth.

<sup>13</sup> "About the time a fifth Chinese researcher asked for a Bible study, I thought, 'Just because I am 65 does not mean that I should retire from Jehovah's service.' So I asked my wife, who is two years younger than I am, if she would like to learn Chinese. We used a recorded language course. That was ten years ago. Preaching in a foreign-language field made us feel young again. So far, we have studied the Bible with 112 Chinese people! Most of them have attended meetings. One of them now serves with us as a pioneer."

### ENJOY DOING WHAT YOU CAN

<sup>14</sup> Although many Christians in their 50's have fine opportunities to do new

**12, 13.** Relate an experience about a Christian who began serving Jehovah in new ways after reaching retirement age.

**14.** About what can older Christians be happy, and how is Paul's example encouraging to them?

You may not be too old to  
expand your ministry  
(See paragraphs 12, 13)



things in Jehovah's service, not all can. Some of them have poor health, and others care for aging parents or dependent children. You can be happy in the knowledge that Jehovah appreciates whatever you do in his service. So rather than be frustrated by what you cannot do, enjoy what you can do. Consider the apostle Paul's example. For years, he was under house arrest, unable to continue his missionary travels. But whenever people visited him, he spoke to them about the Scriptures and strengthened them in the faith.—Acts 28:16, 30, 31.

<sup>15</sup> Jehovah also appreciates what elderly ones can do in his service. Although Solomon pointed out that the distressing days of frail health are not the best stage of life, Jehovah values what elderly Christians can accomplish in praising him. (Luke 21:2-4) Congregations appreciate the faithful example of the long-time servants in their midst.

<sup>16</sup> The Bible reports that an elderly woman named Anna continued faithfully praising Jehovah into her old age. She was an 84-year-old widow when Jesus was born. Likely, she did not live long enough to become a follower of Jesus, to be anointed with holy spirit, or to enjoy preaching the good news of the Kingdom. Yet, what Anna could do, she enjoyed doing. "She was never missing from the temple, rendering sacred service night and day." (Luke 2:36, 37) As the priest offered incense in the temple each morning and evening, Anna would be with the assembled crowd in the courtyard offering silent prayer for perhaps half an hour.

**15.** Why are elderly Christians highly valued?

**16.** What privileges was elderly Anna not likely able to enjoy, but what could she do to worship God?

When she saw the baby Jesus, she began "speaking about the child to all who were waiting for Jerusalem's deliverance."—Luke 2:38.

<sup>17</sup> Today, we should be alert to help elderly or infirm Christians. Some who would dearly love to be at congregation meetings and assemblies may rarely be able to do so. In some places, congregations lovingly arrange for such elderly ones to listen to the meetings by telephone. In other places, this may not be possible. Even so, Christians who cannot attend meetings can share in supporting true worship. For example, their prayers contribute to the success of the Christian congregation.—**Read Psalm 92:13, 14.**

<sup>18</sup> Elderly Christians may not realize how much they encourage others. For example, although Anna was faithful all those years at the temple, she probably did not realize that centuries later her example would still encourage others. Anna's love for Jehovah was recorded in the Scriptures. No doubt your love for God is recorded in the hearts of fellow worshippers. No wonder God's Word says: "Gray hair is a crown of beauty when it is found in the way of righteousness"! —Prov. 16:31.

<sup>19</sup> There are limits to what all of us can do in Jehovah's service. But let those of us who still have some strength and vigor take to heart the inspired words: "Remember . . . your Grand Creator . . . before the days of distress come." —Eccl. 12:1.

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**17.** How might we be able to help elderly and infirm Christians to share in true worship?

**18, 19.** (a) Why might older Christians not realize how much they encourage others? (b) Who can apply the counsel: "Remember . . . your Grand Creator"?



## “Let Your Kingdom Come” But When?

*“When you see all these things, know that he is near at the doors.”—MATT. 24:33.*

AS YOU may have noted, eyewitnesses of an event often remember the details quite differently. Similarly, a person may find it hard to remember exactly what the doctor said after he gave a diagnosis. Or someone may have trouble finding his keys or eyeglasses, though they are near at hand. All these situations may have to do with what researchers say is a type of blindness—not noticing something, or forgetting something, because of being otherwise engaged. This is said to be part of how our brain works.

<sup>2</sup> Many people today experience a similar form of blindness when it comes to world events. They may admit that the world has changed greatly since 1914, but they do not see the real significance of these events. As Bible students, we know that in one sense God’s Kingdom came in 1914 when Jesus was installed as King in heaven. But we know that more is involved in response to the prayer “Let your Kingdom come. Let your will take place, as in heaven, also on earth.” (Matt. 6:10) Clearly, that includes the end of the present wicked system. Only when that occurs can God’s will

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1, 2. (a) What may influence what we actually see? (b) Of what can we be sure as to God’s Kingdom?

### HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

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How have world conditions since 1914 been fulfilling Bible prophecy?

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What is the significance of human society’s going from bad to worse?

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How do you feel about the end being so close?

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be done on earth as it is being done in heaven.

<sup>3</sup> Because we regularly study God's Word, we can see that prophecy is being fulfilled right now. What a contrast with people in general! They are so involved in their lives and pursuits that they overlook the clear evidence that Christ has been ruling since 1914 and will soon bring God's judgment. However, consider a personal question: If you have been serving God for decades, are you as conscious of and concerned about the significance of our times as you were years ago? Even if you have become a Witness more recently, on what is your attention focused? Whatever our response, let us review three important reasons why we can be confident that God's anointed King will soon take additional steps toward having the divine will done fully on earth.

### THE HORSEMEN HAVE MADE THEIR APPEARANCE

<sup>4</sup> In 1914, Jesus Christ—pictured as riding a white horse—was given his heavenly crown. He immediately went forth to complete the conquest of Satan's wicked system. (**Read Revelation 6:1, 2.**) The descriptive prophecy in Revelation chapter 6 gave reason to expect that after God's Kingdom was established, there would be a rapid deterioration of world conditions—war, food shortage, pestilence, and other causes of death. These developments are depicted by the ride of three horsemen closely following Jesus Christ.—Rev. 6:3-8.

3. What advantage do we have from studying God's Word?

4, 5. (a) What has Jesus been doing since 1914? (See opening image.) (b) What do the rides of three horsemen symbolize, and how have things worked out?

<sup>5</sup> As foretold, peace was 'taken away from the earth,' despite human promises of international cooperation and diplomacy. World War I can be viewed as just the beginning of significant wars, as is proved by recent world developments. And despite many economic and scientific advances since 1914, food shortages continue to threaten world security. Furthermore, who can deny that all kinds of pestilences, natural disasters, and other 'deadly plagues' continue to cut down millions of victims each year? The scope, frequency, and severity of these events are unprecedented in human history. Do you take to heart the meaning of that?

<sup>6</sup> Many people were distracted by the outbreak of World War I and the Spanish influenza. Yet, anointed Christians had keenly been anticipating 1914 as the end of the Gentile Times, or "appointed times of the nations." (Luke 21:24) They were not completely sure about what would happen. Still, they knew that 1914 would mark a turning point regarding divine rulership. As soon as they discerned the fulfillment of Bible prophecy, they boldly declared to others that God's rule had begun. Their efforts to proclaim the Kingdom resulted in intense persecution. That such occurred in many nations was itself a further fulfillment of prophecy. In the decades to follow, the enemies of the Kingdom resorted to "framing trouble in the name of the law." They also resorted to physical violence, imprisonments, and even executions by hanging, shooting, or beheading our brothers.—Ps. 94:20; Rev. 12:15.

<sup>7</sup> With so much evidence that God's

6. Who had taken note of the fulfillment of Bible prophecy, and what did this lead them to do?

7. Why have the majority of people not discerned the true meaning behind world events?

Kingdom is already established in heaven, why do the majority of people not accept what this means? Why are they not able to connect the dots, so to speak, between the state of the world and specific Bible prophecies that God's people have long been publicizing? Could it be that most people are focusing attention on just what they can see with their eyes? (2 Cor. 5:7) Does their preoccupation with human affairs blind them to what God is doing? (Matt. 24:37-39) Are some of them distracted by the noise of satanic propaganda? (2 Cor. 4:4) It takes faith and spiritual perception to see what is happening in the spirit realm. How glad we can be that we are not blind to what is really going on!


#### **WICKEDNESS IS ADVANCING FROM BAD TO WORSE**

<sup>8</sup> There is a second reason why we know that it will not be long before God's Kingdom takes active control of

**8-10.** (a) How has 2 Timothy 3:1-5 been fulfilled? (b) Why can we say that wickedness is advancing from bad to worse?

earth's affairs: Wickedness in human society is going from bad to worse. For nearly a century, the conditions foretold at 2 Timothy 3:1-5 have been in evidence. If anything, they too have steadily increased in scope, duration, and frequency. Can you not recognize that the fulfillment of this prophecy has intensified? Let us consider some examples that well illustrate this.—**Read 2 Timothy 3: 1, 13.**

<sup>9</sup> Think about the contrast between what was found shocking in the 1940's or 1950's and what is taking place today in the workplace, in the field of entertainment, in sports, and in fashion. Extreme violence and immorality are now commonplace. People compete to be seen as more fierce, lewd, or ruthless than anyone else. What was considered edgy television in the 1950's is now rated as suitable for families. And many recognize that homosexuals have a loud voice in the fields of entertainment and fashion, promoting their lifestyle in the public realm. How thankful we can be that we know God's view!—**Read Jude 14, 15.**



With the ride of the horsemen,  
world conditions continue to worsen  
(See paragraphs 4, 5)

<sup>10</sup> Or a Christian might reflect on what was considered rebellious behavior on the part of young people in the 1950's in contrast with what is taking place today. Parents used to worry—and rightly so—about whether their children were smoking tobacco, drinking alcohol, or dancing suggestively. Today, shocking reports have become all too familiar: A 15-year-old student opens fire on his classmates, killing 2 and injuring 13. A group of intoxicated teens brutally murder a nine-year-old girl and beat up her father and cousin. Youths in one Asian land are said to be responsible for half of the crimes committed in the preceding ten-year period. Can anyone reasonably deny that things have got much worse?

<sup>11</sup> The apostle Peter accurately pointed out: "In the last days ridiculers will come with their ridicule, proceeding according to their own desires and saying: 'Where is this promised presence of his? Why, from the day our forefathers fell asleep in death, all things are continuing exactly as they were from creation's beginning.'" (2 Pet. 3:3, 4) What might explain why some people react this way? It seems that the more familiar a situation is, the less people are inclined to pay attention to it. A steady decline in the morality of society in general may seem less shocking than a sudden, unexpected change in the behavior of a close acquaintance. Nevertheless, this gradual decay of morality is dangerous.

<sup>12</sup> The apostle Paul warned us that "in the last days," conditions would be "hard to deal with." (2 Tim. 3:1) But they are

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**11.** Why do many people not realize that things are getting worse?

**12, 13.** (a) Why do we not need to be discouraged by world developments? (b) Our realizing what will help us to cope with conditions "hard to deal with"?

not impossible to deal with, so we do not need to hide from reality. With the help of Jehovah, his spirit, and the Christian congregation, we can successfully overcome whatever disappointments or fears come our way. We can stay faithful. "The power beyond what is normal" is God's, not our own.—2 Cor. 4:7-10.

<sup>13</sup> It is good to note that Paul introduced the prophecy about the last days with the expression "know this." Those words guarantee that what follows is certain to occur. There is no doubt that ungodly society will continue to advance from bad to worse until Jehovah steps in to end it. Historians have documented that here or there some society or nation experienced a steep moral decline and then collapsed. Never before in history, though, has the overall morality of the entire world deteriorated to the extent that it has now. Many people may ignore the implications, but this unique development since 1914 should clearly demonstrate to us that we can trust that God's Kingdom will soon take decisive action.

### THIS GENERATION WILL NOT PASS AWAY

<sup>14</sup> There is yet a third reason for confidence. What has developed among God's people points to the nearness of the end. For example, prior to the establishment of God's Kingdom in heaven, a group of faithful anointed ones were actively serving God. When some of their expectations about what would happen in 1914 did not come about, what did they do? Most of them proved their integrity under trials and persecution and kept right on serving Jehovah. Over the years, most—if not all—of those anoint-

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**14-16.** What is a third reason for believing that God's Kingdom will "come" soon?

ed ones have faithfully completed their earthly course.

<sup>15</sup> In his detailed prophecy about the conclusion of this system of things, Jesus said: “This generation will by no means pass away until all these things happen.” (**Read Matthew 24:33-35.**) We understand that in mentioning “this generation,” Jesus was referring to two groups of anointed Christians. The first group was on hand in 1914, and they readily discerned the sign of Christ’s presence in that year. Those who made up this group were not merely alive in 1914, but they were spirit-anointed as sons of God in or before that year.—Rom. 8:14-17.

<sup>16</sup> The second group included in “this generation” are anointed contemporaries of the first group. They were not simply alive during the lifetime of those in the first group, but they were anointed with holy spirit during the time that those of the first group were still on earth. Thus, not every anointed person today is included in “this generation” of whom Jesus spoke. Today, those in this second group are themselves advancing in years. Yet, Jesus’ words at Matthew 24:34 give us confidence that at least some of “this generation will by no means pass away” before seeing the start of the great tribulation. This should add to our conviction that little time remains before the King of God’s Kingdom acts to destroy the wicked and usher in a righteous new world.—2 Pet. 3:13.

### **CHRIST WILL SOON COMPLETE HIS CONQUEST**

<sup>17</sup> What conclusion can we draw from the three lines of evidence that we have

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17. What conclusion do we draw from the three lines of evidence that we have considered?

considered? Jesus cautioned that we would not—and we do not—know the exact day or hour. (Matt. 24:36; 25:13) But we can and do know “the season,” as Paul mentioned. (**Read Romans 13:11.**) We are living in that season, the last days. If we give our full attention to Bible prophecy and to what Jehovah God and Jesus Christ are doing, we cannot fail to see compelling evidence that we are indeed living close to the end of this system of things.

<sup>18</sup> Those who refuse to recognize the awesome authority that has been given to Jesus Christ, the victorious Rider of the white horse, will soon be forced to admit their error. They will not see a way out. At that time, many will cry out in terror: “Who is able to stand?” (Rev. 6:15-17) Yet, the very next chapter of Revelation provides an answer. The anointed ones and those with an earthly hope will indeed “stand” in that day with God’s approval. Then “a great crowd” of those other sheep will survive the great tribulation.—Rev. 7:9, 13-15.

<sup>19</sup> By our consciously focusing attention now on the unfolding fulfillment of Bible prophecy in these exciting times, we will not be distracted by the noise from Satan’s world; nor will we be blind to the real meaning of world events. Christ will soon complete his conquest of this ungodly society by waging the final war in righteousness. (Rev. 19:11, 19-21) Think of what the Bible assures us can then be our happy lot!—Rev. 20:1-3, 6; 21:3, 4.

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18. What awaits those who refuse to recognize God’s Kingdom?

19. As one who recognizes, accepts, and responds to the clear evidence that the last days will soon end, what are you looking forward to?





As a young boy



## What I Chose as a Child

I was only ten years old in 1985 when children from Cambodia arrived at my school in Columbus, Ohio, U.S.A. One of the boys knew a few words of English. With the help of pictures, he began to tell me horrific stories of torture, killings, and escapes. I would cry at night as I thought of these children. I wanted to tell them about the hope of Paradise and the resurrection, but they did not understand my language. Although I was only a boy, I decided to learn Cambodian so that I could tell my schoolmates about Jehovah. Little did I realize then how this choice would shape my future.

Learning Cambodian was difficult. Twice I decided to give up, but Jehovah encouraged me through my parents. In time, my schoolteachers and fellow students began urging me to pursue a lucrative career. But I wanted to become a pioneer, and I chose high school courses that would help me to find part-time secular work so that I could achieve my goal. After school, I used to meet some pioneers and work with them in the ministry. I also volunteered to tutor students who were learning English as a second language—a choice that greatly benefited me later.

When I was 16, I heard about a Cambodian group in Long Beach, California, U.S.A. I visited there and learned to read Cambodian. As soon as I graduated from school, I became a pioneer and continued preaching to the Cambodian people near my home. By the time I was 18, I was thinking about moving to Cambodia. It was still a dangerous place, but I knew that few of the ten million people living in Cambodia had heard the good news of the Kingdom. At that time, there was just one congregation of 13 publishers in the whole country. I first visited Cambodia when I was 19. Two years later, I chose to go and live there. I found part-time work translating and teaching English to support me in my ministry. In time, I found a wife who shared my goals in life. Together, we have enjoyed helping many Cambodian people to dedicate their lives to God.

Jehovah has granted me ‘the desires of my heart.’ (Ps. 37:4) Making disciples is the most satisfying of all professions. During the 16 years I have been in Cambodia, that little gathering of 13 servants of Jehovah has grown into 12 congregations and 4 isolated groups!—As told by Jason Blackwell.



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