

# The **WATCHTOWER**

*Announcing*  
**JEHOVAH'S  
KINGDOM**

OCTOBER 1, 1965

Semimonthly

**PUTTING UP A HARD FIGHT  
FOR THE FAITH**

**EXECUTION OF DIVINE JUDGMENT  
UPON THE UNGODLY**

**DO EVIL SPIRITS EXERCISE  
POWER OVER MAN?**

**PERSONAL HELP TO ANSWER  
YOUR BIBLE QUESTIONS**

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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.

PUBLISHED BY THE  
WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA  
117 Adams Street Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201, U.S.A.  
N. H. KNORR, President GRANT SUITER, Secretary  
"They will all be taught by Jehovah."—John 6: 45; Isaiah 54: 13

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- Dy* - Catholic Douay version      *RS* - Revised Standard Version
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Printing this issue: 4,550,000		Five cents a copy	
"The Watchtower" is Published in the Following 70 Languages			
		Semimonthly	Monthly
Afrikaans	Finnish	Norwegian	Armenian
Arabic	French	Portuguese	Icelandic
Cebu-Vilayen	German	Sesotho	Kanarese
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		Hebrew	Pampango
		Hungarian	Turkish
		Ibanag	Pangasinan
		Ibo	Ukrainian
		Polish	Urdu
			Yoruba

Yearly subscription rates for semimonthly editions	
America, U.S., 117 Adams St., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201	\$1
Australia, 11 Beresford Rd., Strathfield, N.S.W.	8/-
Canada, 150 Bridgeland Ave., Toronto 19, Ontario	\$1
England, Watch Tower House, The Ridgeway, London N.W. 3	7/6
Jamaica, W.I., 41 Trafalgar Rd., Kingston 10	7/-
New Zealand, 631 New North Rd., Auckland S.W. 1	7/-
South Africa, Private Bag 2, P.O. Elandsfontein, Transvaal	70c
Trinidad, W.I., 21 Taylor St., Woodbrook, Port of Spain	\$1.75

Monthly editions cost half the above rates.

Remittances for subscriptions should be sent to the office in your country. Otherwise send your remittance to Brooklyn. Notice of expiration is sent at least two issues before subscription expires.

**CHANGES OF ADDRESS** should reach us thirty days before your moving date. Give us your old and new address (if possible, your old address label.) Write Watchtower, 117 Adams St., Brooklyn, New York 11201, U.S.A.

Second-class postage paid at Brooklyn, N.Y.

Printed in U.S.A.

# The WATCHTOWER

Announcing  
JEHOVAH'S  
KINGDOM

Vol. LXXXVI

October 1, 1965

Number 19

DO

Evil  
Spirits

EXERCISE  
POWER  
OVER MAN?

**M**ILLIONS of persons in the Orient greatly fear evil spirits. This fear deeply affects their lives in many ways. For instance, to protect themselves from the power of evil spirits large numbers of Orientals employ various objects in unusual ways.

Consider, for example, the long bamboo pole used during the Vietnamese New Year. This pole is set up in front of each house. Items are hung on top of the pole, including a small basket containing betel nuts. Certain instruments are added that jingle in the breeze. Above the basket, a small square of bamboo represents roughly the barrier that is intended to stop evil spirits, preventing them from entering the home.

In Malaya evil spirits are also feared, especially in the home at the time of pregnancy and childbirth. During pregnancy, for instance, a Malay woman will wear an iron nail in her hair or carry a sharp instrument such as a knife, in the belief that evil spirits will flee at the sight of metal objects.

In Thailand you will see in the front of most homes a small house. This is a house for evil spirits. Since many believe that evil spirits can harm humans, the small spirit houses are put up to protect the occupants of the real house. They expect that the evil spirits will be fooled by the small house and enter it rather than the real house. Further, to appease the spirits, people often put food in the small houses. Since ants eat the food, it may appear that the food has been taken away mysteriously.

Moreover, the fierce-looking statues at the temple entrances in Thailand are for the purpose of frightening away evil spirits; and the sharp points on the roof are said by some to cause them to flee after they sit down.

Not all Thai people, however, take evil spirits seriously; in fact, the more sophisticated ones may deny that they believe in them. No doubt many Thai people have wondered at such things as: How could evil spirits with immaterial bodies have any need for food or ever be harmed or frightened by metal or other objects? How can

invisible creatures with intelligence ever be frightened by lifeless statues? How could they be so easily fooled as to think that some doll-sized house is a real house and go inside it rather than the real one? Yet even those who may feel somewhat ashamed to admit they believe in evil spirits may keep a small house for demons in their front yard.

So the questions arise: Are there evil spirits? Do they exercise an evil, misleading influence over men? Is it necessary to protect oneself by means of objects or spirit houses or by appeasing demons with food and drink?

#### THE BIBLE'S TEACHING ABOUT SPIRITS

There is a sacred Book that answers these questions. This is the oldest book on earth, an Oriental book, documents of which go back nearly 6,000 years, tens of centuries before Buddhist, Taoist and other such writings were begun. This oldest of all sacred books is the Holy Bible. To find answers to our questions we must go to these Holy Scriptures.

Original religion as taught by the Holy Bible does indeed speak of good and evil spirits, but it definitely does not teach that humans need objects such as nails or spirit houses to protect themselves or that they need to offer food to appease demons. The Bible does not teach the kind of fear of evil spirits that is common throughout the Orient.

The Spirit that is the main subject of the Bible is good, for He is the God of the Bible, whose name is Jehovah. He is the Author of the Holy Bible and also man's Creator. As such, "God is a Spirit," invisible to human eyes.—John 4:24; Ps. 83:18.

How can one believe in Jehovah, man's Creator, without seeing him? We can believe in the Creator's existence because we can see his creation, the flowers, the birds,

the animals and earth's other marvels such as oceans and mountains, so that Jehovah's "invisible qualities are clearly seen from the world's creation onward, because they are perceived by the things made, even his eternal power and Godship." And as we ponder not only on earth's marvels but on the unimaginable immensity of a universe in which the earth is a mere speck, we can better appreciate that there must be a Creator. Most important, we have his own Book, the Holy Bible, that tells us about man's Creator and that convinces one of God's creatorship. As Creator and God, Jehovah is the Great and Good Spirit.—Rom. 1:20.

How, then, could evil spirits come into existence? Did Jehovah, Creator of the heavens and earth, make evil spirits? No, because the Bible assures us of his eternal righteousness by saying: "Perfect is his activity, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness, with whom there is no injustice; righteous and upright is he. They have acted ruinously on their own part." (Deut. 32:4, 5) Just as men have turned bad and acted ruinously on their own part, so can invisible spirit creatures, originally created perfect, go bad. And that is just what happened to some of the holy angels. They turned themselves into demons or devils.

#### THE FIRST DEMON, SATAN THE DEVIL

When did a holy angelic creature first turn himself into an evil spirit? This was after the creation of the first man, Adam, and his wife, Eve. Jehovah had placed them in "a garden in Eden, toward the east." It was a perfect Paradise, and it was God's purpose to have mankind fill the earth, making Paradise earth-wide. But the Bible shows that one of God's spirit sons, an angel "in Eden, the garden of God," determined to turn the worship of the first man and woman away from their

Creator, Jehovah, to himself. Through a serpent, this angelic spirit lied to Eve, and induced her and her husband to disobey Jehovah God, bringing the penalty of death for them and their future offspring. This spirit creature that brought sin and rebellion into the universe came to be known as the Serpent, the Devil or Satan. The Devil has been placed under sentence of death, but God has permitted him to continue for a time.—Gen. 2:8; compare Ezek. 28:13.

The Holy Bible also shows that other spirit creatures later turned disobedient to Jehovah God, thus becoming demons. When was that? At least in the 120 years before the global flood of Noah's day. The Bible record at Genesis 6:1-5 explains how spirit sons of God materialized as men to enjoy human passions by marrying the daughters of men. This was disobedience to God. It brought bad results, including freakish hybrids called Nephilim who were born as a result of such marriages. By taking this wrong course, those spirit sons of God turned themselves into demons and put themselves on the side of the Devil, who is the "ruler of the demons."—Matt. 9:34; Jude 6; 2 Pet. 2:4.

These self-demonized angels are under sentence of destruction, along with Satan the Devil. (Matt. 25:41) However, the sentence was not executed upon them at the time of the global Flood. For the sons of God dematerialized to escape the Flood and returned to the spirit realm. But they were not allowed to become again part of God's organization of holy angels; instead they have lived in a debased condition of spiritual darkness till now.

The Bible further shows that following the birth of God's heavenly kingdom by his Son, Jesus Christ, the Devil and his angels were hurled down to the vicinity of the earth. "So down the great dragon was hurled, the original serpent, the one called Devil and Satan, who is misleading

the entire inhabited earth; he was hurled down to the earth, and his angels were hurled down with him." (Rev. 12:9) Down here at the earth, these demonic angels are no more permitted to materialize in the flesh as they did before the global Flood. Yet they can exercise power over men, so much so that the Bible says that Satan, along with the demons, is "misleading the entire inhabited earth."

#### HOW EVIL SPIRITS EXERCISE POWER OVER MEN

That evil spirits do exercise misleading power over men, the Bible assures us by saying: "The whole world is lying in the power of the wicked one," Satan the Devil. (1 John 5:19) But how do these wicked spirits exercise power over men, to mislead them?

Again it is the Holy Bible that identifies the many ways that evil spirits deceive and mislead men. They do this by means of spiritistic practices condemned by Jehovah God because they are of demonic origin and not from God. Jehovah warns his people against these practices, as the Bible shows: "There should not be found in you . . . anyone who employs divination, a practitioner of magic or anyone who looks for omens or a sorcerer, or one who binds others with a spell or anyone who consults a spirit medium or a professional foreteller of events or anyone who inquires of the dead. For everybody doing these things is something detestable to Jehovah."—Deut. 18:10-12.

Among those practices condemned by the God of the Bible is that of consulting persons such as fortune-tellers and spirit mediums who foretell events. For instance, the man in charge of Chinese and Vietnamese temples is often a spirit medium. People request him to get in touch with the god of the temple. A séance is held in the temple, the medium invoking the god

by offering joss sticks. Then he goes into a trance, perhaps jiggling. People ask favors and questions about the future and receive answers through the voice of the spirit medium. When spirit mediums thus inquire of some god or of the dead, they are actually contacting evil spirits, demons. All such activity is condemned by the Bible as something detestable to God, because it is demonism.

Also condemned by the Bible are magical practices, which include the many magical feats performed by yogis and others, such as levitation, being buried alive for many hours, walking on fiery coals, eating glass, nails, and so forth. What is called black magic is also the work of demons. Thus the Bible condemns sorcerers, those who bind others with a spell, such as by using some of the victim's hair or blood as a "contact," in order to cast a spell on one, or by modeling in clay or wax the effigy of a person whom the sorcerer or witch doctor wishes to injure or destroy, then sticking pins into it. Such black magic is the work of evil spirits.

Then there is divination, common throughout the world. Divination is the obtaining of knowledge of the unknown or of the future by means of omens and supernatural, demon power. There are hundreds of methods of divination, such as the use of divining rods, examining the length of a split bamboo pole, the direction in which the blood of a killed animal flows, the bones of fowl, the entrails of animals, the flight of certain birds, by crystal gazing, the use of playing cards, examining the lines of one's hand, called palmistry, going into a self-induced trance and by the common means of using dreams as omens. All such divination and looking for omens is not taught by the Bible but is warned against and is exposed by the Bible as the deceptive teachings and work of evil spirits to mislead men.—1 Tim. 4:1.

#### DIVINATION BY ASTROLOGY

One of the most common means of trying to foretell the future is divination by astrology. Astrology is divination by stars and planets, a practice that has had tremendous influence on the people of the Orient. Those who practice divination by astrology believe certain days and months are propitious for marriage, business, politics and even burial. For example, the body of the last king of Laos was held for about a year until a favorable time for burial was reached. In 1952, in Burma, the government resigned for five minutes because of an astrological prediction. In 1959, the swearing in of Nepal's first elected government was postponed for two days because some believed the appointed day was astrologically inauspicious. In 1962, Indian astrologers predicted great disasters or the end of the world between the third and fifth of February. It was estimated that the astral crisis caused India to lose, in money alone, 35 crore rupees—about \$70,000,000! In Sikkim, on the advice of astrologers the marriage of the maharajah's son to New York post-debutante Hope Cooke was put off until 1963.

The Bible makes clear that all such methods of divination, whether by astrology or other means, are opposed by Jehovah God and shown to be futile and disastrous to those who depend on them. This is illustrated by what happened to those who originated astrology, the ancient Babylonians. Yes, it was in ancient Babylon that astrology began, as well as the practice of magic and sorcery. But did astrology save Babylon? Almost two hundred years before Babylon fell to the Medes and Persians, the Holy Bible gave the answer, showing that the astrologers would be useless, unable to save Babylon: "Stand still, now, with your spells and with the abundance of your sorceries, in which you have toiled from your youth; that perhaps you might

be able to benefit, that perhaps you might strike people with awe. You have grown weary with the multitude of your counselors. Let them stand up, now, and save you, the worshipers of the heavens, the lookers at the stars, those giving out knowledge at the new moons concerning the things that will come upon you. Look! They have become like stubble. A fire itself will certainly burn them up. They will not deliver their soul from the power of the flame."—Isa. 47:12-14.

How utterly useless Babylon's own astrologers were when Babylon was threatened by the Medes and Per-

sians! A few hours before Babylon's fall to Cyrus the Persian in 539 B.C.E., Jehovah God caused a mysterious handwriting to appear on the wall of the king's palace. The king called on all his wise men and astrologers to interpret it. But "they were not competent enough to read the writing itself or to make known to the king the interpretation." It was not the worshipers of the heavens but a worshiper of the Creator of the heavens who interpreted the writing to mean "God has numbered the days of your kingdom and has finished it." Babylon fell, its astrologers failing to save the king, the kingdom or even themselves. Here we see astrology convicted of ignorance and impotence in the very place where it originated and where it was practiced the most. Astrology not only fails those who rely on it, but it is one of the ways evil spirits mislead mankind.—Dan. 5:1-31.

#### OPPOSE EVIL SPIRITS THE BIBLE'S WAY

How, then, can one protect himself from the misleading influence of evil spirits? First of all, break free from all those practices condemned by the Bible as detestable

to God—divination whether by astrology or any other way, looking for omens such as dreams, and consulting foretellers of events such as spirit mediums. Have nothing to do with sorcerers or those who practice the magical arts and spells. Keep free from all these forms of demonism.

Though evil spirits do exercise misleading power over most of mankind, those who worship Jehovah God are not among those "lying in the power of the wicked one." The Bible counsels: "Oppose the Devil, and he will flee from you." (Jas. 4:7) Oppose the Devil by putting on the spiritual suit of armor

that God provides to fight against the demons: "Put on the complete suit of armor from God that you may be able to stand firm against the machinations of the Devil." This requires faith in Jehovah God, knowledge of him and of his purpose to destroy the Devil and the demons and to make possible everlasting life on a Paradise earth through his heavenly kingdom. God also provides "the sword of the spirit, that is, God's word," the Holy Bible, to help you to fight successfully against wicked spirit forces.—Eph. 6:11-18.

So break free from the misleading power of demons. Use the Bible to help you and to help others to break free of demonistic practices. Do not be among those in bondage to the fear of evil spirits, senselessly trying to protect themselves by using nails, spirit houses, astrology, charms, and so forth. But acquire the spiritual weapons God provides for opposing the Devil and the demons. Come into the glorious freedom of those who know the Bible's truth by means of God's Son, and this "truth will set you free."—John 8:32.

# **Putting Up a Hard Fight**

**F**EW popular expressions are more deceptive and dangerous than the one widely heard throughout Christendom: "Once saved, always saved." Believing such a saying can lead to disaster, the loss of the Bible-taught hope of everlasting life in a righteous new order under the kingdom of Almighty God.

<sup>2</sup> To warn us against such dangerous beliefs as "once saved, always saved," and to encourage us to put up a hard fight for the true faith, a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ wrote a short letter of urgent importance today. It is the sixty-fifth book of the Holy Bible, written about the sixty-fifth year of the first century C.E. It is called The Letter of Jude, and though there are only twenty-five verses in the letter, our heeding its inspired counsel may well make the difference between gaining or losing the salvation held forth to all true followers of the Son of God.

<sup>3</sup> Whom did Jehovah God use to give us this timely warning? The letter answers: "Jude, a slave of Jesus Christ, but a brother of James, to the called ones who are loved in relationship with God the Father and preserved for Jesus Christ: May mercy and peace and love be increased to you." (Jude 1, 2) The inspired writer Jude was, in fact, a half brother of Jesus Christ. (Matt. 13:55) However, Jude does not seek to glorify himself by reason of being related to the Son of God in a fleshly way;

1, 2. (a) Wherein lies the danger in the belief "Once saved, always saved"? (b) Where do we find warning against this belief?

3. Who was Jude, and why does he call himself "a slave of Jesus Christ"?

for

## **THE FAITH**

*"I found it necessary to write you to exhort you to put up a hard fight for the faith that was once for all time delivered to the holy ones."*

—Jude 3.

he realized that Jesus' true followers would henceforth not know him according to the flesh. (2 Cor. 5:16, 17) So he humbly calls himself "a slave of Jesus Christ." Thus he put the proper emphasis on his spiritual relationship to Jesus Christ first. Since Jude was not an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, he simply calls himself "a slave"; in fact, he did not believe on Jesus Christ as the Son of God until after Jesus' resurrection. (John 7:5; Acts 1:14) Then he put faith in Jesus and, after putting faith in him, Jude realized that, like a slave, he had been bought with a price—the precious blood of the Son of God. From then on Jude, as well as any other person bought with the ransoming blood of Jesus Christ, could not become a slave to men.

—1 Cor. 7:22, 23.

<sup>4</sup> As a slave of Christ, Jude wanted to write on what was most advantageous for his fellow slaves to help them to be obedient to their Master. Hence he wrote a general letter, one directed not to any specific Christian congregation. Yet it is emphatically clear as to whom it is directed: "To the called ones," that is, to

4. (a) To whom is The Letter of Jude specifically directed, but why is it timely for all life seekers? (b) What does God require of those who hope in his salvation?

those called to God's heavenly kingdom to rule with Jesus Christ as kings and priests. (1 Thess. 2:12) These spirit-anointed Christians are "loved in relationship with God the Father and preserved for Jesus Christ"; hence it is the Father's good pleasure to give them the kingdom of the heavens if they keep themselves in a saved condition. Though this inspired letter is directed to the "congregation of God" or those whose number is limited according to the Scriptures to 144,000 from among mankind, yet it is timely in its warning for all persons who hope for salvation under God's kingdom, those who hope to live eternally on a paradise earth. They, too, must remain in a saved condition, having the same degree of devotion, the same degree of faithfulness and producing the same Kingdom fruitage as the anointed Christians. Yes, all those who would enjoy God's salvation must put up a hard fight for the true faith.

<sup>5</sup> The prayer of Jude is that God's "mercy and peace and love" would be multiplied toward Christ's true followers, of whom a remnant are yet on earth today. Certainly this has been the case with this spiritual remnant of Christ's followers who have been granted God's mercy, by his liberating them from Babylon the Great, the world empire of false religion, in 1919, then filling these liberated Christians with peace so all can work unitedly in advancing the interests of God's kingdom. Out of God's love they have been cleansed from Babylonish paganism and set forth as his clean witnesses. It is because Jehovah God has increased his mercy, peace and love upon his liberated Christian witnesses that a "great crowd" of "other sheep" have flocked to their side. (Rev. 7:9-17; John 10:16) These persons have seen the divine blessings showered upon the remnant of

these "called ones," the remnant of spiritual Israel, so they have become part of the "one flock" of Kingdom witnesses. Since the New World society of Jehovah's witnesses is one peaceful flock, guided by the Fine Shepherd, they rejoice in God's love and mercy, as Jude's prayer has been abundantly answered upon them. Jude's prayer is that God's mercy, peace and love would be increased toward us, not be decreased and finally cease. Could such a terrible thing happen? It could happen to individuals; and to put us on guard against that possibility, Jude sounds a warning to show that it could happen if we fail to keep ourselves in God's love:

#### SPECIAL REASON FOR PUTTING UP A HARD FIGHT

<sup>6</sup> "Beloved ones, though I was making every effort to write you about the salvation we hold in common, I found it necessary to write you to exhort you to put up a hard fight for the faith that was once for all time delivered to the holy ones. My reason is that certain men have slipped in who have long ago been appointed by the Scriptures to this judgment, ungodly men, turning the undeserved kindness of our God into an excuse for loose conduct and proving false to our only Owner and Lord, Jesus Christ."—Jude 3, 4.

<sup>7</sup> Jude obviously had not intended to write about putting up a hard fight for the true faith. He had hoped to write in a general way about "the salvation we hold in common"; however, by means of God's holy spirit, he discerned that there was something of pressing importance, of greater urgency than a doctrinal discussion on the salvation held in common by the 144,000 called to the heavenly kingdom. In Jude's day, nineteen centuries ago, the

6. What exhortation is given individual Christians, and why?

7. From writing on what subject did Jude change, and why?

5. What is Jude's prayer, and how has it been answered upon Jehovah's witnesses today?

Fine Shepherd, Jesus Christ, was not gathering the "great crowd" of Revelation 7: 9-17, and so Jude was not writing about the salvation shared equally today by all those of the "great crowd." Even though they are not included directly in Jude's intended discussion, they do hold in common the precious hope of salvation under the Kingdom; they hope for life everlasting in the new order as much as the remnant of the "little flock" look forward to heavenly glory. This hope, to live on a paradise earth, will be brought about by the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, who reigns with his "called ones." Hence Jesus Christ died, not only for the "called ones," but for the whole world of mankind, including this "great crowd" of sheeplike persons of today. (1 John 2:1, 2) Those "sheep" with an earthly hope must also "put up a hard fight for the faith" until the prize is won, for Satan the Devil would like to cheat them of such a precious prize.

<sup>8</sup> By writing on the subject of putting up a hard fight for the faith Jude spotlighted the falsehood of the belief "once saved, always saved." Our being now in a saved condition is no reason for any Christian to think that he cannot be moved from or drawn out of God's love and thereby lose out on the salvation God extends to obedient mankind. Jesus Christ had made it clear, and Jude knew it, too, that "he that has endured to the end is the one that will be saved." (Matt. 24:13) Jesus was speaking of personal salvation here, not a class salvation. No uncertainty exists about the salvation of the class called to the heavenly kingdom, but the question is: Individually, whether we are of the "little flock" or of the "great crowd," will we endure to the end? The "end" Jesus mentioned is not necessarily a specific year, or even the battle of Armageddon, but the idea is to

8. So what belief does Jude clearly expose, and what had Jesus Christ earlier said about individual salvation?

endure to the finish of one's earthly course or of the long test. Not to endure means to prove disloyal. So either until one dies in faithfulness or to the end of this wicked system of things, one must continue to put up a hard fight for the faith. How?

<sup>9</sup> Putting up a hard fight for the faith means not only to endure to the end in holding fast with our minds the things God teaches us; it also means to resist temptations toward corruption by any who would turn the undeserved kindness of our God into an excuse for loose conduct. We must realize that the Devil's tactic throughout the history of God's people has been to try to introduce among them persons who would serve his cunning design and who would try to corrupt others. Hence a fight is forced upon all who have declared themselves for the true faith. This fight tests our integrity and our love for God.

<sup>10</sup> Explaining why we must put up a hard fight for the faith, Jude said that certain ones have slipped into God's organization, pretending to be Christians. They are actually "ungodly men," who turn God's mercy into an excuse for loose conduct. About ten years before Jude wrote this warning, the apostle Paul had foretold that persons with wicked motives would worm their way in among God's people. (Acts 20:29, 30) Jesus, too, had foretold this enemy movement to try to corrupt Jehovah's name people. (Matt. 13:24-43) The Devil draws his agents from the world of mankind that have "come to be past all moral sense."—Eph. 4:17-19.

<sup>11</sup> Since the Devil would like to introduce morally bankrupt persons with evil designs in among the New World society of Jehovah's witnesses, all need to watch,

9. What does it mean to put up a hard fight for the faith?

10. What does Jude say ungodly men would do, and how had this been foretold?

11. In view of Jude's warning, what must be our attitude, and why?

especially the overseers of congregations. "Because the days are wicked" and because many love wickedness, never can we relax our guard. The Christian congregation must be alert to strain out and debar enemy agents from gaining any foothold. Though we know wicked men cannot corrupt the organization as a whole, they may do injury to a congregation, causing God's spirit to be retarded in that congregation, until the wicked ones are rooted out. Not only may the congregation fail to prosper but individuals in it may be drawn aside and corrupted into immoral relations with those of the opposite sex. This must be guarded against so that God's organization may remain clean and pure, undefiled.

#### "EYES FULL OF ADULTERY"

<sup>12</sup> Hence Jude warns those who would try to corrupt God's people that they "have long ago been appointed by the Scriptures to this judgment" of everlasting destruction. What is wrong with these persons? Their motive. They think that, since God is merciful, they can use his mercy as an excuse for immoral conduct to gratify sexual desires. (1 Cor. 6:9, 10) They try to persuade unstable believers to indulge in loose relations, causing others to believe that it will not hurt to indulge one's passions just once in a while, since God readily forgives us if we confess this sin. So these persons have the motive of sexual gratification, and, as in the case of Cain, sin is crouching at their doorstep; they do not have pure eyes. Peter describes them: "They have eyes full of adultery and unable to desist from sin, and they entice unsteady souls. They have a heart trained in covetousness." (2 Pet. 2:14) The Devil uses these persons with "eyes full of adultery" to try to corrupt the pure-eyed, pure-

hearted people of God and to try to tempt them into pleasurable sin.

<sup>13</sup> Unlike Moses, these persons of evil design think they can go in for "the temporary enjoyment of sin," and still gain salvation. (Heb. 11:25) They think they can indulge their passions and then go through a form of repentance and stay among God's people till the next time they lust for indulgence in sin, until they can again persuade others by impure advances into immorality. Thus they are guilty of turning the undeserved kindness of our God into an excuse for loose conduct. It is against such immoral persons that Christians must put up a hard fight, resisting them, not only for harm done to individuals, but for the harm that comes to any congregation that would allow them a free hand in trying to corrupt and degrade those of the opposite sex.

<sup>14</sup> The fact that Christendom has gone the way of loose morals and that its schools and church systems teem with people practicing immoral conduct is no excuse for a true Christian to indulge his passions. Jude makes it clear that, if any yield to sin, they would be "proving false to our only Owner and Lord, Jesus Christ." Since we must be true to the faith once delivered to the holy ones, we should steadfastly refuse to yield to ungodly persons, resisting any form of corruption in these wicked days.

#### SOMETHING OF WHICH TO BE REMINDED

<sup>15</sup> To stress the point that our salvation is not yet sealed up and delivered to us beyond loss or failure after believing, Jude shows that, despite one's being in a saved condition, an individual can lose out. How?

13. In what way are these ungodly men unlike Moses, and so what is the Christian's obligation?

14. Why is Christendom's moral condition no excuse for yielding to immoral persons?

15. How does Jude illustrate that one can lose out despite being in a saved condition, and what deliverance had the Israelites shared in common?

12. What warning does Jude give regarding ungodly men who would try to sneak into God's organization, and what is the Devil's motive in trying to introduce such men?

By not putting up a hard fight, by giving in to the temptations of ungodly persons. The doom of these persons, he warns, has been foretold. How? By the historical record of the Bible! Many are the examples in God's Holy Word showing how Jehovah dealt with ungodly persons in the past; these examples show what God will do in like cases today. Hence, before they sneak in and try to entice others into immorality, they are warned what their doom will be! Jude writes: "I desire to remind you, despite your knowing all things once for all time, that Jehovah, although he saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterwards destroyed those not showing faith." (Jude 5) Yes, what a marvelous deliverance the Israelites had in 1513 B.C.E.! With a strong hand Jehovah delivered them, saving their firstborn from death when the tenth plague came upon Egypt. Not only were the Israelites delivered at the time of this blow upon the firstborn, but later also, at the Red Sea. In this deliverance a "mixed company" of non-Israelites also shared. —Ex. 12:38.

<sup>16</sup> What is prefigured here? Since Egypt is a symbol of this system of things (Rev. 11:8; 2 Cor. 4:4), it pictures that today those whom Jehovah saves from this system of things are not to run to Egypt and sinful bondage. Their initial deliverance from this wicked system of things does not mean that they are unalterably saved to everlasting life in God's new order, beyond all possibility of failure. Not if the Israelites with the "mixed company" are a true illustration! Jehovah, who was their Savior, destroyed a million or more Israelites in the wilderness. (Ex. 12:37; Num. 14:26-38) Why? They yielded to the deceptive power of sin. Sin is deceptive; it creeps

up and pounces on its victims without mercy, as it did with the Israelites. Warning us that an initial deliverance from anti-typical Egypt and its Babylonish paganism is no final proof of salvation, Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, declared: "On most of them [Israelites in the wilderness] God did not express his approval, for they were laid low in the wilderness. Now these things became our examples, for us not to be persons desiring injurious things, even as they desired them. Neither become idolaters, as some of them did; just as it is written: 'The people sat down to eat and drink [sacrifices offered to Baal of Peor], and they got up to have a good time [with the Canaanite women who invited them to such sacrifices].' Neither let us practice fornication, as some of them committed fornication, only to fall, twenty-three thousand of them in one day. Neither let us put Jehovah to the test, as some of them put him to the test, only to perish by the serpents. Neither be murmurers, just as some of them murmured, only to perish by the destroyer. Now these things went on befalling them as examples, and they were written for a warning to us upon whom the ends of the systems of things have arrived." —1 Cor. 10:5-11.

<sup>17</sup> Paul here was writing to Christians, and he draws his illustration from typical natural Israel. With the Israelites was a "mixed company" of people friendly to Israel; so in the antitype today the warning refers to both the remnant of anointed Christians and the "great crowd" of "other sheep." Hence all must be on guard against those who would entice anyone bought with the blood of Jesus Christ into immoral conduct, with resultant bondage to sin. Anyone can be affected no matter how long he has been in the way of salvation. Never become careless, proud, self-reliant, but always examine yourself in the light

16, 17. (a) What lesson do Christians learn from the example of the Israelites and the "mixed company"? (b) How did the apostle Paul sound the same warning, and what should be our response?

of his Word so as not to be overreached by the deceptive power of sin.

**ANGELS NOT EXEMPT FROM  
FALLING TO DESTRUCTION**

<sup>18</sup> Jude then goes on to another illustration showing the need to put up a hard fight for the Christian faith: ("And the angels that did not keep their original position but forsook their own proper dwelling place he has reserved with eternal bonds under dense darkness for the judgment of the great day. So too Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities about them, after they in the same manner as the foregoing ones had committed fornication excessively and gone out after flesh for unnatural use, are placed before us as a warning example by undergoing the judicial punishment of everlasting fire.")—Jude 6, 7.

<sup>19</sup> The disciple Jude now compares these ungodly persons who would try to corrupt others in God's organization to the fallen angels in Noah's day. These materialized as perfect-looking humans, no doubt; thus their appearance must have been strikingly attractive. But had they come to earth to bring men back to God? No, their motive was wrong! They had eyes full of passionate desires. They had their eyes on the

beautiful-looking daughters of men. Impressive in appearance, these materialized angels made enticing advances to good-looking girls. Regardless of whether they considered that they had a right to these women or not, they apparently took whomsoever they wished and as many women as they wanted as wives, perhaps more wives than Lamech, who had earlier taken two to himself. (Gen. 4:19) Their beautiful appearance helped them sneak in and infiltrate the human race to corrupt it. So today Jude shows that some whose outward appearance may even be handsome would slip in. They want to get familiar especially with those of the opposite sex, so they can corrupt and degrade them by impure sex relations. At the time of the Flood those angels dematerialized, but they could not return to God's holy organization. God caused them to be "reserved with eternal bonds under dense darkness for the judgment of the great day." They now are in a state of spiritual darkness, having no light from God. By their wrong motive they turned themselves into demons. (Gen. 6:1-5) What a lesson there is here for us!

<sup>20</sup> We learn here that even angels that behold God's face can fall into sin and come under judgment to destruction. God never intended angels to be amphibious, that is, to live partly in heaven as spirits and partly on earth as humans, to cohabit with women. But those angels left



Sodom and Gomorrah, a Warning Example

18. In what other way does Jude illustrate the need to put up a hard fight for the Christian faith?

19, 20. (a) What was the sin of the angels to which Jude referred, and in what punishment did this result?

(b) What lesson is there for us in the example of the angels who sinned?

their assigned dwelling place. Well, now, if angels are not exempt from falling to destruction, imperfect humans should not think their salvation is yet secured with no possibility of losing it. Only by putting up a hard fight for the faith can we remain in that saved condition. We do not want to be like those angels that fell from such a high estate. So resist those humans who would go beyond their God-given boundary and seek to defile flesh.

<sup>21</sup> In addition to the sinner angels, Jude mentions as a warning a destruction God brought about more than 450 years after the Flood, when God punished the towns of Sodom and Gomorrah with fiery destruction. The town's inhabitants "committed fornication excessively" and went after flesh for unnatural use. They not only committed fornication with women, but they lusted for the flesh of men, possibly also the flesh of brute beasts. (Lev. 18:22-25) The Bible tells us how Jehovah sent two angels to Sodom to inspect its moral condition and to rescue Lot from the destruction overhanging the city. Lot hospitably took the angels into his home, but the ungodly inhabitants of Sodom, a mob made up of youths as well as older men, demanded the two angels for improper sex relations. Even after the angels smote the mob with blindness, the passion-obsessed Sodomites tried to get their hands on the angels. The next morning Jehovah God drenched Sodom and Gomorrah with fire and sulphur. Lot and his daughters escaped the destruction that came upon the Sodomites. That destruction is placed "before us as a warning example." For whom?

21. (a) Especially for what sin were Sodom and Gomorrah destroyed? (b) How does the destruction of those cities stand as a warning and at the same time an encouragement to godly persons?

Peter answers: "By reducing the cities Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes he [God] condemned them, setting a pattern for ungodly persons of things to come; and he delivered righteous Lot, who was greatly distressed by the indulgence of the law-defying people in loose conduct— . . . Jehovah knows how to deliver people of godly devotion out of trial, but to reserve unrighteous people for the day of judgment to be cut off, especially, however, those who go on after flesh with the desire to defile it."—2 Pet. 2:6-10.

<sup>22</sup> So let all who would defile flesh in God's organization beware! They are under doom of everlasting destruction. Let all true worshipers take to heart the warning, not considering even momentarily the enticement from such doomed persons. Resist them. "Put up a hard fight for the faith." We can be certain that God knows how to deliver persons of godly devotion out of trial. God does not necessarily take us out of trialsome circumstances, for he lets them furnish a test upon us. The way God delivers the righteous out of trial is by cutting off the ungodly persons in his own due time. He takes those who provoke trial off the scene of action.

<sup>23</sup> We do not know how much longer the wicked will keep bringing trials upon us, but we must never grow weary in preaching "this good news of the kingdom," all the while resisting ungodly persons. Then we will attain to blessed deliverance when God cuts off the ungodly, and we will be left in a cleansed new order. Until then we must never relax our guard, always putting up a hard fight for the faith.

22. (a) So what warning should we take to heart? (b) How does God deliver the righteous out of trial? 23. In what must we never tire, with the hope of what reward?



# EXECUTION OF DIVINE JUDGMENT

## Upon the Ungodly

MANY men do not like to be reminded that there is a Supreme Court of the universe, a Court of judgment higher than the highest human court. They do not like to face the fact that, regardless of who they are, they must respect the Supreme Judge over all, Jehovah, the Almighty God, "the Judge of all the earth." (Gen. 18:25) Many persons may not like to reflect that, if they do ungodly things, this Judge of the very universe is watching, just as the Bible declares: "If you see any oppression of the one of little means and the violent taking away of judgment and of righteousness in a jurisdictional district, do not be amazed over the affair, for one that is higher than the high one is watching, and there are those who are high above them."—Ecc. 5:8.

<sup>2</sup> Yes, men in general are not eager to be reminded that a Judge higher than human high ones is over us all, no matter how high a judicial or political position one may have in this system of things. In this regard it is interesting to note the statement of an American congressman as reported in the New York *Times* of November 13, 1963. In America there is a separation of Church and State, and the chief justice of the United States Supreme Court rejected a proposal to inscribe "In God We Trust" above the bench of that

1. 2. Upon what thought do many persons not like to reflect, and in this regard what did a congressman say of a human court?

*"Look! Jehovah came with his holy myriads, to execute judgment against all, and to convict all the ungodly concerning all their ungodly deeds that they did in an ungodly way, and concerning all the shocking things that ungodly sinners spoke against him." —Jude 14, 15.*

secular court, before which Jehovah's witnesses have won tens of cases. In a reaction to the court's decision, Congressman R. T. Ashmore, sponsor of the bill to provide the religious inscription, commented on the rejection, saying: "The tone of the Chief Justice's letter is most indicative that the Supreme Court would be made painfully aware of the fact that there is an Authority higher than that of the Supreme Court of these United States." But men do not need an inscription above their heads to be reminded that God is the Supreme Judge.

<sup>3</sup> If any men are not eager to be reminded of the respect they owe "the Judge of all the earth," then it is understandable that the ungodly especially do not like to hear of the respect men must render to the Supreme Judge. For selfish reasons such persons ignore, scorn and defy the Judge's righteous judicial decisions. But woe to these! For execution of divine judgment upon all the ungodly is at hand.

<sup>4</sup> This fact is stressed in the inspired letter that Jude, a disciple of Jesus Christ, wrote to warn Christians to put up a hard fight for the true faith, especially by resisting corruption from ungodly men. Jude

3. What is the attitude of ungodly men, and with what consequences?

4. What warning counsel is stressed in The Letter of Jude?

warned that some of the ungodly would even slip into God's organization, in an endeavor to defile flesh. But in the first seven verses of his letter, Jude set down an inspired warning that the doom of such ungodly persons has long ago been foretold by Jehovah God's adverse sentence upon the unfaithful, rebellious Israelites, upon the angels that forsook their original place in heaven and upon the unspeakably corrupt inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah who perished in flaming destruction. The penalty such ones paid for contempt of the highest court in the universe serves as a warning to all who are not now showing respect to the Supreme Judge.

#### LORDSHIP DISREGARDED, GLORIOUS ONES ABUSED

<sup>6</sup> In the face of this divine warning, Jude states, some would ignore it by living in a dream world of sensuality, thinking they could defile flesh in God's organization with impunity. Jude writes: "These men too, indulging in dreams, are defiling the flesh and disregarding lordship and speaking abusively of glorious ones." (Jude 8) Such ungodly dreamers imagine they can ignore Bible teachings as to how God deals with the wicked. They have no regard for the command of the Supreme Judge stated at 1 Corinthians 6:18 to "flee from fornication." Rather, they seek ways to further opportunities for fornication and think they can get away with it. But such thinking is all a dream! It is fatally unrealistic. Their dreams of sensual enjoyment will be shattered by a sharp awakening, as they come face to face with an adverse sentence from the Supreme Judge. The Judge they have failed to respect will show them they are in no dream world in which they can let passions run riot; they will come out of their stupor to find the

5. (a) What did Jude say in verse eight? (b) In what sense are the persons he speaks of "indulging in dreams," and with what result?

Judge executing the foretold judgment upon them.

<sup>6</sup> That these immoral dreamers deserve such judgment is further indicated by the fact that they disregard lordship and speak abusively of glorious ones. They have no regard for the Universal Sovereign, Jehovah God, and for his beloved Son, the "King of kings and Lord of lords." (Rev. 19:16) Because of their disregarding the highest lordship in the universe, it is to be expected that they would also speak abusively of glorious ones.

<sup>7</sup> Who are these "glorious ones"? They must be those who receive glory from Jehovah God and his Lord of lords, Jesus Christ. According to Isaiah 60:1, 2, Jehovah's "own glory" would be conferred upon the remnant of spiritual Israel, the anointed Christians. Because "the very glory of Jehovah" has shone upon them, they have risen to shine with the light of the Kingdom good news in all the inhabited earth. (Matt. 24:14) Because of the effulgent glory God has given them through his Son, they are to be respected. Jesus Christ indicated this when he said concerning his anointed followers: "I have given them the glory that you have given me." (John 17:22) Certainly those of the anointed remnant who serve as overseers have an additional glory or honor conferred upon them, and those ones deserve "double honor." (1 Tim. 5:17) Now that many of the "great crowd" of "other sheep" are serving as overseers, representing the remnant or "faithful and discreet slave" class, such presiding ones receive glory from God by virtue of the office they occupy as representatives of the anointed remnant; they are to be treated with due regard. (Matt. 24:45-47) Properly God's people cooperate

6. What accounts for their ungodly conduct and further shows such persons deserve the foretold judgment?

7. (a) Who are the "glorious ones"? (b) How do the persons Jude warned of show they do not respect glories from Jehovah?

with and respect the anointed remnant and all the overseers appointed by "the faithful and discreet slave" over the congregations of Jehovah's witnesses. But the flesh-defiling dreamers, despising Jehovah's lordship, do not respect glories from Jehovah. They talk abusively of those clothed with such glories, especially those whom the great Judge Jehovah has honored with special positions of responsibility. Like Diotrephes, of whom the apostle John wrote, they chatter about "glorious ones" with wicked words.—3 John 9, 10.

<sup>8</sup> Jude next contrasts the attitude of these disrespectful dreamers with the mental attitude of Jesus Christ, in his pre-human existence as Michael. "But when Michael the archangel had a difference with the Devil and was disputing about Moses' body, he did not dare to bring a judgment against him in abusive terms, but said: 'May Jehovah rebuke you.' Yet these men are speaking abusively of all the things they really do not know; but all the things that they do understand naturally like the unreasoning animals, in these things they go on corrupting themselves."—Jude 9, 10.

<sup>9</sup> In speaking abusively of God's servants, such dreamers take liberties that even God's own Son did not take when he disputed with the Devil over the body of Moses. Moses died at Pisgah of Mount Nebo and the Devil wanted Moses' body. The Devil knew the human inclination to worship relics and no doubt wanted to start a new religious cult around the body of Moses, to corrupt God's people. When resisting the Devil, Michael did not resort to abusive speech, even though the Devil certainly had no glory from God. He did not run ahead of God's appointed time.

8, 9. (a) Why does Jude contrast the men of whom he warns with the mental attitude of Michael? (b) What was the Devil's purpose in disputing over the body of Moses, and how did Michael show power as well as mildness?

Rather, he showed respect for the Great Judge and accorded Him the right to rebuke Satan. Humbly he said: "May Jehovah rebuke you." Though Michael's statement was mild, he showed power by prevailing over the Devil, keeping control over Moses' body, burying it, as the Bible indicates.—Deut. 34:5, 6.

<sup>10</sup> Yet ungodly men who would defile flesh in God's organization, and who are so inferior to Michael, dare to speak abusively of "glorious ones." Michael and the holy angels do not speak abusively, and so the apostle Peter makes a contrast: "Darling, self-willed, they do not tremble at glorious ones but speak abusively, whereas angels, although they are greater in strength and power, do not bring against them an accusation in abusive terms, not doing so out of respect for Jehovah." (2 Pet. 2:10, 11) By acting so disrespectfully such persons show they have lost their power of reasoning and that they have succumbed to animalistic passions. They become like unreasoning animals, made to be caught and destroyed without any resurrection from the dead. That kind of destruction will catch up with all such ungodly men.—2 Pet. 2:12, 13.

#### LIKE CAIN, BALAAM AND KORAH

<sup>11</sup> Jude then likens such flesh-defiling dreamers to prominent men of the human family who failed to respect the Supreme Judge: "Too bad for them, because they have gone in the path of Cain, and have rushed into the erroneous course of Balaam for reward, and have perished in the rebellious talk of Korah!"—Jude 11.

<sup>12</sup> Cain, an elder brother of the human family, saw God's approval put on the

10. How are the warned-against men so unlike Michael and the holy angels, and so their course of action reveals what?

11. How does Jude next liken the ungodly dreamers to men prominent in ancient times?

12. (a) What path did Cain take, and with what result? (b) Why are the foretold ungodly men like Cain, and how must we treat all such?

right worship of Abel. Instead of imitating Abel in right worship and with pure motive, Cain hated his brother and murdered him. Cain disregarded a divine warning that he was heading for trouble. (Gen. 4:6, 7) This defiant action showed Cain's disrespect for the Supreme Judge. Just as Cain's motive was all wrong, so with those who seek to turn God's undeserved kindness into an excuse for loose conduct. By leading others in a way that can only result in eternal destruction, they are like Cain in being guilty of murder. (1 John 3:12) Jehovah cursed Cain, and at the time of the Flood his offspring were wiped out. Woe to those who go in Cain's path! Do not yield to them. Resist them!

<sup>13</sup> Another prominent bad man of ancient times was Balaam, whom the Devil used to corrupt the Israelites when they were in the wilderness. Balaam's home was in Pethor, a town that has been identified by inscriptions as lying in the Upper Euphrates region.\* Balaam was a prophet in that land and one who recognized Jehovah, the God of Israel. But what a different prophet he was from Moses! Moses loved God's people; Balaam had no respect for them and for the glory God had conferred upon them. When Balak, king of Moab, sent to Mesopotamia to hire Balaam to come down and curse Jehovah's people by means of Babylonian magic, Balaam did not give a decisive No. He finally yielded to renewed offers of reward. So he went to curse Israel. In doing this he rushed into a course that plunged him into error. Three times he tried to curse Israel, but Jehovah always turned the curse into a blessing, making it clear that "there is no unlucky spell against Jacob, nor any divination against Israel." Balaam's heart was not in that blessing. Having failed to

curse Israel, he went about corrupting God's people by suggesting to Balak that, if Israel could be seduced into false religion and into indulgence in animal passions, fornicating with Moabite women, then God would curse even his own people. The evil counsel was followed. Because of the Israelites' loose conduct, 24,000 of them were killed by a plague at Shittim on the plains of Moab. (Num. 25:1-9; Rev. 2:14) Balaam, who was willing to curse or corrupt Israel for personal gain, finally met a violent death at the hands of those he intended to curse. (Num. 31:8) Woe to those like Balaam! Woe to those who would corrupt any of God's people by fornication and indulgence in animalistic passions!—Num. 22:1-24:25; Deut. 23:3-5.

<sup>14</sup> Korah is another typical bad man whose catastrophic end stands as a warning example. He was a Levite and had a fine privilege of service; yet he was not satisfied. He wanted more glory. Korah challenged Jehovah's appointments, rebelling against Moses and high priest Aaron and also drawing into the rebellion prominent members of the tribe of Reuben. Though Korah and these Reubenites had been saved out of Egypt, they never entered the Promised Land. They perished violently. The earth opened up and some were buried alive, while others were destroyed by fire. This was an act of Jehovah God's judgment. (Num. 16:1-35; 26:10) Woe to those who rebel at God's theocratic arrangements!

<sup>15</sup> So Jude gives Christians a warning that among them there will be men like Cain, Balaam and Korah. The men they foreshadowed will not escape the foretold destruction. "Too bad for them." Here, then, is a warning to us today that like-minded men will try to infiltrate God's or-

\* Biblical Archaeology, by G. Ernest Wright, p. 73.

13. (a) Whom did the Devil use to corrupt the Israelites in Moses' day, and how? (b) What happened to Balaam, so what about those who would act like him?

14. Who was Korah, and why does he stand as a warning example?

15. What warning does Jude thus give Christians, obliging us to do what?

ganization. They must be resisted by our putting up a hard fight for the faith.

#### DECEPTIVE-APPEARING FLESH DEFILERS

<sup>16</sup> To alert Christians further, Jude says concerning these animalistic men: "These are the rocks hidden below water in your love feasts while they feast with you, shepherds that feed themselves without fear; waterless clouds carried this way and that by winds; trees in autumn time, but fruitless, having died twice, having been uprooted; wild waves of the sea that foam up their own causes for shame; stars with no set course, for which the blackness of darkness stands reserved forever."—Jude 12, 13.

<sup>17</sup> These agents of the Devil who would sneak into God's pure organization make a showy pretense of love for the brothers; hence they are like jagged rocks hidden beneath the water that cause shipwreck. Unless we "put up a hard fight for the faith" to keep a good conscience, such ones could lead unstable individuals to "shipwreck concerning their faith." (1 Tim. 1: 19) Those would-be flesh defilers attended the love feasts in Jude's day with unclean motives. Those feasts, not described in apostolic accounts, have been discontinued in their ancient form. Today God's people come together for spiritual feasts, such as at circuit, district, national or international assemblies. Yet even at assemblies the Devil tries to infiltrate some of his flesh-defiling agents, to catch unstable souls off guard, and lead them, through immorality, to shipwreck. Hence the need to be watchful.

<sup>18</sup> What apt expressions Jude uses to describe these deceptive-appearing ungodly men! They are like shepherds who are in-

terested only in gratifying their own sensual appetites and not in caring for the flock. They are like clouds deceptive in appearance. The farmer believes they will drop down much-needed rain. But these clouds prove to be waterless and are driven away by winds before they can drop down the needed moisture. They are valueless for increasing productivity of the crops. Such men are like fruitless trees, for they are devoid of the fruitage of God's holy spirit. They do not bear fruit to the glory of God and must be dealt with like unproductive trees in Palestine, which were uprooted, destroyed forever, as hopeless cases. Being without God's holy spirit, such men are as wild as sea waves that stir up mire and dirt. Such men do not set a steady course by using the Bible as a compass, and so they are like wandering stars that have no set course. No bright-shining place is reserved for them in God's kingdom, for Jude says their end is "the blackness of darkness" forever.

<sup>19</sup> It is concerning such unfaithful men, all who fail to pay respect to the Supreme Judge, that Enoch long ago prophesied: "Yes, the seventh man in line from Adam, Enoch, prophesied also regarding them, when he said: 'Look! Jehovah came with his holy myriads, to execute judgment against all, and to convict all the ungodly concerning all their ungodly deeds that they did in an ungodly way, and concerning all the shocking things that ungodly sinners spoke against him.'"—Jude 14, 15.

<sup>20</sup> That prophecy concerning divine judgment against those who speak disrespectfully of the Supreme Judge was spoken first by Enoch, seventh in line of human progression, counting from Adam. Enoch was privileged to prophesy concerning divine execution of judgment upon all the

16. How does Jude describe the deceptiveness of the would-be flesh defilers?

17. What pretense and motive makes these agents of the Devil like jagged rocks, and so what could result unless guarded against?

18. Why are these men described with reference to (a) shepherds? (b) clouds? (c) trees? (d) waves? (e) stars?

19, 20. (a) How did Enoch foretell the end of ungodly men? (b) What must we inescapably conclude from Enoch's prophecy, and how does God convict the ungodly of ungodly practices?

ungodly. Just how Enoch's prophecy was carried for centuries outside the Hebrew Scriptures the Bible does not say. However, it did not appear in the Bible until Jehovah God inspired Jude to put it in. Enoch's prophecy shows there is just one possible judgment for such ungodly persons at the destruction of Babylon the Great and the war of Armageddon: everlasting destruction, being cut off by God's holy myriads, the Chief Holy One in charge of the executional work being the Lord Jesus Christ. (Rev. 18:1-24; 19:11-16) The day of execution of judgment draws near, and Jehovah permits ungodly persons to manifest themselves. Thus he convicts them of ungodly practices against his name and kingdom.

#### MURMURERS AND COMPLAINTERS

<sup>21</sup> These ungodly men speak "shocking things." And little wonder, as Jude goes on to write: "These men are murmurers, complainers about their lot in life, proceeding according to their own desires, and their mouths speak swelling things, while they are admiring personalities for the sake of their own benefit." (Jude 16) Having no real godly devotion, they murmur against God's whole organization. They are not content with their lot in life; and if they cannot have their own way, they complain, using abusive and disrespectful speech. Like Korah, they pursue prominence. They like to express their own views in arrogant speech, arrogating to themselves a great deal of importance. They single out persons and show admiration for them, trying to cultivate people in the hope of gain from them. Their objective is self-aggrandizement. They really fail to respect the Judge and so come under sentence of destruction.

21. How do these men Jude warns of speak, and so what is their motive?

<sup>22</sup> It should thus come as no surprise to us that ungodly sinners would try to corrupt individuals in Jehovah's organization or try to cool off their love for God and his organization. Jude says: "As for you, beloved ones, call to mind the sayings that have been previously spoken by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, how they used to say to you: 'In the last time there will be ridiculers, proceeding according to their own desires for ungodly things.' These are the ones that make separations, animalistic men, not having spirituality." (Jude 17-19) Jude points out that the apostles foretold the appearance of men motivated by selfish desires, who would try to get us out of God's love. Peter was one of those apostles who sounded such a warning for the "last days." (2 Pet. 3:1-4) While God is carrying on a unifying work over all the earth, these scoffers would carry on a work of separation among God's people. Lacking spirituality, they have no zeal for God's Kingdom ministry. They spend their energy in strife-producing talk.

#### KEEPING IN GOD'S LOVE

<sup>23</sup> So what is the course for God's faithful witnesses? Jude answers: "But you, beloved ones, by building up yourselves on your most holy faith, and praying with holy spirit, keep yourselves in God's love, while you are waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ with everlasting life in view." (Jude 20, 21) Jude had earlier prayed that God's mercy and peace would be increased; now for that prayer to be fulfilled upon Jehovah's people, they must keep themselves in the love of Almighty God. How? By diligent study of God's Holy Word, reading the Bible regularly in conjunction with the congrega-

22. (a) Of what apostolic warning does Jude remind Christians? (b) So what kind of activity do such foretold persons try to carry on among God's people?

23. (a) What counsel does Jude give for Christians? (b) How can we stay in God's love?

tion's Theocratic Ministry School. Attend all the meetings. Deepen the impression the Word of God makes on our lives by helping others to learn of God's clean, righteous new order of things. Never cease cultivating more and more of the fruitage of God's holy spirit. Be "praying with holy spirit" for what is in harmony with God's will, including more of that holy spirit to be upon us. If we thus keep ourselves in God's love, the result will indeed be mercy, peace and love multiplied through Jesus Christ. We need it to get the work of preaching the Kingdom good news done and to liberate still more from Babylon the Great. We also need divine mercy and so must be merciful to others whose life is at stake.

<sup>24</sup> Hence Jude writes: "Also, continue showing mercy to some that have doubts; save them by snatching them out of the fire. But continue showing mercy to others, doing so with fear, while you hate even the inner garment that has been stained by the flesh." (Jude 22, 23) To do this, we must distinguish between those who are worthy of God's mercy and those who are doomed animalistic dreamers whose destruction was pictured by Sodom's fiery end. Such men, by reason of their murmuring, cause unsteady ones to be filled with doubts as to whether this is Jehovah's organization. These doubting ones may be so shaken by the swelling words of those complainers that they may stop attending meetings of Jehovah's people. Hence Jude counsels us to have mercy on those who waver and doubt. We must not

24, 25. (a) To whom must we show mercy, and so between whom must we distinguish? (b) How do we show them mercy, and how does Jude indicate there is no time to lose?

ignore them. Patiently seek to build them up in the faith. But we must act quickly, just as firemen snatch endangered persons out of a burning building; so we must 'snatch them out of the fire.'

<sup>25</sup> Some may have yielded to the enticements of those immoral dreamers and have thus stained their identity as true Christians. (2 Pet. 2:18) But while we hate stained inner garments, we have mercy upon the wearer of the garments and try to help such a one back to spiritual health.

<sup>26</sup> While helping others to build up their faith, we must continually "put up a hard fight for the faith," resisting all ungodly complainers, would-be separationists and any who would turn God's undeserved kindness into an excuse for themselves to carry on loose conduct in the congregation. By our unremittingly putting up this kind of fight, we will be trusting in Jehovah to safeguard us from stumbling. To him be the glory: "Now to the one who is able to guard you from stumbling and to set you unblemished in the sight of his glory with great joy, to the only God our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, might and authority for all past eternity and now and into all eternity. Amen." (Jude 24, 25) Jude's words are almost a prayer to Jehovah for his people that He will uphold us and keep us from stumbling if we "put up a hard fight for the faith" so as to stay in his love. While all the ungodly sinners will meet their doom, as long ago foretold by the Supreme Judge, we will be privileged, with unending lives, to ascribe to Jehovah his due.

26. (a) As we help others, what must we do? (b) How do Jude's words, which are almost a prayer, show the way to avoid stumbling? (c) Contrast the foretold destiny of the ungodly with the privilege of those who stay in God's love.

*"Go on walking as children of light, for the fruitage of the light consists of every sort of goodness and righteousness and truth. Keep on making sure of what is acceptable to the Lord; and quit sharing with them in the unfruitful works that belong to the darkness."*—Eph. 5: 8-11.

**W**HEN Jerusalem was completely desolated by the armies of her age-long rival, Babylon, and her kings of the line of David were removed from the throne under Jehovah's disfavor, it appeared to the observer that Jerusalem was crushed forever. Babylon thought so and figured that she would keep the Jews permanently captive. Then when Jerusalem lay desolate for many years without man or domestic beast and seemed like a place haunted this supposition was more than ever confirmed in the minds of the nations round about. Satan the Devil, the god of Babylon, thought that he had scored a crushing victory. But it was absolutely impossible that Jerusalem should forever lie waste. It was an absolute certainty that she would be rebuilt. Furthermore, the temple of Jehovah would once again exist within her walls. Why was this so sure? It was because it had to do with the thing of greatest possible importance in Jehovah's eyes. It had to do with the sacred secret of the Seed, the promise made at the very first in the Garden of Eden by Jehovah himself. It had to do with the coming of the Messiah.

#### WHY JERUSALEM HAD TO BE REBUILT

To Jews who were looking for the coming of the Seed and who had faith in the Word of Jehovah God, it was certain that

# Jerusalem **REBUILT**



FOR  
**MESSIAH'S  
COMING**

Jerusalem would not lie forever desolate but would again be rebuilt and would again flourish. They knew from Jeremiah's prophecy that there was a seventy-year limit on Jerusalem's desolation. (Jer. 25:11, 12) They knew of Jerusalem's restoration and coming glory, from the prophecy of Isaiah. (Isaiah, chapter 52) They knew that when the Messiah came Jerusalem would have to be in existence, situated on Mount Zion, and that it must contain Jehovah's temple of true worship. True, things looked bad at the time, for even the line of the royal family had been narrowed down very thin. All the sons of Zedekiah,

Judah's last king, were destroyed and only one of the reigning family, Jehoiachin or Jeconiah, Zedekiah's nephew, survived. Similarly with the line of the high priest. Nebuchadnezzar put Seraiah to death but spared his son Jehozadak who, like Jeconiah, became captive in Babylon. But in this dark time the very survival of these two men and the fact that no foreign nation was allowed to settle in the land during Judah's time of desolation served as strong signs to give bright hope to the faithful ones of the Jewish exiles. They could see that God was miraculously carrying out the preservation of the kingly and priestly lines and was also miraculously holding the land open until the time he would send his own people back to rebuild

Jerusalem. That the Messiah would come, not to a desolation, but to a rebuilt Jerusalem, was indicated in a remarkable prophecy at Daniel 9:25: "And you should know and have the insight that from the going forth of the word to restore and to rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Leader, there will be seven weeks, also sixty-two weeks. She will return and be actually rebuilt, with a public square and moat, but in the straits of the times."

#### TEMPLE BUILDING COMPLETED

In our previous article we dealt with the return of the Jews under Zerubbabel, a descendant of the royal line, accompanied by Jeshua the high priest, the son of Jehozadak. The return was by the decree of Cyrus the Persian, the conqueror of Babylon, as Jehovah had foretold. In 536 B.C.E. these returning Jews had the foundation of Jehovah's temple laid. But shortly afterward the Devil set a roadblock in their way by causing the Samaritan enemies of the Jews to throw up an interference, eventually getting an official ban placed on the building work by the Persian government. This weakened the Jews so much that they left off this most important work and neglected the temple structure while they built homes for themselves. But even such opposition and the failure on the part of the Jewish remnant due to fear could not stop Jehovah's purpose. He raised up the prophets Haggai and Zechariah who, with great zeal and a powerful message from God, stirred up the Jews to resume the temple building. (Hag. 1:1-3, 9; Zech. 1:1-3, 16; Ezra 4:24-5:2) It was during the second year of the reign of Darius I king of Persia, fifteen years after the foundation of the temple had been laid, that these prophets began to speak. Of course, the rebuilding work was quickly noticed by the enemy and the lawfulness of their activity was brought in

question before the Persian-appointed officials governing the provinces between the Euphrates River and the Mediterranean Sea. But now the Jews, inspired by Haggai and Zechariah, were fearless and continued their work. They called attention to the fact that Cyrus had made the decree that the temple should be rebuilt. Thereupon, Tattenai the governor, to whom Zerubbabel was responsible, and other officials wrote to the king of Persia for his decision. Ezra the scribe reports the results:

"It was then that Darius the king put an order through, and they made an investigation in the house of the records of the treasures deposited there in Babylon. And at Ecbatana, in the fortified place that was in the jurisdictional district of Media, there was found a scroll [not a cuneiform tablet], and the memorandum to this effect was written within it: 'In the first year of Cyrus the king, Cyrus the king put an order through concerning the house of God in Jerusalem: Let the house be rebuilt as the place where they are to offer sacrifices, and its foundations are to be fixed, its height being sixty cubits, its width sixty cubits, with three layers of stones rolled into place and one layer of timbers; and let the expense be given from the king's house. And also let the gold and silver vessels of the house of God that Nebuchadnezzar took out of the temple that was in Jerusalem and brought to Babylon be returned, that they may reach the temple that is in Jerusalem at its place and be deposited in the house of God.'"—Ezra 6:1-5.

Darius recognized the building work as lawful and strictly told the officials: "Keep your distance from there. Let the work on that house of God alone." Furthermore, he warned that, "as for anybody that violates this decree, a timber will be pulled out of his house and he will be impaled upon it, and his house will be turned into a public privy on this account."—Ezra 6:6-12.

Encouraged by so manifest a blessing from God, the Jews hastened the work and in less than four and one half years' time the temple was completed. Ezra 6:15 gives

the date of completion, saying: "And they completed this house by the third day of the lunar month Adar, that is, in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the king." If the first year of Darius I is counted from 522 B.C.E., when his predecessor Cambyses died, then the rebuilding of the temple was completed in March of 516 B.C.E.\*

The next month after Adar is Nisan. So by completing the temple on Adar 3 the Jews were able to inaugurate it in time to hold the Passover in Nisan in the beginning of the seventh year of King Darius I: "And the sons of Israel, the priests and the Levites and the rest of the former exiles held the inauguration of this house of God with joy." (Ezra 6:16) Now worship of Jehovah at Jerusalem was fully restored. The joy of the builders must have been great, seeing the temple building fully accomplished.

#### CITY-BUILDING GETS ATTENTION

But what about the city itself? And what about Isaiah's prophecy that Jerusalem would flourish and Daniel's prophecy about the rebuilding of its public square and moat? While it was some time before this took place, still it was something that had to be done to prepare the way for the coming of Messiah the Prince. It was not until the reign of King Artaxerxes of Persia that Jehovah stirred up the spirit of another faithful servant to see that this was done. This servant was Nehemiah, who at the time had the responsible position of cupbearer to King Artaxerxes of Persia.

\* Since Darius I did not establish himself in Babylon until defeating the rebel Nebuchadnezzar III in December of 522 and shortly afterward capturing and killing him in Babylon, the year 522 B.C.E. may be viewed as the accession year of King Darius I. Since the regnal year of a Persian king began in the spring month of Nisan, the first regnal year of King Darius I would begin in the spring of 521 B.C.E., as presented in *Babylonian Chronology 626 B.C. - A.D. 75* (page 28), by Parker and Dubberstein. In that case the sixth regnal year of King Darius I began April 11-12, 516 B.C.E., and continued to the end of the twelfth lunar month (Adar) of his sixth year, or to the end of March of 515 B.C.E. On this basis, the rebuilding of the temple was completed by Zerubbabel on March 5-6 of 515 B.C.E.

Though he could not be in Jerusalem, nevertheless his heart was there, for there, he knew, was centered the true worship of Jehovah. Jerusalem was the place on which Jehovah's name rested and it was the temple of Jehovah that was now rebuilt there. He tells us of his concern over the city and the delay in rebuilding revealed by a report of its condition some sixty years after the temple had been rebuilt: "Now it came about in the month Chislev, in the twentieth year, that I myself happened to be in Shushan the castle. Then Hanani, one of my brothers, came in, he and other men from Judah, and I proceeded to ask about the Jews, those who had escaped, who had been left over of the captivity, and also about Jerusalem. Accordingly they said to me: 'Those left over, who have been left over from the captivity, there in the jurisdictional district, are in a very bad plight and in reproach; and the wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its very gates have been burned with fire.' . . . Now I myself happened to be cupbearer to the king."—Neh. 1:1-3, 11.

Nehemiah was greatly grieved on hearing this report. He took the matter immediately to Jehovah in prayer. The answer to his prayer was not long in coming. He tells us: "And it came about in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king, that wine was before him, and I as usual took up the wine and gave it to the king. But never had I happened to be gloomy before him. So the king said to me: 'Why is your face gloomy when you yourself are not sick? This is nothing but a gloominess of heart.' At this I became very much afraid."—Neh. 2:1, 2.

Nehemiah explained the reason for his sadness to the king. When Artaxerxes asked: "What is this that you are seeking to secure?" Nehemiah offered a silent prayer to Jehovah and took courage to ask the king to send him to rebuild Jerusalem.

The prayer was answered; King Artaxerxes was agreeable. Nehemiah relates: "So it seemed good before the king that he should send me, when I gave him the appointed time. And I went on to say to the king: 'If to the king it does seem good, let letters be given me to the governors beyond the River [Euphrates], that they may let me pass until I come to Judah; also a letter to Asaph the keeper of the park that belongs to the king, that he may give me trees to build with timber the gates of the Castle that belongs to the house, and for the wall of the city and for the house into which I am to enter.' So the king gave them to me, according to the good hand of my God upon me."—Neh. 2:3-8.

How marvelously Jehovah showed that his hand was not shortened! Just as he had foretold at Daniel 9:25, the rebuilding work was done in straitened, difficult times. Even after the king's decree Nehemiah and his fellow builders experienced many threats and much opposition from the non-Jewish people round about. Efforts were made to draw them away from the work. Nehemiah was placed in danger of his life, but by faith and trust in Almighty God and by arming themselves for defense against attack, and by sticking to the work that God had assigned them, they built the defensive walls around Zion or Jerusalem within two months. "At length the wall came to completion on the twenty-fifth day of Elul, in fifty-two days." (According to Nehemiah's reckoning, the year began with Tishri and ended with Elul as the twelfth month.)—Neh. 6:15.

#### JEHOVAH'S FULFILLED PURPOSE BRINGS HAPPINESS

Nothing could stop Jehovah's purpose. It was a very small matter for him to push aside the bitter foes whom Satan the Devil had aroused. They were completely blind

to the glorious purpose that they were fighting against and had no understanding of the tremendous importance of this rebuilding work in connection with the coming of the Promised Seed who was to bless all families of the earth. They were unknowingly fighting against an arrangement that will result finally in blessing to many of their own number.

But Jehovah had people who loved him and his worship and who looked for Messiah's coming. He could inspire them with the zeal and strength to do this important rebuilding work even in the straits of the times. Nehemiah relates: "And it came about that, as soon as the wall had been rebuilt, I at once set up the doors. Then there were appointed the gatekeepers and the singers and the Levites. And I went on to put in command of Jerusalem Hanani my brother and Hananiah the prince of the Castle, for he was such a trustworthy man and feared the true God more than many others."—Neh. 7:1, 2.

This was certainly the time for the greatest joy. Accordingly the next month, the month of Tishri, in the twenty-first year of Artaxerxes, the regular religious festivals for this month were celebrated: the blowing of the trumpet and the festival on the first day, the day of the new moon, the day of atonement on the tenth day and, beginning on the fifteenth day, the feast of the booths or tabernacles. Ezra the noted copyist of God's law was there to read publicly to them the written Word of God. After the reading, Governor Nehemiah strengthened the celebrants with the words: "Do not feel hurt, for the joy of Jehovah is your stronghold." Jehovah desired his faithful people to be happy and indeed they were, as the account reads: "The sons of Israel had not done that way from the days of Joshua the son of Nun until that day, so that there came to be very great rejoicing. And there was a read-

ing aloud of the book of the law of the true God day by day, from the first day until the last day; and they went on holding the festival seven days, and on the eighth day there was a solemn assembly, according to the rule."—Neh. 8:1-18.

Though the account of the inauguration of the walls is not recorded until farther along in the book of Nehemiah, yet it probably took place after the above-mentioned religious ceremony. It enabled the Israelites to extend beyond the festivals the expression of their rejoicing that overflowed. We read: "At the inauguration of the wall of Jerusalem they looked for the Levites, to bring them out of all their places to Jerusalem to carry on an inauguration and a rejoicing even with thanksgivings and with song, cymbals and stringed instruments and with harps." It was a colorful inauguration with two processions formed to march in opposite directions on the finished wall. The wall had not a break in it. "At length the two thanksgiving choirs came to a stand at the house of the true God, also," says Nehemiah, "I and half of the deputy rulers with me, and the priests . . . And the singers with Izrahiah the overseer kept making themselves heard." Following this the celebrators went to the temple on Mount Moriah and great sacrifices were joyfully offered on Jehovah's altar. "For the true God himself caused them to rejoice with great joy. And also the women and the children themselves rejoiced, so that the rejoicing of Jerusalem could be heard far away."—Neh. 12:27-43.

How marvelously Jehovah God showed his power to bring about his purposes! What a victory over Satan the Devil and

what a humiliation to the opposers to Jehovah's true worship! What spiritual strengthening for the faithful Jewish remnant there at Jerusalem! They were doubly sure of Jehovah's loving-kindness and the certainty of his purposes. With what confidence and zeal they could sing God's praises and relate to their children and to others God's marvelous works! Even they at that time could not fully understand the marvelous part they played in God's purposes. But how they will rejoice when they come back in a resurrection at the hands of the Messiah for whom they looked and when they find the part that Jehovah allowed them to play in the development of his purposes concerning the great Messiah, the Seed of promise!

By gathering his people back to Jerusalem, God kept a nation intact to whom the Messiah came. Much of the Messiah's preaching was done in the temple area, where many who came up to worship Jehovah could hear and be among his first followers. Outside its gates he gave his life in sacrifice for mankind. Truly, it was an essential part of God's purpose for Jerusalem to be restored after its desolation by Babylon. But there is another very important factor with regard to these events and Daniel's prophecy concerning them. That is the *time* of their occurrence. It provides us with one of the most accurate identifications of the Messiah. It helps all believers in the Hebrew Scriptures, Jew or Gentile, to prove for themselves features of the ministry of God's promised Messiah that can lead to their salvation. This important subject will be discussed in our next issue.

## HELP MEN GET SAVED FROM THIS CROOKED GENERATION

AS DEDICATED Christian witnesses of Jehovah we have heard and understood the truth of God's Word and have acted upon it. We can testify to the truth of Jesus' statement: "You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." Having been set free ourselves, we now have the obligation to serve as messengers of liberation, saying to all who will hear, "Get saved from this crooked generation."—John 8:32; Acts 2:40.\*

Yes, like the Jews in Babylon who were set free in 537 B.C.E., by the decree of Cyrus, like the Jews who were released from bondage to false religion in the days of Jesus and his apostles by their bringing the truth to them, so we in modern times have been set free. The first steps along this line were taken as early as the 1870's, but then we suffered a setback during World War I as we went into captivity to modern Babylon, the world empire of false religion, for a prophetic "three and a half days," when we lay dead in the streets of Babylon, as it were.—Rev. 11:2-11.

But then, in 1919, Jehovah's spirit was poured out upon us and we were revived and set free from Babylonian bondage. At that time the prophecy, which had had two previous fulfillments, in 537 B.C.E. and 33 C.E. onward, applied: "How comely upon the mountains are the feet of the one bringing good news, the one publishing peace, the one bringing good news of something better, the one publishing salvation, the one saying to Zion, 'Your God has become king!'"—Isa. 52:7.

What evidence is there that we were indeed set free at that time? The fact that we are rejoicing in Jehovah, as recorded at Isaiah 52:8-12, is one proof. Another proof is seen in our worldwide activity; in 194 lands and islands of the sea we are preaching the good news of God's established kingdom, and that by more than a million publishers. And the very fact that Satan is making war upon us as foretold at Revelation 12:17 is proof that we have been set free, for would he war against us if we were still in helpless bondage?—Matt. 24:14.

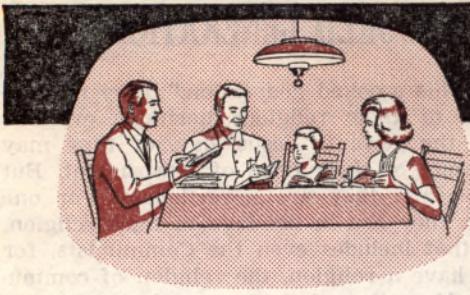
Ever so many persons will resent our coming to them with the call, "Get saved

from this crooked generation." They may be proud of their religious heritage, even as were the Jews in Jesus' day, or they may be proud of their form of government. But in bondage they are nevertheless. For one thing, they are in bondage to false religion, and that includes even the Communists, for they have a religion, the religion of communism. More than that, they are in bondage to sin, even as Jesus said: "Every doer of sin is a slave of sin." And all such are also in bondage to "the god of this system of things," by whom they have been blinded, even as we read, "the whole world is lying in the power of the wicked one."—John 8:34; 2 Cor. 4:4; 1 John 5:19.

There is an urgency about our sounding this warning as God's messengers of liberation. Do we appreciate it and are we acting in harmony with such an appreciation? Babylon the Great's fall presages her destruction, even as ancient Babylon was destroyed after she had fallen; only in our day the destruction of Babylon the Great will not be delayed for centuries but only for a few short years, as Jesus intimated when he said regarding our day: "But as these things start to occur, raise yourselves erect and lift your heads up, because your deliverance is getting near. Truly I say to you, This generation will by no means pass away until all things occur."—Luke 21:28, 32.

The many "Word of Truth" District Assemblies held so far this year have given a great witness to Jehovah's name and kingdom and have greatly refreshed each one of Jehovah's people that was able to attend them. What we have learned at these assemblies we do not want to keep selfishly to ourselves but should want to share with others, thus showing appreciation for this grand spiritual feast and demonstrating that we have profited from it, being doers and not forgetful hearers of God's Word. So let us go from house to house bearing the good news of liberation, warning all lovers of righteousness to flee from this crooked generation by severing their ties with Babylon the Great, lest they share in her sins and receive of her plagues. "If you know these things, happy you are if you do them."—John 13:17.

\* For details see *The Watchtower*, February 1, 1964.



## Personal Help

# TO ANSWER YOUR BIBLE QUESTIONS

**O** HOW I wish I could understand the Bible better!" Have you ever said that? Many thousands of sincere Bible readers have, and in this they are much like a prominent man who lived in the first century of our Common Era.

He was a eunuch, a court official, under Candace queen of the Ethiopians. But his busy life did not keep him from reading the Bible. And so, as he traveled along in his chariot after a trip up to Jerusalem to worship as a circumcised Jewish proselyte, he made good use of the time by reading aloud from the Bible prophecy of Isaiah. That was not the most ideal circumstance for undistracted reading, but it certainly reflected earnestness on his part.

The Christian disciple Philip, directed by God's spirit, ran alongside the moving chariot and endeavored to engage the man in conversation, asking: "Do you actually know what you are reading?" That struck a responsive chord; he wanted to understand. Readily he acknowledged his need for assistance, and he urged Philip to get into the chariot with him and answer some questions he had on what is now known as the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah. At that, Philip proceeded to declare to him "the good news about Jesus," in whom that prophecy was fulfilled. The Ethiopian official recognized the truthfulness of what he was hearing; he could see clearly his responsibility before God, and, without hesitation, he got baptized.—Acts 8:27-38.

There are hundreds of thousands of persons today who are of a disposition simi-

lar to that shown by the Ethiopian eunuch. They too believe that the Bible is God's inspired Word. From time to time they read portions of it, but they freely admit that they need some aid to understand it fully. Some of them have approached their minister for help, but frequently he is too busy or tells them that they should not be concerned about these things. Yet the inquirer is concerned, and when one of Jehovah's witnesses approaches him at his home to discuss the Bible, as the disciple Philip approached that Ethiopian official, such a sincere seeker for the truth urges the visiting Witness to come into his home and answer his questions. Jehovah's witnesses are glad to provide this personal help.

Around the world last year they devoted over 162,000,000 hours to service such as this. Gladly they made nearly 56,000,000 return visits to be of personal help to individuals who had Bible questions. And there were over 741,000 homes to which they made regular visits, in most cases for an hour each week, to help families to gain an accurate knowledge of the Word of God. All this was done free of charge, out of love for God and for their fellowman.

### WHAT THERE IS TO LEARN

Just what could a person expect to learn in the course of perhaps a year of such weekly home Bible discussions? An examination of one of the Bible-study aids that is used, along with the Bible, as the basis for such discussions would give you

a good idea of the subjects that would be covered. This past summer at their "Word of Truth" District Assemblies Jehovah's witnesses received a new publication for use in this work. It is the beautifully illustrated 416-page book "*Things in Which It Is Impossible for God to Lie.*" Already it is being used in many parts of the English-speaking world, and as soon as it can be translated into other languages, it will be put to good use by ministers speaking those languages too.

Using this book and the Bible, Jehovah's witnesses will consider with interested persons topics such as these: "God Lives! How We Know It," and "Which Sacred Book of Religion Is the Truth?" Then they will take up a condensed coverage of the entire Bible, from cover to cover, highlighting the principal ideas and showing how it all ties together and how it makes clear the purpose of God.

Having laid this fine foundation, they will focus attention on specific Bible topics and questions that have perplexed people everywhere; for example, How did the universe and living creatures, both human and spirit, come into existence? What does the Bible show the soul to be? What happens to that soul at death? Why must man die? Will it always be this way? Does the Bible's promise of a resurrection mean that you will actually be able to enjoy the companionship of your deceased loved ones again? Where will they be raised—in heaven or on earth? What conditions will prevail then? How do the prophecies of the Hebrew Scriptures or "Old Testament" and accounts concerning such men as Abraham, Moses and David affect us today? Is God a person or three persons in one God? Are you obligated to keep the Law given through Moses? What about the Ten Commandments? the sabbath day? Why has God permitted wickedness to continue for so long? Will unrighteousness come to an

end? When? How can we be sure? This is only a sampling of the stimulating questions that are given satisfying answers.

#### A REGULAR HOME BIBLE STUDY

The manner in which Jehovah's witnesses conduct home Bible discussions is in harmony with the principles set out in God's Word. For example, at Galatians 6: 6 it is recommended: "Let anyone who is being orally taught the word share in all good things with the one who gives such oral teaching." So the minister conducting the discussion does not do all the talking; rather, he guides the members of the household to the information that will help them and encourages them to express themselves on it.

It is suggested that each one who shares in such a home Bible study have his own copy of the Bible and a copy of the publication being used as a Bible-study aid. All are encouraged to read ahead of time the information that is going to be discussed, perhaps even underlining principal ideas in their book. Those who do so usually make the most rapid progress, because, if they have read the lesson and have the basic ideas in mind, the visiting minister can direct attention to more than just these fundamental points.

You see, a home Bible study of this sort is more than just a quick review of what the householder already knows from his reading. In the first place, much of the information is new to the student; so discussing it together helps him to make sure that he has not missed any of the principal ideas. It also aids him to fix these important points firmly in mind so that they will not be lost in a few days, as happens to so many things that people read.

But, more than this, is the information understood? It is one thing to be able to repeat an answer from a book; it is something quite different to have a clear under-

standing of it. In Proverbs 4:7 the Bible counsels us: "Acquire wisdom; and with all that you acquire, acquire understanding." If you have done that, you will know, not only the basic ideas, but the reason why they are right. You will be aided to see how they fit in with other truths that you have learned and how they affect your outlook on life. You will be helped to appreciate how to use what you have learned with benefit to yourself and others.

Time is taken during the study to look up the many scriptures cited in the book and to discuss their relation to the topics under consideration. In this way you will soon become well acquainted with your own copy of the Bible, knowing what it says on many subjects and the context in which these statements are made. You will come to know the location of the scriptures so that you can find them again. Having received personal help in formulating comments on the scriptures, you will find it easy to explain them to others.

As your understanding grows, you will also grow in appreciation. Head knowledge is not enough. Heart appreciation is also vital. "More than all else that is to be guarded, safeguard your heart," says the inspired proverb, "for out of it are the sources of life." (Prov. 4:23) This is true not only in a physical way, but, more importantly, from a spiritual standpoint. We need strong love for Jehovah God and deep appreciation for his provisions. We must come to love what is good and hate what is bad. This takes time. It is not achieved by hurried reading. But as the truths from God's Word are discussed together week after week, and as you take time to reflect on them, they will come to be a motivating force in your life. These are some of the benefits that can be derived from a regular home Bible study conducted by one of Jehovah's witnesses.

Where possible, Jehovah's witnesses en-

courage entire families to share in these home Bible studies together. This has a unifying effect, which is greatly needed by families everywhere in these critical times. While it is true that men often do not take interest in religion that puts the emphasis on human traditions, showy rituals and unceasing donations to the church, many of them do find real satisfaction in a reasonable discussion of the Bible. They readily appreciate that what it has to say is consistent with their own experience in life. They respond when they are given sensible Scriptural answers to their questions. When they see that application of Bible principles puts family relations on a more solid foundation, they are oftentimes willing to take the lead in seeing that their household receives such instruction.

If course, in some cases only one member of a household may be interested in the purposes of God. Even so, there is no reason why such a person cannot enjoy a personal home Bible study at a time that does not interfere with other family activities. Jehovah's witnesses are glad to assist such persons, and in time it may be that other members of the family will have their interest aroused when they see how beneficial the arrangement has proved to be for the one who first showed interest.

#### BUT WHY?

What is the purpose of all this? Why do Jehovah's witnesses offer to provide this free home Bible study service?

Well, why did the first-century disciples of Jesus Christ respond to his encouragement to "go, preach"? (Matt. 10:7) Because they believed what Jesus taught. They knew that he was the Son of God and that gaining salvation depended on taking in knowledge of him and of his heavenly Father and then acting on it. Out of gratitude to God, they felt moved to share the good news with others. O it

is true, many of those to whom they preached had their own religion; some even had a large part of what is today known as the Bible. But the people in general did not really understand the Scriptures; they failed to realize that the prophecies of the Bible were being fulfilled before their very eyes. The same is true today.

Jehovah's witnesses believe the Bible and recognize its message to be urgent. They know that it means everlasting life to learn it and act in harmony with it. Appreciation for the love that God has

placed in us to notice all bibles and bibles  
at present left unclaimed to return to our  
and this is an easy to remember rule  
writers and readers throughout the world of bibles  
or else it is due to



- Since those destroyed in the Flood and those who perished at Sodom and Gomorrah are mentioned together at 2 Peter 2:4-6 and Luke 17:26-30, might this indicate that those who perished in the Flood will be resurrected?  
—J.B., England.

In determining if this is what is meant at 2 Peter 2:4-6 and Luke 17:26-30, it would be good to read these texts carefully and consider the context.

When we examine Second Peter chapter two we find that the apostle Peter was warning that false Christians would appear in the congregations. (2 Pet. 2:1-3) These "false teachers" would lead some away from the true faith, but their own destruction was sure to come. To establish the point that God would punish them, the apostle referred to several examples. He showed that "God did not hold back from punishing the angels that sinned" and that he "did not hold back from punishing an ancient world" in Noah's day. Also, by punishing Sodom and Gomorrah with destruction, God set "a pattern for ungodly persons of things

shown to all mankind in making this provision available stimulates them to aid others to lay hold of it. This is why they can be found today in over 190 lands offering personal help to all kinds of persons to answer their Bible questions.

If you are one who wants to understand God's Word, as did that Ethiopian eunuch spoken of in the Bible, show a spirit like his. Welcome Jehovah's witnesses when they come to your door. Ask them your Bible questions. Request that one of them come for an hour each week, free of charge, to aid you to understand God's Word.

is because of the new life that Jesus  
has given us to those who are in him  
and this is an easy to remember rule  
writers and readers throughout the world of bibles  
or else it is due to  
to come." (2 Pet. 2:4-6) So the apostle was giving examples to show that God punishes ungodly ones for wrongdoing. Resurrection prospects were not being discussed.

Similarly, Jesus, as shown at Luke 17:26-30, used the people who perished in the Flood and those who died when Sodom was destroyed as examples. Examples of what? Examples to show that the people in general would not be aware of his second presence because they would be completely immersed in the daily affairs of life: eating, drinking, marrying, buying, selling, planting and building. This would be "just as it occurred in the days of Noah" and "just as it occurred in the days of Lot." Jesus concluded: "The same way it will be on that day when the Son of man is to be revealed." Jesus used a similar illustration in Matthew 24:37-39, though there he mentioned only Noah's day. In neither of these passages was he discussing whether the people mentioned would be resurrected.

However, in Second Peter chapter three the apostle focused attention on the destruction that will come during Christ's second presence. He reasoned: "The world [human society outside Noah's ark] of that time suffered destruction when it was deluged with water. But by the same word the heavens and the earth that are now are stored up for fire and are being reserved to the day of judgment and of destruction of the ungodly men." (2 Pet. 3:6, 7) Notice that he says that the pre-flood world

"suffered destruction." What does that mean? Well, does the Bible say anywhere else that those who perished in the Flood will receive a resurrection? Does it say that they will be present on Judgment Day? No! But here in Second Peter the destruction they suffered in the Flood is compared to that of "ungodly men" who are destroyed at the end of this present system of things, concerning whom Jesus said that they will be symbolic "goats" and "will depart into everlasting cutting-off." So apparently those people who were destroyed in Noah's day were everlastingly cut off.—Matt. 25:31-46.

- How could the apostle Paul truthfully say that he was a Pharisee, as he did at Acts 23:6?
- R.M., U.S.A.

Paul the apostle was standing accused at an assembly of the Jewish court of the Sanhedrin when he said, "I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees. Over the hope of resurrection of the dead I am being judged."

The day before he said this the apostle Paul had openly preached the resurrected Jesus Christ and caused an uproar among the Jews. (Acts 22:6-24) So the Pharisees and Sadducees assembled on this occasion definitely knew that Paul was no Pharisee but was a Christian. It

is to be remembered, though, that he had been raised a Pharisee and was fully aware that Pharisees believed in the resurrection, angels and spirit, while the Sadducees rejected such doctrines. (Acts 23:8; 26:5; Phil. 3:5) As far as these doctrines were concerned, Paul the apostle held a belief similar to the Pharisees, in contrast to the position of the Sadducees.

The actions of the high priest Ananias, recorded in Acts 23:2, made it plain that those assembled would not be impartial or reasonable when hearing Paul's case. It is possible that when the apostle saw this he attempted to divide the assembled group by driving between them the controversial wedge of the resurrection doctrine. While he was obviously not a Pharisee in the strictest sense of the word, he was still a "son of Pharisees" and indicated that he espoused the position of the Pharisees on the matter of resurrection. He believed in the resurrection of Jesus as a spirit, and this added to the disagreement between the groups present.—Acts 23:9, 10.

The apostle Paul did not here claim to accept some false beliefs in order to "become all things to people of all sorts." (1 Cor. 9:22) He told the truth, not compromising his position, and used the occasion to give an effective witness.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### FIELD MINISTRY

In the first century of our Common Era the apostles of Jesus Christ urged the people: "Get saved from this crooked generation." (Acts 2:40) If the need to do so was great then, how much more so is it urgent today! For that reason, Jehovah's witnesses regularly call at the homes of people everywhere, talking to others about the purposes of Jehovah God and leaving with interested persons literature that will build up their appreciation for the Bible. As they engage in this work during October they will be offering a year's subscription for the magazine *Awake!*, along with three Bible-study booklets, for \$1.

### JOIN THE MILLIONS READING "AWAKE!"

Will you be one of the new subscribers for *Awake!* during October? Each year thousands

of names are added to the growing list of regular readers of this instructive companion magazine to *The Watchtower*. Circulation through the mails and by individual copy has now reached the four and one-quarter million mark! Send \$1 today for your year's subscription for *Awake!* and receive three free booklets on timely Bible subjects.

### "WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

- October 24: Putting Up a Hard Fight for the Faith, ¶1-17. Page 584.
- October 31: Putting Up a Hard Fight for the Faith, ¶18-23, and Execution of Divine Judgment upon the Ungodly, ¶1-10. Page 589.
- November 7: Execution of Divine Judgment upon the Ungodly, ¶11-26. Page 593.