

The WATCHTOWER

**The Horsemen of the Apocalypse
—Their Effect on Our Lives**

**Meeting the Challenge of
Bible Translation**

'Living No Longer for Ourselves'

JUNE 15, 1974

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ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

The **WATCHTOWER**

June 15, 1974
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THE HORSEMEN OF THE APOCALYPSE

-THEIR EFFECT ON OUR LIVES

WAR, famine and disease have continued to plague humankind in this twentieth century. Why is this so in spite of man's technical developments?

The answer involves "the horsemen of the Apocalypse." No doubt you are acquainted with that expression. But did you realize that what the Bible says about those "horsemen" is really a description of the problems of our day and of their solution? The accuracy with which the events of the twentieth century fit the prophecy is indeed thought provoking.

The term "horsemen of the Apocalypse" is drawn from the Bible's last book, called Revelation, or, as in Greek, Apocalypse. Written nineteen centuries ago, it is a book of prophecies inspired by God. Consider how it describes these horsemen:

"And I saw, and, look! a white horse, and the one seated upon it had a bow, and a crown was given him, and he went forth conquering and to complete his conquest.

"And when he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, 'Come!' And another came forth, a fiery-colored horse, and to the one seated upon it there was granted to take peace away from the earth so that they should slaughter one another, and a great sword was given him.

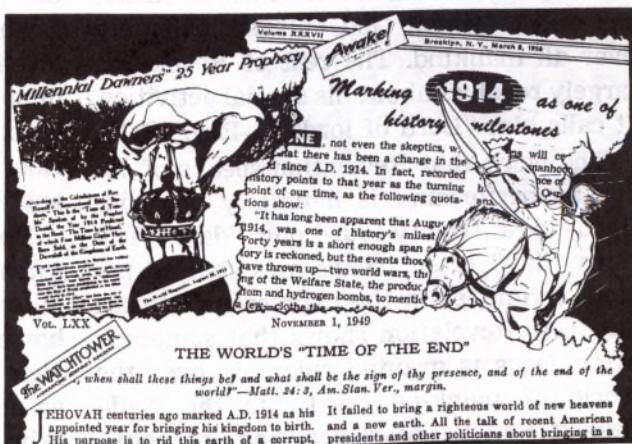
"And when he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, 'Come!' And I saw, and, look! a black horse, and the one seated upon it had a pair of scales in his hand. And I heard a voice as if in the midst of the four living creatures say: 'A quart of wheat for a day's wage, and three quarts of

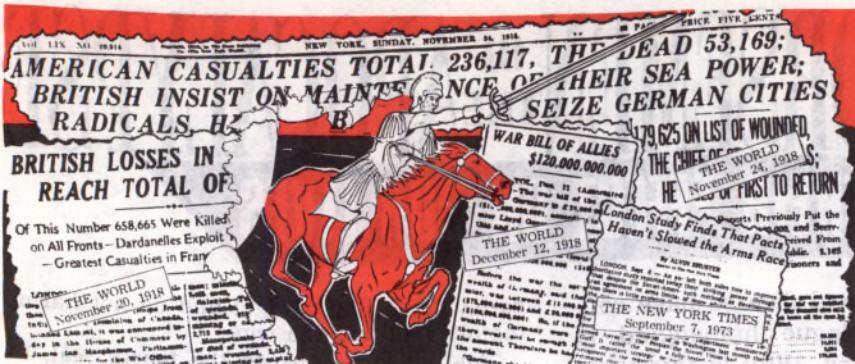
barley for a day's wage; and do not harm the olive oil and the wine.'

"And when he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, 'Come!' And I saw, and, look! a pale horse, and the one seated upon it had the name Death. And Hades was closely following him. And authority was given them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with a long sword and with food shortage and with deadly plague and by the wild beasts of the earth."—Rev. 6:2-8, *New World Translation*, 1950 edition.

Obviously, much of this prophecy is symbolic; Revelation was 'presented in signs.' (Rev. 1:1) Thus, in the fulfillment, we would not expect a series of literal horsemen to spread destruction. But the effects brought by these symbolic horsemen would be as disastrous as if that had happened.

When do the terrible conditions represented by those horsemen appear? The Revelation indicates this because, after describing the horsemen, it goes on to





talk about "the great tribulation," also called the "great day of [the] wrath" of God and of the Lamb Jesus Christ. (Rev. 6:17; 7:1-3, 14) So the conditions represented by the horsemen must come just before the complete destruction of the present worldwide wicked system of things. Our personal security during God's "great tribulation" demands that we find out when these horsemen would ride.

DETERMINING THE TIME OF THE APPEARANCE OF THE HORSEMEN

Most of the action in the Bible book of Revelation occurs during what the apostle John calls "*the Lord's day*." (Rev. 1:10) What does this term "*the Lord's day*" mean?

Well, first of all, note that the "Lord" in this expression must refer to Jesus Christ, the one to whom God entrusts rulership over all mankind. The rest of Revelation largely revolves about his special activities. It calls him "Lord of lords."—Rev. 19:16.

The work that Revelation speaks of Jesus as performing is definitely not confined to a twenty-four-hour "day." The term "day" often means an extended period of time, as in the expression "Noah's day." As Revelation shows that sometime after Jesus is granted rulership over the world of mankind he fights the "wild beast," Satan's beastly system of politi-

cal control, and the kings of the earth and their armies. (Rev. 11:15; 12:10; 19:11-21) Then he rules for a thousand years. (Rev. 20:6) All of this is included in the "day" or period of Jesus' rule of which the apostle John speaks.

But when, exactly, does the "Lord's day" begin and thus also the ride of the horsemen of the Apocalypse? All the evidence points clearly to the year 1914, and it includes our own day. How is this known? Well, consider first what the Bible says about the horsemen and then compare this with world events since that year.

Since it is Jesus' "day," it is logical to believe that the account of the horsemen would, first of all, describe him in some way. This is the case. The initial horseman is shown to be seated on a "white horse" and as having a bow and a crown, expressions that would indicate he is both a warrior and a king. That this is a reference to the Lord Jesus is shown by a comparison with Revelation 19:12, 13. There the "Word of God," Jesus, is shown astride a white war mount and as having "upon his head . . . many diadems." Also, terminology similar to that found in Revelation chapter 6 about the white horse's rider is found in Psalm 45; this psalm is applied to Jesus Christ in Hebrews 1:8, 9.

How does knowing this help us to know *when* he rides? Well, to say, as the Revelation does, that this one on the white horse goes "forth conquering and to complete his conquest" indicates that he, as an active king, would remove his enemies. Who was the first of these to whom he

turned his attention? Revelation chapter 12 speaks of the time when Jesus "Christ comes to his rightful rule!" (Rev. 12:10, *New English Bible*) A war takes place in heaven, and Satan the Devil, the foremost enemy of all who love righteousness, is thrown down to the vicinity of the earth. With that act, Christ 'goes forth conquering.'

These events, however, took place in heaven, invisibly. After the Devil is thrown out of heaven, the account tells us that there would be "woe for the earth . . . because the Devil has come down to you, having great anger."—Rev. 12:7-12.

The descriptions of the other horsemen who ride at the same time that Jesus does serve to prove that Christ as King is riding to victory. Knowing when the effects caused by the riders started would reveal the exact time that the horsemen were riding and would indicate when Jesus as king was gathering lovers of God and of his kingdom with a view to their preservation.

What are these disastrous effects?



THE SECOND HORSEMAN—WAR

The second rider is depicted as being seated on a "fiery-colored horse" and as taking "peace away from the earth so that they should slaughter one another, and a great sword was given him." What does this represent? War! But not just ordinary war. Rather, large-scale war seems to be implied, for this rider is given no ordinary sword of war; he is given a "great sword." For this reason the paraphrase found in *The Living Bible* is appropriate. It says that this rider was authorized to "banish peace and bring anarchy to the earth; war and killing broke out everywhere." When did war on such a large scale appear?

In the year 1914.

That was when World War I erupted, the greatest war the world had seen up to that time. Further, historian H. W. Baldwin says: "World War I ushered in the century of Total War, of—in the first full sense of the term—global war." About 10,000,000 persons were killed and many millions more were wounded in that war. Even those nations that did maintain their neutrality were in great uncertainty; they felt no sense of security, because 'peace had been taken from the earth.'

But the "fiery-colored horse" did not stop after World War I ended in 1918. True, there were concerted efforts to bring about earth-wide peace, and many circumstances seemed to indicate that it could be achieved. An international organization, the League of Nations, was even established to try to prevent war from arising again. A *New York Times* editorial appearing the day after World War I closed expressed the feelings of most persons: "The world is sick of war . . . the solid framework of the League of Na-

tions has already been erected." Even science seemed to contribute toward lasting peace, by making a 'smaller world,' one of rapid communication and transportation. But even with all these favorable forces at work, "the League of Nations" buckled about twenty years later.

World War II broke out in 1939. It eventually took fifty-five million lives. After the explosion of two atomic blasts over Japan, it finally came to a close.

The nations again desired peace and so the United Nations was formed. Peace talks continue up to this time. But, as you know, so do the construction and stockpiling of huge weapons of war. War, revolutions and civil revolts are still being fought. Peace has indeed been 'taken from the earth,' in spite of man's efforts and desires to the contrary.

Is this not clear evidence, therefore, that the rider on the "fiery-colored horse" must have started his ride in the year 1914? Are not the effects of his riding all around us? Surely that is the case. In that same year, 1914, Jesus Christ must also have gone forth to begin actively ruling as king over the whole world of mankind, and the time when he would destroy those who are enemies of God's righteous rule must be near at hand.

THE THIRD HORSEMAN—FAMINE

Food shortage often accompanies warfare. Appropriately, therefore, the third rider that John saw is upon a black horse representing famine. So intense would the conditions be that a voice is heard to say: "A quart of wheat for a day's wage, and three quarts of barley for a day's wage; and do not harm the olive oil and the wine." According to the Greek historian Herodotus, one "quart" of grain was the minimum amount needed to maintain a soldier successfully.

Revelation thus indicates that food would be limited. Rationing would be necessary, as pictured by the horseman's "pair of scales." The wealthy would not be exempt, since the voice says, "Do not harm the olive oil and the wine," that is, it would be necessary to use sparingly even those products customarily identified with the well-to-do. Have we seen such famine conditions as these since World War I?

Indeed we have. One of the largest famines in history swept much of Europe and Russia after World War I. An even larger one occurred after World War II. You have probably read about the extreme famine conditions and food shortages that continue right now in parts of Africa and Asia. And where you live, what has happened to food prices? People in all walks of life, from every economic and social stratum feel the effects of the food pinch; such shortages have occurred in spite of man's know-how. Better farm equipment and sophisticated farming methods have not stopped famine. Since thousands of people still suffer and die *every day* from starvation, the rider on the "black horse" obviously is still riding.

DEATH BY OTHER MEANS

While war and famine have caused millions of deaths in the last sixty years, there have been other major causes of death. So, the fourth horseman is described as being seated upon a pale-colored horse and "it had the name Death." He brings death, not just with "a long sword and with food shortage," but also with "deadly plague and by the wild beasts of the earth."

Many persons now living have seen the truthfulness of this prophecy about "deadly plague." Ask some of the older generation who recall World War I. They will tell you about the deadly Spanish Flu (grippe) that swept the globe after that great war,

and about how it brought death to over twenty million persons, even to those living in the most remote sections of earth.

Cholera, malaria, trachoma, smallpox and schistosomiasis (snail fever) now affect hundreds of millions of persons. And even if you live in one of the "advanced countries," you know that in spite of diligent medical work, cancer, heart disease and other sicknesses abound. These things should convince us that the fourth horseman is still riding.

But what about death brought on "by the wild beasts"? In the absence of humans, wild animals ordinarily thrive. (Ex. 23:29) So, too, in modern times the large-scale upsetting of settled life brought about by war and subsequent famines and plagues has meant increasing danger from wild beasts. Thus a January

23, 1915, Reuter's news dispatch reported that people living in the Carpathian Mountains while fleeing from the Austrians were in "fear of wolves, who, rendered desperate by hunger, are attacking human beings throughout the devastated districts."

Yes, honest observers can see that the horsemen of the Apocalypse have been on the move since the year 1914. But how long will they continue to ride? That is no doubt something you would like to know.

LENGTH OF THEIR RIDE

In answer to that question it is necessary to consider the words of Jesus, which

largely parallel those found in Revelation chapter 6. He predicted similar calamities in connection with the "conclusion of the system of things." (See Matthew chapters 24 and 25; Mark chapter 13 and Luke chapter 21.) And, therein, Jesus lets us know how much time is involved before he, as the rider on the white horse, 'completes his conquest.'

Jesus stated, as recorded at Matthew 24:34: "Truly I say to you that this generation will by no means pass away until all these things occur."

The generation that saw the beginning of "these things" in 1914 is now well up in years and, in fact, is near to 'passing away.' Therefore, the time must be close for the "great tribulation" and the 'day of wrath' of God and Jesus Christ. What should you do to survive the coming destruction?

Take steps to find yourself among those whom Revelation also reveals will "come out of the great tribulation," that is, who will survive it. These ones, the account says, have taken certain steps to come into a favorable relationship with God and the Lamb. They have shown faith in the sin-atoning value of Jesus' sacrifice; theirs is an active, living faith resulting from study of the Bible. Jehovah's witnesses will be pleased to show you how you might be among the "great crowd, which no man was able to number, out of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues," who stand approved "before the throne and before the Lamb."—Rev. 7:9-17.



Insight on the News

- To determine what institutions are most influential in the United States, the "U.S. News & World Report" magazine recently took a survey among 500 leading Americans. Listing eighteen major organizations and institutions, the magazine asked those polled to rate each "according to the amount of influence you think it has on decisions or actions affecting the nation as a whole."

First place in the ratings went to television, followed by the White House, the Supreme Court and the newspapers. Educational institutions were in twelfth place, while the two major political parties occupied fourteenth and seventeenth places. In last place: "Organized religion."

Commenting on this, the magazine said: "Long-held suspicions that the influence of religion, educational institutions and political parties are not as strong as once thought appear to be borne out in the answers given by America's leaders."

The drop of the churches' influence is paralleled by their modern failure to uphold the Bible's morals and principles. Jehovah God's words directed to the leaders of apostate Israel of old come to mind: "Look! They have rejected the very word of Jehovah, and what wisdom do they have?"—Jer. 8:9.

- The first death came on August 15, 1969, when machine-gun fire smashed into an apartment and killed a sleeping nine-year-old boy. Less than five years later—on Saturday, April 20, 1974—the one thousandth victim of violence in Northern Ireland died. All these deaths are directly related to terrorist action and do not include deaths from accidental causes. Among the one thousand slain were fifteen children less than twelve years of age.

The country has a population of about one and a half million. What if the same ratio of deaths struck a nation the size of the United States? It would mean the loss of 135,000 persons—more than double the number of U.S. soldiers killed in Vietnam!

Northern Ireland has a Protestant majority

Religion— How Much Influence?

and a Catholic minority. Many hold that the present conflict is not really a religious struggle waged over religious issues. Instead, they say it is a case of a minority group seeking greater voice in government and a majority group resisting due to fear of jeopardizing their present independence from the Catholic Republic of Ireland to the south.

Be that as it may, the inability of Northern Ireland's religious organizations, Catholic and Protestant, to halt the violence and contribute to peaceful conditions for the people is painfully evident. Nor can the churches wash their hands of responsibility for the deep-seated divisions and distrust that exist.

- "Transsexualism" is a word appearing with growing frequency in the news. A transsexual is not merely a transvestite (one who dresses in clothes of the opposite sex), nor necessarily a homosexual (though that may be the case). A transsexual is a person who rejects the sex

Born in the Wrong Body?

with which he or she was born and takes up the life of the other sex. Claiming they were, in effect, "born in the wrong body," many have undergone radical surgery and hormone treatments to attain a sexual transformation. An estimated 1,500 persons in the United States and about 150 in Britain have done so. What really do they accomplish? Is it possible to change a normal person (not a hermaphrodite of ambiguous sex) from one gender to another?

The answer is, No. As Dr. Georges Burou, a French surgeon prominent in the field, says: "I don't change men into women. I transform male genitals into genitals that have a female aspect. All the rest is in the patient's mind." ("Time," Jan. 21, 1974, p. 64) In reality, the ultimate result is either a severely (and irreversibly) mutilated man who resembles a woman, or a severely (and irreversibly) mutilated woman who resembles a man.

The increase of transsexualism is but one more facet of the spread of practices "contrary to nature" characterizing much of this present period. (Compare Romans 1:26.) The remedy for those with such inclinations is not surgery but a change in outlook, 'being made new in the force actuating their minds' with the aid of God's Word.—Eph. 4:22-24.

Meeting the Challenge OF BIBLE TRANSLATION



THE Holy Bible, by early 1974, was translated wholly or in part into 1,526 languages and dialects. Not only is it being translated into more languages each year but more and more translations are being made in the same languages. A case in point is the English language, in which it seems that of late almost yearly new translations have been made.

Regarding the art of translation a professor of languages once stated that "the problems that arise with translation are infinite." Translating the Bible presents the greatest challenge of all. Well has it been said: "Biblical translation is an endless process." It involves translating from ancient languages idioms that are no longer in common usage. And it involves religion, and religion always has associated with it strong feelings, which at times may get in the way of a translator's judgment. The Bible being the inspired Word of God, it should be translated with the greatest care and skill. Unless one accepts the Bible's claim to be the inspired Word of God one cannot fully do justice to it. Bible translation should be a labor of love, as well as an art and a science.

ACCURACY

Among the many challenges that Bible translation poses is that of accuracy. Is the translation as explicit as is the original? Does it do justice to the flavor as well as the words of the original? Often translations come short in this regard. Thus

there are two Greek words that most translations render "anoint," namely, *aleiphō* and *khri'o*. Whenever *aleiphō* appears it always refers to the use of oil or ointment applied to the body, as after a bath, or in sickness or in death. (Matt. 6:17; Mark

6:13; 16:1; Luke 7:38, 46; Jas. 5:14) But *khri'o* is used only in a spiritual, sacred and figurative or symbolic sense and therefore deserves the word "anoint," as at Luke 4:18, where we read: "Jehovah's spirit is upon me, because he *anointed* me to declare good news to the poor." Few, if any, aside from the *New World Translation* (NW), uniformly distinguish between these two Greek words.

Another challenge as to accuracy has to do with what is known as the "present imperative" in Greek.* It denotes continuous or repeated action. Its distinctiveness is, by and large, ignored by Bible translators. For example, at Luke 11:9, 10 nearly all read as does the *New English Bible* (NEB): "So I say to you, *ask*, and you will receive; *seek*, and you will find; *knock*, and the door will be opened. For everyone who *asks* receives, he who *seeks* finds, and to him who *knocks*, the door will be opened."

But such a rendering misses the entire point of Jesus' illustration. In it he tells of a man whose guests arrive at midnight and who goes to his neighbor for bread. The neighbor at first refuses because he is in bed with his children. But finally the neighbor does get up and gives him bread, not because the one asking is a friend but because of his "bold persistence." And so what Jesus said in applying the lesson of the parable was: "*Keep on asking*, and it will be given you; *keep on seeking*, and you will find; *keep on knocking*, and it will

* See *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, Dana & Mantey, pp. 300-303.

be opened to you. For everyone *asking* receives, and everyone *seeking* finds, and to everyone *knocking* it will be opened.” —NW.

GUARDING AGAINST BIAS

There is also the matter of fidelity to the original. At times Bible translators let their religious bias show through in their renderings. For example, modern translators appear to have an aversion to using an equivalent for the Hebrew Tetragrammaton, YHWH or JHVH. Some object to using the name “Jehovah” as an equivalent. But if Yahweh is more nearly correct, why do not more of them use that form? Since Rotherham’s translation (1897) apparently only *The Jerusalem Bible* has used Yahweh. Obviously the Tetragrammaton is a proper noun and so cannot be properly translated by using such common nouns as “Lord” or “God.” True, in some translations these common nouns are printed in all capitals, but that does not make them truly distinctive. Besides, when Bible texts are read aloud the listener is not aware of the capital letters, is he?

Then again, John 2:3, 4 in the *Catholic Confraternity Version* (1941) reads: “The wine having run short, the mother of Jesus said to him, ‘They have no wine.’ And Jesus said to her, ‘What wouldst thou have me do, woman? My hour has not yet come.’” This is just the opposite from the way Jesus actually spoke to his mother, even as indicated by his calling Mary “woman” instead of “mother.” What he actually said was: “Woman, why turn to me? My hour has not come yet.” (*The Jerusalem Bible*) A footnote states: “A semitic formula not infrequent in the O[ld] T[estament]. . . . It is used to depurate interference or, more strongly, to reject overtures of any kind.” Jesus was putting Mary in her place; he did not regard her as being on a pedestal.—Luke 11:27, 28.

Furnishing similar examples of religious bias is *The Children’s Living Bible* by K. N. Taylor. Thus at 2 Timothy 2:8 it reads: “Don’t ever forget the wonderful fact that Jesus Christ was a Man, born into King David’s family; and that he was God, as shown by the fact that he rose again from the dead.” But the original says nothing about Jesus’ being God, even as can be seen from the way the *New English Bible* renders this verse: “Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, born of David’s line.”

Then again, Taylor’s translation of Matthew 7:13 reads: “Heaven can be entered only through the narrow gate! The highway to hell is broad, and its gate is wide enough for all the multitudes who choose its easy way.” But the original says nothing about either *Hades* or *Gehenna*, the two Greek words often translated “hell.” Instead, it contrasts “life” and “destruction.”

LETTING GOD’S WORD ITSELF DIRECT

When there is a choice of alternatives, as when punctuation becomes vital, what the Bible itself says must be permitted to direct. (When the Bible was first written, there was no such thing as punctuation.) But Luke 23:43 is almost invariably rendered as if Jesus said: “I tell you verily, today you shall be with me in Paradise.” (*The Bible in Living English*, Byington) However, others, such as the *New World Translation* and *Rotherham*, put the comma after “today”: “Truly I tell you today, You will be with me in Paradise.” Which is correct?

All that we need to do is to ask, Did that malefactor merit going to heaven after a life of crime just because he expressed sympathy for Jesus and asked to be remembered by him? Did he ‘work out his salvation with fear and trembling’? (Luke 13:24; Phil. 2:12) Moreover, the Bible says nothing about Jesus as having

gone to a heavenly Paradise that day. On the contrary, Peter said that Jesus went to *Hades* when he died and was buried, and from it he was resurrected. Jesus himself said that, even as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a fish, so he would be—not in heaven but—“in the *heart of the earth* three days.” Besides, after being raised from the dead, Jesus told Mary that he had not as yet ascended to his God and to her God. (Matt. 12:40; John 20:17; Acts 2:22-33) So in view of these facts, what other conclusion can the objective Bible translator come to than that Jesus must have said, not “*To-day* you shall be with me in Paradise,” but, rather: “I tell you today, You will be with me in Paradise,” that is, at some future time.

The same principle holds true in beginning names with capital letters; it is up to the translator as to what use he makes of these. Thus those who believe the holy spirit to be the third person of a Trinity will, of course, capitalize “Holy Spirit,” as at Acts 1:8, which reads (*NEB*): “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you.” But in the actual account when Jesus’ words were fulfilled, what do we read? “This will happen in the last days: I will pour out upon everyone *a portion of my spirit.*”* (Acts 2:17, *NEB*) Where is the capital letter? It is not there! Why not? Because God could not pour out a portion of a coequal God; “spirit,” as used here, clearly could not refer to a person. Since this text relates to the very thing Jesus foretold at Acts 1:8, it must follow that he did not have a person in mind when he spoke of his apostles as receiving holy spirit, and so in Acts 1:8 it should not have been capitalized either.

All of this is in harmony with the words of John the Baptist that, while he baptized

with water, the coming One “will baptize you with holy spirit.” (Mark 1:8) One cannot be baptizing *with* another person but one can baptize others with water or with an active force, which is what God’s holy spirit is. Yes, translators must let the rest of God’s Word direct when there is a choice between renderings.

Illustrating this principle also are the words of Jesus at Matthew 24:3-8. Thus after Jesus tells of wars, famines and earthquakes, the *New English Bible* has Jesus saying: “With all these things the birth-pangs of the new age begin.” But not so. Rather, these things mark the death throes of an old order. The birth pangs leading to the new system of things are described at Revelation chapter 12, which tells of the birth of God’s Messianic kingdom followed by a war in heaven, between Michael and the great dragon, Satan the Devil.

THE IDEAL IS TO COMMUNICATE

It might well be said that no one translation is superior in every instance. While some freer translations may err as to accuracy, more literal ones may at times not communicate as well as do others. Thus, time and again, we read of some being “brought to silence.” (Isa. 6:5; Jer. 49:26) The actual thought is being brought to the ‘stillness of death.’ (Jer. 49:26, *NEB*) Likewise that expression of contempt, “anyone urinating against a wall” (1 Ki. 14:10; 21:21; 2 Ki. 9:8), is idiomatic, referring to males only, and so some translators simply render the expression “every mother’s son.” (*NEB*) But in other instances the *New English Bible* does not communicate as well as do other translations, as, for instance, when it reads: “They shall beat their swords into mattocks,” and “thy staff and thy crook are my comfort.” Not everyone reading will be familiar with a “mattock,” nor with a

* See also *The New American Bible*.

"crook" as referring to a shepherd's staff.
—Isa. 2:4; Ps. 23:4.

Truly, doing justice to translating the Bible presents a real challenge. It is indeed a blessing that there have been pro-

duced so many different translations. However, from the foregoing examples it may well be said that, as an accurate translation, the *New World Translation* has much to recommend it.

REACHING
PEOPLE
IN THE



SKYSCRAPERS OF NEW YORK

IT WAS a cold February morning in New York city. People were making their way in and out of stores amid towering skyscrapers, the tallest of them being the 110-story World Trade Center. Just a few blocks away from those mammoth structures is an insurance building that I was about to enter.

Getting off the elevator on the thirty-seventh floor, I looked down the long corridor with entrances leading to various offices. It was my prayer that people working in large office buildings here in New York city would be reached with the important message that we had for them.

Earlier that morning, as we prepared to set out on our mission, a group of us wondered: 'How would people in this business and financial center react to the good news of a coming world change by means of God's kingdom?' This question now flashed through my mind as I approached one end of the corridor leading to an office of a research corporation.

The friendly executive who greeted me had just been served a cup of coffee. My opening remark tied in with the morning break, after which I introduced myself as a representative of the Watch Tower Society whose world headquarters are located just across the East River from lower Manhattan. Inviting me into an adjoining office, he motioned to a chair near his desk and kindly suggested that I make myself comfortable.

In explaining the purpose of my call, I raised a question about the quality of life and what could be done to upgrade it. His interest seemed to be aroused. He gave the question some serious thought before responding. Within minutes it was apparent that this man was concerned about the general deterioration within human society and specifically what was happening in the city. However, he was not sure what could be done to improve the situation, unless, he said, "the answer lies in reli-

gion." That comment indicated something about his inclinations.

What he said was used to emphasize the purpose of my visit and the work that Jehovah's witnesses are doing. He was referred to the Bible and to what it says about these critical times and the basis for a welcome change. For detailed answers to questions and the hope for a better way of life for all mankind, he was offered a Bible study aid entitled "The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life." Readily accepting the publication, he insisted that I take an extra contribution, for which he was left additional pocket-size books. We had spent about twenty minutes discussing some pressing questions and spiritual matters. On leaving, he thanked me for the call.

That visit gave me added courage. It made me more aware of the fact that no matter what the occupation or business, there are people who feel the need to take a few minutes in their busy day to consider vital issues that affect them personally. Before the morning was over, that realization was heightened by experiences that my co-workers and I had in reaching people in offices high above the street level.

With some exceptions, we found business people quite courteous, civil and friendly in dealing with visitors like us. Putting ourselves in their position made us appreciate things that they must put up with. Like most other people, they feel the pressures of everyday life and are beset with anxieties. They wonder what the future holds, and, consequently, are in need of the Bible's comforting message.

OUR VARIED EXPERIENCES

Just how does one go about determining whom to see and how to reach them? The names of individuals or firms were usually listed on the directory located in the lobby area as well as on the various floors. But in many cases it was not possible to reach directly the person whose name was

given. Where a receptionist or secretary was on the job, I would ask for a particular individual or head of the firm after identifying myself and the organization I represented. If there was some hesitation, I assured them that my call would be brief.

Most receptionists were usually quite friendly and helpful. On other occasions, it was evident that they were instructed to screen out everyone except those who had appointments, in which case I found it practical to request an appointment.

In keeping such an appointment with the head of a personnel agency, I directed his attention to an article in *The Watchtower* dealing with the bad effects of drug abuse and what can be done to safeguard youths from getting hooked. Having teenage children, he immediately expressed concern over the drug problem. As a parent he wanted to protect his children from this danger, so he became fully absorbed in the discussion. One could keenly sense that this man was disturbed over what was happening to young people; he was concerned about his own family.

Despite several interruptions by phone calls and inquiries from his secretary, at no time was he inclined to curtail our conversation. The points referred to in the article were used to encourage him to receive regularly the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines. Without hesitation he agreed to have both magazines sent to his home. As he gave me his card, extending an invitation to visit him again, it was apparent that our thirty-minute discussion had accomplished much good.

On several occasions it was receptionists or secretaries who took a special interest in what we had to say from the Bible.

One of us called on a doctor who lived in an apartment that was not readily accessible to outsiders. So he had little occasion to get acquainted with the work of Jehovah's witnesses. However, when the Witness called at his office, he took advantage

of the opportunity to listen carefully. Even though the phone rang several times, he did not answer. "They will call back," he said, encouraging the Witness to continue the discussion. The doctor accepted four Bible study aids and wanted to examine them thoroughly.

An unexpected reception greeted two Witnesses who called on a businessman in his office. Before they even had time to introduce themselves, he inquired: "Jehovah's witnesses? I have been looking for you!" It turned out that his sister in a southern state was deriving much benefit from a home Bible study conducted by one of Jehovah's Christian witnesses, and she made known this fact to her brother. He readily took several Bible publications.

SECURITY MEASURES INCREASING

Trying to reach people in some office buildings was more difficult due to a variety of security measures now in effect, because of increasing crime. In some buildings security guards are on duty; identification cards or passes are needed to gain admittance beyond the lobby area. Sometimes we had to obtain permission in advance or we had to check with a personnel director, public relations officer or other such official.

In one building with security restrictions, I was directed to a brokerage executive who told me that something was happening to family life. "People are getting away from the Bible," he observed. In the ensuing discussion it was evident that he had respect for God's Word and advocated a closely knit family unit. For this he was commended. To emphasize how Jehovah's witnesses aid people in this vital area, he was shown one of the Watch Tower publications with a chapter on "Building a Happy Family Life." He was pleased to obtain a copy of the book.

What made this discussion so refreshing was his ready response and attentiveness,

along with his gracious manner. It was most satisfying to have reached such a person with the good news.

While making visits a few blocks above Wall Street, I noted that a number of office doors were locked. Outside bells had to be used to gain admittance. Peepholes in solid metal doors were also in evidence. My conversation with one receptionist in this area about the causes of increased lawlessness was overheard by a lawyer in an inside office. He invited me into his office for further discussion. He had just returned from court, where a case involving some youths was being handled. He voiced his fears that discipline in the home was breaking down. A fine discussion ensued, and he accepted a hardbound volume explaining what the Bible has to say on these and other vital matters.

WHAT CONCERNED THEM

It is evident that people in the business and professional community are definitely concerned about national and international issues. Their comments indicate a general dissatisfaction with the way things are going in the world. Few spoke with any degree of confidence in human plans and efforts to lay a solid basis for improvement in the foreseeable future.

While this attitude was reflected in the face of growing troubles elsewhere, problems closer to home disturbed them even more. The energy crisis, rising inflation, increasing lawlessness, youth and drug problems, family breakdown and deterioration in the quality of life around them are what they see from day to day.

By responding to the Bible-based message brought to them by Jehovah's Christian witnesses, some individuals working in the skyscrapers of New York are being directed to the divine source of true peace and security.—Contributed.

Are You TRULY APPROACHABLE?

J EHOVAH God highly values approachability on the part of those who serve him. We should expect this. For God himself has set a superb example of approachability, being accessible to the prayer of people of all kinds, at all times, under all manner of circumstances.—Ps. 65:2.

Evidence of God's high regard for approachability is found in his sending his Son to earth and causing him to live under lowly circumstances. For what purpose? Among other things, that this Son, Jesus Christ, "might become a merciful and faithful high priest," "not one who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tested in all respects like ourselves." Because of him, Christians can "approach with freeness of speech to the throne of [God's] undeserved kindness," doing so with boldness and confidence. (Heb. 2:17, 18; 4:15, 16; 10:19, 21, 22) Jehovah God wants it that way.

Today, people in general are steadily drifting apart; communications—between family members, between those with authority and those subject to authority—are steadily breaking down. This should cause us to appreciate more than ever the vital need for being approachable. We cannot afford to let such unfavorable worldly conditions filter into the Christian congregation and weaken the spirit of warmth and genuine love prevailing there. Who especially need to be alert, and how can they guard against such a danger?

Christian husbands, who are to 'love their wives as themselves,' need to guard this quality. Parents also must main-

tain approachability with their children if they do not want them to become 'exasperated and down-hearted.' And, in each Christian congregation, elders (overseers) need to prove themselves truly approachable in their dealings with all their brothers and sisters.—Eph. 5:28, 33; Col. 3:19, 21; 1 Pet. 5:1, 3.

PROVING OURSELVES APPROACHABLE

The key to being approachable is having sincere, genuine interest in others. It is not enough to say that we are approachable, that we have an "open-door" policy and the "welcome mat" is out. As the proverb says: "A multitude of men will proclaim each one his own loving-kindness." But words are not enough. We must demonstrate that we are genuinely approachable by the way we deal with others. (Prov. 20:6; 1 John 3:18) If we really care about people and are willing to give of ourselves on their behalf, they will sense this.

An elder in a congregation has an assignment by holy spirit to serve as a shepherd under Christ Jesus. But this assignment should not make him feel superior to others, for he himself is part of the flock as one of the "sheep." (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:2, 4) Instead, he should feel grateful that the Head of the congregation, Christ Jesus, counted him worthy to minister to fellow members of the flock and that God qualified him by granting him a measure of knowledge, understanding and wisdom. (1 Tim. 1:12; 2 Cor. 3:5) Such spiritual riches are like a 'trust fund' from God. Rather than feeling important in himself, he will be happy that, by God's undeserved kindness, he has something to give for the good of his brothers, good

counsel and knowledge, all based on and gained from God's own Word. Exactly opposite to feeling 'lifted up' in his own eyes, he will humbly endeavor to use that 'trust fund' of knowledge to bring praise to Jehovah and to his Son, the congregation's Head.—1 Cor. 4:7; 1 Pet. 4:10, 11.

DO YOU MAKE YOURSELF AVAILABLE?

Obviously, you cannot be approachable if you are not available to be approached. Of Jehovah God, the apostle Paul could say, "he is not far off from each one of us." (Acts 17:27) God's servant Moses was willing to endure the wearing task of aiding people with their problems "from the morning till the evening."—Ex. 18:13-16.

Of course, Christian elders may have many responsibilities to care for—they may have their own families that need their attention. And they are also interested in sharing in the announcing of the good news to those of the world of mankind, making disciples of as many as they can. Yet, if they are to be good shepherds of the flock they must balance these and other responsibilities in such a way as to make themselves available to their brothers and sisters in the congregation who seek information or aid in personal questions and problems.

At Christian meeting places it is often simply a matter of letting others see that you are there, available and willing to talk. If one gives the appearance of being constantly "busy," many may hesitate to approach. Congregational records and paper work have certain value, but these are not what show one to be a true shepherd of the "sheep." It would be better to handle these after the real, live "sheep" themselves have first received due attention.—Compare Proverbs 27:23; John 10:2-4.

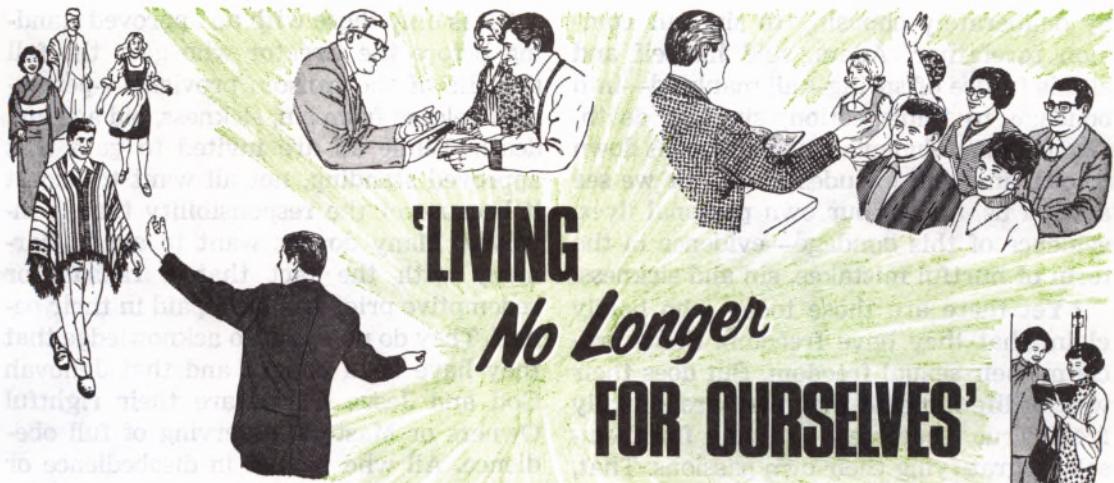
It is a fine thing, of course, to take the initiative in showing interest in others, approaching them. This follows God's example, for he did not wait for humankind

to approach him first, but took the initial steps himself. (Jer. 7:13, 25; 2 Cor. 5:20; 1 John 4:10, 19) Even in this, however, it is vital that we demonstrate that we are not merely being "congenial," nor just following a "policy" of being (or appearing) friendly and outgoing. Our interest must be sincere and genuine.—1 Pet. 1:22.

Do we really *listen* when someone presents a question or a problem? The matter may seem minor, even somewhat trivial, to us. Yet to the one presenting it, it may seem very big. Some parents are guilty of "exasperating" their children and making them downhearted through ignoring or even ridiculing them for presenting certain seemingly small problems. Elders should guard against doing the same thing with those they serve in the congregation. For Jehovah God is clearly not like that. As James 1:5 tells us, Jehovah God is not "stingy" about giving us help with our problems—problems that certainly could look very small from his lofty viewpoint—but he hears us and generously aids, not becoming annoyed or reproaching us for having come to him with such matters.

On one occasion certain parents brought their young children to God's Son. Jesus' disciples tried to prevent this, evidently feeling that 'their Master had far more important things to occupy his time and attention.' But Jesus became indignant on seeing this, reproved his disciples, and took the children into his arms and gave them the attention sought.—Matt. 19:13, 14; Mark 10:13-16.

Surely the fine example he and his Father set for us should move us all to prove that we, too, are truly approachable. So doing, we will contribute to a fine spirit in God's congregation, a true Christian spirit of warmth and confidence, love and brotherly affection. We will prove ourselves a blessing to others and will, in turn, be richly blessed.



'LIVING No Longer FOR OURSELVES'

HOW highly prized freedom is! On all sides today persons extol freedom and equality. The ideas of freedom and independence are so prominent that many rebel even at the thought of having to be directed by someone else, or, in effect, living for someone else. You may have heard such ones say, 'I want to live the way *I* want.' They do not want to be slaves to anyone. To most people, the very word "slave" brings to mind scenes of past centuries when hopeless men strained at the oars of a galley, labored in a quarry or served the will of some cruel master.

² The bad effects of slavery—of humans existing as no more than the property of another person—reach down even to our time. A 1972 United Nations report stated that 'the origin of the social strife in many countries today is directly attributable to various forms of slavery. Recently large-scale massacres in several countries have been perpetrated by peoples formerly enslaved, against those who had once been their masters.'

1. What is the common response to the ideas of freedom and slavery?
2. Is slavery something affecting only people of past generations?

"For the love the Christ has compels us, because . . . he died for all that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died for them." —2 Cor. 5:14, 15.

³ 'Well, that does not involve me; I'm no slave,' you may think. However, a renowned writer who observed firsthand the slavery of the Roman Empire proved that every person in the entire empire was, in a sense, a slave. By the same reasoning, the slave population today includes all mankind. That renowned writer, the apostle Paul, did not consider himself exempt but, in writing to Christians at Rome, said: "I am fleshly, sold under sin. . . . I behold in my members [a] law warring against the law of my mind and leading me captive to sin's law that is in my members." —Rom. 7:14, 23.

ARE WE REALLY FREE, INDEPENDENT?

⁴ The apostle Paul did not mean that his own parents willingly had sold him into captivity to sin; nor did our own parents do that to us. But Paul understood that,

3. Why can it be said that slavery is more widespread today than is usually thought?
4. 5. What evidence is there that all of us are enslaved?

by deliberately choosing to sin, our common forefather, Adam, sold himself and all his future offspring—all mankind—into bondage to imperfection, sin and death. (Rom. 5:12) Undeniably this reaches down to our time and includes us all, for we see around us, and in our own personal lives, evidence of this bondage—evidence in the form of hurtful mistakes, sin and sickness.

⁵ Yet there are those today who boldly claim that they have freedom. Some proclaim their sexual freedom. But does their way of life indicate that they are actually free? True, they may be living for themselves, gratifying their own passions. That, however, only underscores the fact that they are slaves to imperfection and sin. What of the man whose greed drives him to gain money, possessions or prestige? He, too, grows older and weaker, succumbs to some disease and finally dies. That is true even of the leaders of civil, women's and minority "rights" movements. The end for all is the same—death—proving that they are indeed slaves of Kings Sin and Death.—Rom. 5:21.

⁶ Does this mean that man's situation is hopeless? Is there no emancipation from sin and death? And if there is a provision for release, can you still live just as you want, or is something required of you to benefit from this provision?

⁷ A fundamental teaching of the Bible is that God, in his mercy, made provision for man's release from bondage to sin and death. This was by means of his only-begotten Son, who became the perfect human Jesus. In harmony with God's purpose for him, Jesus laid down his life sacrificially as "a corresponding ransom for all." (1 Tim. 2:5, 6) Though the ransom or redemptive price was thus paid "for all," not all will fully receive its benefits. Why not?

6. This enslavement should lead to what questions on our part?

7. How has provision been made for release from this bondage?

⁸ It is only those with an approved standing before the Creator who gain the full benefits of the ransom provision—permanent release from sin, sickness, old age and death. While all are invited to gain that approved standing, not all want to accept it because of the responsibility that is involved. Many do not want to act in harmony with the fact that a ransom or redemptive price has been paid in their behalf. They do not want to acknowledge that they have been bought and that Jehovah God and Jesus Christ are their rightful Owners or Masters, deserving of full obedience. All who persist in disobedience or who later renounce Jehovah God and Jesus Christ as their Owners lose out on the benefits of the ransom provision.—Matt. 10:33; John 3:36; Heb. 10:26, 27; 2 Pet. 2:1-3.

⁹ The question before all humans, therefore, is, Whom do I want to serve voluntarily—sin with death in view, or God and Christ with life in view? (Rom. 6:16) 'That is not much of a choice,' some may say. 'I'd rather die than be a slave forever.' But is that sound reasoning when it comes to serving God and Christ? Did not Jesus say that the "truth will set you free"? (John 8:32) Should we, therefore, not expect service to God and Christ to offer the kind of freedom that every honest-hearted person would desire? Consider:

A DIFFERENCE IN MASTERS

¹⁰ There is good reason for humans to want to be slaves of God and Christ. They are unlike the cruel masters of past centuries who brutalized and exploited their slaves and cared little about their welfare and happiness. What Jehovah God and his Son have done for mankind testifies to

8. Why do not all humans receive the benefits of the ransom?

9. What choice is set before all mankind?

10. What type of "masters" do Christians have in heaven?

their depth of concern and boundless love.

¹¹ Jehovah God is the One to whom we are indebted for life. 'He created all things, and because of his will they existed and were created.' (Rev. 4:11) He could have executed the death sentence upon the disobedient Adam and Eve before they were able to become parents. None of us would then have been born. However, moved by merciful consideration for their unborn offspring, Jehovah God allowed the first human pair to continue living and to procreate. Despite the unappreciative attitude of most of their descendants, he did not withhold from humankind his generous provisions for sustaining life. (Matt. 5:45) Even the "pagans" could not disagree with the apostle Paul's statement that God does "good, giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling your hearts to the full with food and good cheer."—Acts 14:17; Ps. 104:13-15, 24.

¹² But God's expression of love and undeserved kindness did not stop at this point. So that sinful, undeserving humans could choose to come into an approved relationship with him and be freed from bondage to sin and death, God did not "spare" his dearest Son from undergoing a shameful death. (Rom. 8:32) For the majority of mankind the opportunity for life free from death that this affords will become theirs upon being raised from the dead. (Acts 24:15) Think of it, Jehovah God did this for humans who did not even acknowledge his authority in their lives. As the apostle Paul wrote to Christians at Rome: "God recommends his own love to us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."—Rom. 5:8.

¹³ The purchase of sinful mankind with "precious blood" was also an outstanding evidence of Jesus' own deep love. (1 Pet. 1:19, 20) As Jesus himself put it: "I surrender my soul in behalf of the sheep. . . .

This is why the Father loves me, because I surrender my soul, in order that I may receive it again. No man has taken it away from me, but I surrender it of my own initiative." (John 10:15-18) "No one has love greater than this, that someone should surrender his soul in behalf of his friends." (John 15:13) Jesus actually did more than that. He died, not only for his friends, but for the world of mankind in general that did not acknowledge any accountability to his Father. (1 John 2:2) Now, what man would have been willing to do that for people who had no respect for his father? We are indeed indebted to Jesus Christ for purchasing us at the cost of his life, opening up to us the opportunity to gain freedom from sin and death.

¹⁴ In view of the great love of God and Christ, is your heart stirred to want to be in their service? Do you feel like certain men of ancient times who, though offered freedom, voluntarily chose to continue in slavery to their kind and generous Hebrew masters? (Ex. 21:2-6) That is the heartfelt response of those who appreciate what Jehovah God and Jesus Christ have done in their behalf. As Paul wrote, "the love the Christ has compels us." (2 Cor. 5:14) Observe that he did not say that God compels or that Christ compels humans to take up faithful service to them. On the contrary, the compelling force is "the love the Christ has." And, since Jehovah God has the same love for us as does his Son, God's love has like compelling force.

¹⁵ The relationship that you can enter into with God and Christ, if you have not already entered it, is not a formal or impersonal one, but warm and close. On his final night as a human with his disciples, Jesus warmly assured them: "I no longer call you slaves, because a slave does not

11, 12. In what ways are we indebted to God?
13. Why are we indebted to Jesus Christ?

14. How should we respond to this indebtedness?
15. What is the nature of a Christian's relationship with Jehovah and Jesus Christ?

know what his master does. But I have called you friends, because all the things I have heard from my Father I have made known to you." (John 15:15) By this Jesus was not saying that their real position was no longer that of slaves, for they still owed their lives to God, and soon Christ was to pay the "redemption price" for them. He meant that he was not treating them as mere slaves, ones who just get assignments but no intimate information. No, they were to be treated as "friends," as trusted and respected confidants.

¹⁶ So we see that there is nothing burdensome about slavery to God and Christ. Their commands are based on love and serve to protect obedient ones from injury and to ensure their lasting happiness and welfare. (1 John 5:3) No oppressive yoke awaits those who, motivated by love, choose to disown themselves in order to be slaves of God and Christ. "Come to me," said Jesus Christ, "all you who are toiling and loaded down, and I will refresh you. Take my yoke upon you and become my disciples, for I am mild-tempered and lowly in heart, and you will find refreshment for your souls. For my yoke is kindly and my load is light." (Matt. 11:28-30) With such loving masters, what rightly disposed man or woman could possibly want to pursue a course of self-willed independence?

A SLAVE DOES WHOSE WILL FIRST?

¹⁷ If the love of God and Christ compels you to serve them, this will be reflected in the way you live your life. You will not be living for yourself. As the apostle Paul wrote: "[Christ] died for all that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died for them." (2 Cor. 5:15) Just what does this involve?

16. Why is service to God and Christ not burdensome? 17. What effect should the love of God and Christ have on the way we live our life?

¹⁸ Ponder a literal slave-master relationship. Would a faithful, trusted slave put off serving his master or treat such service as of minor importance? Would he give first attention to his own comforts or personal interests in life? Most certainly not! Then what about slaves of God and Christ?

¹⁹ An illustration used by Jesus Christ gives a forceful answer to this question. He drew upon the fact that then slaves who worked in the field might also serve the evening meal to their master. This was viewed as something to which the master was entitled. Jesus said: "Will he [the master] not say to him [the slave], 'Get something ready for me to have my evening meal, and put on an apron and minister to me until I am through eating and drinking, and afterward you can eat and drink'?" He will not feel gratitude to the slave because he did the things assigned, will he?" Then, regarding the fulfillment of their assignments, Jesus advised his disciples to say: "We are good-for-nothing slaves. What we have done is what we ought to have done."—Luke 17:7-10.

²⁰ Jesus was not here recommending that Christians constantly be tearing themselves down, depreciating themselves, thinking of themselves as useless. No, but he was advising them to keep clearly in mind their relationship to God and his Son. As Christians, it is not their personal will and comforts that come first, for Christ died that they "might live no longer for themselves."

²¹ Of course, service to God and Christ is not always easy, but never is such service the reason for problems. In itself it is a source of joy and refreshment. Humans without faith and wicked spirit forces, however, are the ones that make

18-20. (a) As illustrated by Jesus, what comes first if a person is no longer living for himself? (b) Did Jesus mean that we are useless?

21. Why is 'living no longer for ourselves' very difficult at times?

things hard for Christians. (Eph. 6:11, 12; 2 Thess. 3:1-3) This has been the experience in modern times of Jehovah's Christian witnesses, especially in lands under dictatorial rule. Often they have been persecuted because of obeying Jesus' command to preach and teach God's Word. (Matt. 28:19, 20) At other times persecution has come upon them because, out of faithfulness to God, they refuse to get involved in the political and military affairs of the nations. (John 6:15; 17:16) The 'line of least resistance' would be to give in, to live 'good, moral lives,' while accommodating the demands of the totalitarian governments. But these Christians are not living for themselves. They are servants of God and Christ. Appreciating the boundless love that they have been shown, they are willing to suffer, yes, even to die, in faithful service.

²² Thus, in the book *Even Under the Sky There Is Hell* (1971, page 117) a Czechoslovakian reporter described the cruel treatment of Jehovah's witnesses in a Communist labor camp during 1951: 'I will always remember with admiration and recognition Jehovahists [Jehovah's witnesses], mostly young boys, who refused military duty and were condemned for it. Even here they remained in their faith . . . and they refused to work in uranium mines. Commanders of the camps used everything they had at their disposition to force them to do the work, but everything they tried was in vain; most of them would rather die than work in building the Soviet atomic threat. The chief of the camp Palacek made them stand for days in front of headquarters in snow drifts in the [-]30° C. [-22° F.] winter weather pouring water on them till they were frozen. It was a terrible sight, which will haunt me till I die.'

22, 23. (a) What did young Witnesses in Czechoslovakia endure? (b) What enabled them to continue faithful?

²³ What enabled these young men to maintain faithfulness? They appreciated that they had been bought with "precious blood" and did not want to prove false to their Owners, Jehovah God and Jesus Christ. They had the firm conviction that, though killed by men, God and Christ would not forget them and would restore them to life. They believed the inspired assurances: "God is not unrighteous so as to forget your work and the love you showed for his name." (Heb. 6:10) "Whoever seeks to keep his soul [life] safe for himself will lose it, but whoever loses it will preserve it alive."—Luke 17:33.

²⁴ While you individually may never face such a severe test of your faithfulness to God, are you, nonetheless, even now putting him first? Maybe the test of your faithfulness involves family members—perhaps they abuse you, saying you 'take your religion too seriously.' Or, possibly your schoolmates or workmates put pressure on you to abandon your Christian principles. What are you doing and will you do in the face of such difficulties? Giving in to the persecution or pressure might seem to make life easier, more bearable; whereas proving faithful to God may mean continued or even increased abuse for a while. If you bear in mind your indebtedness to God and Christ, you will make the right decision. You will continue to "glorify God."—1 Cor. 6:20.

USING YOUR "FREE" TIME

²⁵ Living no longer for ourselves involves more, though, than faithful endurance when we are being persecuted. Christians are urged: "Whatever you are doing, work at it whole-souled as to Jehovah, and not

24. In what related situations can we show that we are not 'living for ourselves'?

25. What, besides faithful endurance when we are persecuted, is involved in 'living no longer for ourselves'?

to men, for you know that it is from Jehovah you will receive the due reward of the inheritance. Slave for the Master, Christ." (Col. 3:23, 24) Hence, living no longer for ourselves includes every aspect of life—morals, how one thinks, acts, talks and works, wifely subjection, husbandly exercise of headship and obedience to parents.—Col. 3:5-22.

²⁶ You may, however, have observed that many professed Christians make exceptions. It is well known that even among nominal Christians who have a certain sense of decency, wild unrestraint—drunkenness, immorality and destruction of property—often accompanies festivals that are linked to church holidays. Vacations, evenings and weekends are also times when more and more people feel they are free to "live" as they please.

²⁷ Relaxation and pleasure are, of course, useful in achieving a balanced life and personality. And a genuine Christian rightly uses some of his time in pursuits that are relaxing and pleasurable. But he does not live solely for pleasure. He does not ration off some specific part of his life as "my time," during which he can forget that he is serving God.

²⁸ That this is so is seen from the fine way in which Christian servants of Jehovah use their "free" time. High on the list of pleasurable things they do are things directly related to their worship. They delight to speak about their Creator and to attend Christian meetings each week. The wholesome association and instruction received make these meetings most enjoyable. Even when families are away traveling, they may include some Christian meetings in their plans. Thus they enjoy

an added pleasure—the opportunity to meet new friends, spiritual brothers and sisters, in another city or country. When situated some distance from a Kingdom Hall, perhaps camping in the woods, they find joy in meditating about their Creator and Scriptural discussions as family groups. Then, too, many of Jehovah's witnesses schedule their vacation period to include benefiting to the full from one of the large Christian conventions arranged each year.

²⁹ So when you personally give thought to evenings, weekends or vacations, reflect on your standing before God and Christ. Endeavor to do that which will refresh you physically, mentally or spiritually. Have as your goal gaining strength that you will put to good use in continued service to God after the "free" period is over. While the world may say, 'Get away for a while and forget your regular routine,' demonstrate your appreciation for what God and Christ have done for you. Avoid things that could disturb your conscience and cause you to look back with regret on what might otherwise have been a rewarding and refreshing time.

³⁰ Really, the servant of God should have in mind doing all things to the glory of his Creator. (1 Cor. 10:31) Though imperfect, he should strive to control sinful inclinations and not 'present himself as a slave of sin.' (Rom. 6:16) You may have noted, however, that some persons who say they believe in the Creator and his Son lead daily lives that center on having all the pleasure they can get here and now. What is lacking? Might it be that they see no hope for the future? Just how is your day-to-day living influenced by your view of the future? This we leave for the next article to consider.

26. What exceptions do nominal Christians make in the way they conduct themselves?

27, 28. (a) While there is a time for relaxation, what will true Christians not do or think? (b) In what fine ways do they use their "free" time?

29. When giving thought to our use of "free" time, what might we beneficially consider?

30. What questions arise regarding those who claim to believe in God but live for pleasure?

Serve WITH ETERNITY IN VIEW

IS IT not common today to meet persons whose basic theme in life, as revealed by what they say or do, is: "Enjoy yourself while you can; who knows what tomorrow will bring?" Even many nations seem to follow that idea. One of Europe's most influential economists accused his government of pursuing a policy of "After us the deluge"—that is, plan and spend money with only today in view, not the future.

² And many people are so disenchanted with the goals and accomplishments of the "establishment" that they are not interested in a future of just more of the same. In 1972 one college professor observed that "young adults do not seem interested enough in their own personal future." He added: "Youth lacks what social scientists call 'goal orientation,' and they frequently appear to be frittering away their time with everything from drugs and protest to life-style experiments and pointless projects or pleasures." Then there are other persons who would rather not even think about the future because of the ever more terrifying warnings about pollution, crime, famine and war.

³ Even if the major nations made startling breakthroughs in international relations, so that the foretold significant announcement of "peace and security" appeared certain, many persons would still 'live just for the moment.' (1 Thess. 5:3) They believe that they might as well get

1, 2. (a) What view do individuals and nations have about the future? (b) Why are some not even inclined to think about their future?

3. What realization moves many persons to live just for the present?

all they can out of life while they have it, since science (in which they have trusted) cannot prevent death. For example, commenting on science's findings, one reporter admitted that Tübingen professor Friedhelm Schneider has established that "nothing supports [the view] that death is tied to the concept of life as a physical necessity." And the reporter acknowledged that current evidence is that "with the right mixture of cell hormones in each cell one would die no more." Still, he was compelled to add, "Except: At present there is no possibility of producing this right mixture!" So, for most people it is 'Live for today!' since death appears to be inevitable.

⁴ What a vastly different outlook, though, is found among the Christian witnesses of Jehovah! It is not a fatalistic "let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we are to die." (1 Cor. 15:32) Rather, they are intensely interested in the future, looking forward to it. In fact, their whole life and thinking revolve around, not a finite, limited existence, but around eternity. However, is that so with *you* individually? In order to see how it can be so, let us consider "eternity" as respects God and his purposes.

ETERNITY INHERENT IN OUR WORSHIP

⁵ It can fittingly be said that Christian worship pivots around eternity, for our God is himself eternal. For humans, that may be hard to conceive—God never having a beginning. But just consider the

4. (a) Is this the view of Jehovah's witnesses? (b) But what does each of us need to consider?

5. Why is eternity fundamental to our worship?

mountains, the whole earth, and, yes, the entire universe. Are these new, recent? Scientists date the universe in thousands of millions of years. So would not their Creator extend back even beyond that? Understandably, the apostle Paul wrote that Jehovah's "eternal power and Godship" are evident from what He has created.—Rom. 1:20.

⁶ God's eternity also extends into the future. The writers of both the Hebrew Scriptures and the Christian Greek Scriptures knew that God will never die, hence, that Jehovah will reign for all eternity to come. The psalmist proclaimed: "Jehovah is King to time indefinite [Heb., 'ohlam], even forever [Heb., 'adh]."⁷ (Ps. 10:16; Ex. 15:18) And in the final book of the Bible the apostle John quoted voices out of heaven that said about the Lord Jehovah: "He will rule as king forever and ever." The writer John here used the plural form of the Greek phrase, which literally means "to the ages of the ages." (Rev. 11:15; 1 Tim. 1:17) With regard to the future, then, John knew unquestionably that our Creator will reign "into the ages of the ages." (*Kingdom Interlinear Translation*) What can this mean both now and in the future for you?

⁸ Not all of God's living creation is eternal. We know that plants, even long-lived trees, eventually die. (1 Pet. 1:24) And there is no Biblical evidence that God purposed for individual animals to live forever. Yet it was different with humans. God held out to our first parents the prospect of never dying. By obedience they could have hoped to live eternally. (Gen. 2:17) God's purpose in this regard was not interrupted by man's fall into sin. But the Bible shows that His purpose to have obedient humans living forever on earth is definitely going to be realized. That will be accomplished by means of God's kingdom.

6. What does the Bible indicate about God's future?
7. Is eternal existence linked with all of God's living creation on earth? And what about man?

dom, which, as described in Revelation 12:1-5, was born in heaven in 1914 C.E. Yes, since then it has been appropriate to say: "The kingdom of the world did become the kingdom of our Lord."—Rev. 11:15.

ETERNAL RULERS IN THE KINGDOM

⁸ This kingdom, the means by which eternal life is possible for us, is a heavenly government. Jesus himself is the chief Ruler, and he is to have 144,000 co-rulers who have been chosen from mankind and called by God to heavenly life. (Rom. 8:16, 17; Luke 22:29; Rev. 5:9, 10; 14:1) The paramount importance of this kingdom is seen in the emphasis that God put on it in the Bible. It was the chief subject of Jesus' preaching. (Matt. 4:23) Also, it is to the spirit-anointed Christians who will rule in that kingdom that *most* of the Christian Greek Scriptures is directed, including the promises of everlasting life.

⁹ For instance, the apostle John wrote in 1 John 2:25: "This is the promised thing that he himself promised us, the life everlasting." Did he mean everlasting life on earth, or immortal life in heaven? John realized that God's purpose from the time of Adam was to have the earth filled with true worshipers who would receive everlasting life. But in these words John was speaking to Christians who had been anointed with holy spirit and called to heavenly life. (1 John 2:20) Thus, he went on to say: "As yet it has not been made manifest what we shall be. We do know that whenever he [God] is made manifest we shall be like him, because we shall see him just as he is."—1 John 3:2.

¹⁰ A similar promise of eternal life is found in Jesus' statement: "Most truly I say to you, If anyone observes my word, he will never see death at all." (John 8:51;

8. Why is God's kingdom stressed in the Bible?
9. How can we see what John meant by "life everlasting" in 1 John 2:25?
10. In promising that his disciples would "never see death," what did Jesus mean?

6:51, 58; 11:25, 26; 12:25) Christ obviously did not mean that the faithful apostles and others who soon would be anointed with holy spirit would never grow old or die. He knew that in order for them to receive heavenly life they must die. Some months earlier Jesus had told them that he himself would die and then be resurrected. (Matt. 16:21; 17:22, 23; John 2: 19-22) All of his anointed followers, too, had to die to become immortal rulers in his kingdom. (1 Cor. 15:42-44, 49, 53; 2 Tim. 4:18) Then how would such ones "never see death at all"? In that by being faithful until death they would never be harmed by the *second* death, as borne out by Revelation 2:10, 11. Thus, after being resurrected, they will forever be kings in heaven, to the benefit of all of God's servants on earth. (Rev. 22:5) What a blessing!

¹¹ This hope of everlasting life, however, is not limited to those who are part of the heavenly kingdom. Not at all. In speaking about this time or the generation seeing the establishment of the Kingdom, Jesus definitely promised everlasting earthly life. This is the time for separating the "sheep" from the "goats." (Matt. 25:31-33) And what reward did Jesus hold out for the "sheep" who help and serve with his anointed "brothers" but who are not themselves such "brothers" of Christ who have heavenly life in view? He promised that these righteous ones will enter into "everlasting life," yes, life right here on earth. (Matt. 25:46) What a thrilling prospect, living forever on earth, which God has purposed to become a paradise! But how much does that really mean to you? Do you show that you believe it? Does it influence your daily decisions? your attitude toward your job? what subjects you choose in school? whether you will get married soon? Yes, are you living with eternity in view?

¹¹. How can we be sure that everlasting life on earth is possible for persons alive at this time?

MORE THAN GLIMMERINGS OF EVERLASTING LIFE

¹² The possibility of being numbered among the "sheep" who will enter into everlasting life on earth without dying should stimulate your devotion to God. Why, you are in position to experience things of which many faithful servants of God in past centuries could see only glimmerings. Note how this was so with King David.

¹³ In Psalm 37:11, 29 David wrote: "The meek ones themselves will possess the earth, . . . The righteous themselves will possess the earth, and they will reside forever upon it." In saying this he evidently drew upon what *should* have been the case with regard to the Promised Land in his days and in the following generations. According to God's covenant with Abraham, the wicked pagans who had lived in the land should be cleared out. (Gen. 15:18-21; 17:8; Deut. 7:22; Josh. 21:43-45) Thus each successive generation of righteous worshipers making up the nation of Israel could have resided on the land, the portion of the earth that God gave to them. (Deut. 30:20) We know, however, that the majority of the Israelites proved unfaithful, and so they did not carry out God's purpose in that regard. In fact, finally God let the Assyrians and Babylonians conquer and depopulate the land temporarily.

¹⁴ What David wrote in Psalm 37, though, was also a glimmering of the prospect that Christians today can have. That David's words had a broader, large-scale application to the Kingdom rule of the entire earth is seen in the fact that at Matthew 5:5 Jesus quoted from Psalm 37. Did Christ say that its fulfillment was all in the past? No, for he projected it into the future, saying that the 'mild-tempered *will* inherit the earth.' Yes, those mild-tempered

¹². In what sense are we particularly privileged?

¹³. What was David evidently drawing on in what he wrote at Psalm 37:11, 29?

¹⁴. Jesus showed that Psalm 37:11, 29 had what further, grander significance?

ones who are to be with Christ in his heavenly kingdom will rule over this earth. (Rev. 5:9, 10) Jesus knew that the Kingdom would rule the earth in righteousness forever. So, the earth itself will be populated by "righteous" ones who will "reside forever upon it." Thus, by inspiration, David had described what the finale will be when Jehovah carries out his purpose for our earth. Christians can rejoice that the things of which David saw just glimmerings, and could personally share in only by means of a future resurrection, they can experience. Those whom the Lord puts on his right hand as "sheep" have the opportunity to "reside forever" on a paradise earth governed forever from heaven.

¹⁵ How fitting, then, that we focus our thinking, plans and hopes on serving Jehovah with eternity in view! Think how much David, Abraham and prophets such as Isaiah and Micah would have thrilled to be alive now with such a privilege. In describing prophetically the restoration of pure worship among the Jews after their return from exile in 537 B.C.E., Micah indicated the attitude that he and other true worshipers had: "For all the peoples, for their part, will walk each one in the name of its god; but we, for our part, shall walk in the name of Jehovah our God to time indefinite, even forever." (Mic. 4:1-5; Isa. 65:18) He was absolutely determined to worship God eternally. At that time Micah did not have everlasting life. Up to then death was an unavoidable experience for mortal men. Yet Micah was going to serve God right up to the day he died, and upon resurrection in the New Order he would carry on his service as if it were uninterrupted. What a fine view for Micah to have! But should not we, many of whom have the prospect actually

to walk in the name of God forever, uninterrupted, have the same outlook?

NOT SERVING JUST UNTIL SOME DATE

¹⁶ Whether we personally have the prospect of life in heaven with Jesus or in an earthly paradise, it is vital to remember that, not any set date, but *eternity* is our goal. We can, in this respect, imitate those who were Christians prior to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E. They rightly expected the end of the Jewish system of things to occur soon, during the "great tribulation" that Jesus said would come in that generation. (Matt. 24:3, 21, 22, 34) But had they decided, when they repented and became Christians, to serve only until some date or event? By no means. What they had learned and accepted, such as what Peter preached to Cornelius and his household, was not that they were to be Christians only until some approaching date arrived. Rather, God "granted repentance for the purpose of life," endless life as Christians.—Acts 10:34-43; 11:18.

¹⁷ Hence, when Jesus' half brother Jude wrote his inspired letter around 65 C.E., about one year before the Romans attacked Jerusalem for the first time, he did not mention some terminal date. Instead, he wrote: "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) He knew that the goal was to serve God forever. Whether the "tribulation" on the Jewish system came in two years, or three, or beyond that, would not affect the fact that they were going to keep right on serving God.

¹⁸ And it is the same today among true Christians who realize from the fulfillment of Bible prophecy that the end of this entire wicked system of things is near at

16. Those who became Christians in the first century C.E. had what view of their service?

17. How did Jude manifest this view?

18. (a) Where do we stand in the stream of time?

(b) What does Bible chronology indicate, without setting dates?

15. What was Micah's attitude with regard to worshiping Jehovah, and what does this mean for us?

hand. True, the most accurate Bible chronology available indicates that 6,000 years of human existence will end in the mid-1970's.* So these Christians are intensely interested to see if that will coincide with the outbreak of the "great tribulation" of our day that will eliminate all wicked ones on earth. It could. But they are not even attempting to predict exactly when the destruction of Satan's wicked system of things will occur. They are content to wait and see, realizing that no human on earth knows the date.—Matt. 24:36.

¹⁹ Jehovah's Christian witnesses are confident that God is going to bring the end of this ungodly system in HIS due time. When the "great tribulation" begins, we will be able to recognize it. So instead of speculating about a certain date, as if serving with that date as a goal, we can concentrate on the important preaching work that Jesus said his disciples would do in this time period. (Mark 13:10) Thus, whenever the "tribulation" breaks out, we will be found busy and zealously carrying out the assignment we have. And our "sights" for the future will not be on some date, but we will be serving with eternity in view, just as Jude urged Christians to do.

REFLECT ETERNAL WORSHIP IN YOUR CONDUCT AND DECISIONS

²⁰ Our firm belief that we can serve God forever should also be evident in matters other than our preaching. It should influence our daily thoughts and deeds. This is mentioned because a person might say that he agrees with all that we have considered up to this point but then manifest by his daily life that it still does not affect his thoughts and actions. He might show that actually he is living only for NOW. How sad that would be!

* See *Aid to Bible Understanding*, pages 322-348.

19. This leads to what outlook among God's servants today?

20, 21. (a) What might a person's life indicate about his view of the future? (b) Is this the wise outlook to have?

²¹ The very fact that true worshipers can have a place in Jehovah's *eternal* purpose proves how fleeting *now* is. It is comparable to one half inch on a measuring stick that extends for thousands of miles, if you can picture that. Would it be sensible to govern one's whole life by the half inch, as if that were the principal thing? How much more balanced and wise is the one who lives now so as to live forever, and who measures and evaluates things in terms of how they will affect his *everlasting* welfare!

²² One example to illustrate living with eternity in view involves marriage. The inclination on the part of young men and women toward marriage is understandable. Marriage is an arrangement that God provided and it has many blessings. But among imperfect humans it also has its problems and limitations. (1 Cor. 7:28) The apostle Paul understood this, and he recommended singleness for Christians who could maintain that state without being persistently disturbed by passion. Such single persons would be able to give 'constant attention to the Lord without the distractions' associated with married life. And Paul said that this advantage of singleness was specially valuable because "the time left is reduced."—1 Cor. 7:29-38.

²³ For many young persons who have no faith in the possibility of serving God everlasting, the attitude is, 'Why bother with self-control. If we want to enjoy sex or to get married, let's do it. Who knows what the future will bring?' But the young Christian who is really serving with eternity in view is in no such rush. He is willing to wait until he is "past the bloom of youth" to decide if it would be better for him to marry or not. In the meantime he can experience the advantage of singleness:

22, 23. (a) The Scriptures help Christians to understand what about marriage? (b) In contrast to the world, what attitude do Christian youths who serve with eternity in view have toward marriage?

"undivided devotion to the Lord." (1 Cor. 7:35, *Revised Standard Version*) If in time he decides to marry, he then will be better prepared to handle the responsibilities involved. His serving with eternity in view thus helps him to avoid living only for "now." And note, it is reflected in his everyday decisions.

²⁴ One's belief in serving eternally should also affect one's view of money and possessions. Many people in the world have a 'get it while you can' attitude toward these. And advertisements constantly stress buying new things *now*. But how do you react? What is your view? When you are tempted along these materialistic lines, does eternity come into the picture? It should, for after showing the dangers of loving money and material possessions, the Bible recommends thinking about everlasting life. (1 Tim. 6:6-12) So when directly or subtly pressured toward obtaining more money or possessions, ask yourself: 'A thousand years from now, will I regret having decided against taking an extra job that would enable me to buy a new car or boat?' Or ask, 'A million years into the New Order, will I look back and feel I made the wrong decision in turning down overtime work so I would not miss any of my Christian meetings?' Yes, *eternity* should influence our daily lives and thinking.

24. How does "eternity" affect one's outlook on material goods?

²⁵ This same outlook—serving with eternity in view—will aid Christians to endure joyfully. Though opposition, sickness and old age can be difficult tests to endure, measured against eternity, this endurance is but momentary. We can have eternity before us, just as the apostle expressed it: "Even if the man we are outside is wasting away, certainly the man we are inside is being renewed from day to day. For though the tribulation is momentary and light, it works out for us a glory that is of more and more surpassing weight and is everlasting; while we keep our eyes, not on the things seen, but on the things unseen. For the things seen are temporary, but the things unseen are everlasting."

—2 Cor. 4:16-18; Matt. 19:29.

²⁶ As Christians, then, let us strive each day to remember that our God is eternal and that we should serve him with eternity in view. And he will aid us by increasing our knowledge of his eternal truth and giving us of his holy spirit, which is promised to his servants as a helper forever. (2 John 2; John 14:16, 17) Thus our service to him will not be just for now, or for a limited life-span. Rather, we will serve him eternally, for to him be "the glory . . . into all the generations of the age of the ages."

—Eph. 3:20, 21, *Kingdom Interlinear Translation*.

25. The right view of eternity is of what value when enduring various trials?

26. What, then, is the Christian view to have of the future?

Noah's Ark No Minor Vessel

● The ark that God commanded Noah to build may sometimes be thought of as an insignificant vessel. (Gen. 6:14, 15) But not so, says a recent article on supersize tankers: "The ark had to be one of the largest vessels to ride the seas until even fairly modern days, for at about one and one-half feet to the cubit it was 450 feet long, 75 feet in beam and 45 feet high. This was bigger by far than most of the famous wooden sailing craft built since Noah's time and surpassed even many early steam-powered steel ships, thereby qualifying Noah as one of the master shipbuilders of all time—although it must also be assumed that he received more than a little help from a higher source."

—*Oil Lifestream of Progress*, Number Three, 1973.

THE “Lake of Fire” AND ITS PURPOSE

WHAT is the “lake of fire”? We find this expression used in the Bible only in the book of Revelation, and there its mention is confined to the small area of chapters 19 to 21. A possible allusion to it is also found at Matthew 25:41.

Who or what goes into the “lake of fire”? Among the things mentioned are the “wild beast” and the “false prophet.” Death and Hades are put into this “lake.” We also read that the Devil (and along with him his associate demons) is hurled into the “lake” after his final attack on God’s sovereignty.—Rev. 19:20; 20:10, 14.

A SYMBOL

In examining these texts we readily see that the “lake of fire” is not a literal pool of flame. The “wild beast” is symbolic, as earlier shown in Revelation chapter 13, the “image” of it being described in chapter 17, where we are told that the seven

heads of the “beast” represent seven ‘mountainlike’ kingdoms. These are understood by Bible commentators to be the seven world powers of Bible history. The five that had “fallen” were Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia and Greece. The one that “was” at the time the apostle John wrote was Rome. The seventh has proved, from historical events, to be the Anglo-American World Power.—Rev. 17:9, 10; compare Daniel chapter 8.

Similarly the “false prophet” is not a person, but is a system or an organization. A “prophet” claims to have inspired information for the direction of others. A “false prophet” would mislead others, to turn them away from God and toward false worship. What does this “false prophet” do to accomplish such purpose? He is shown in another guise in Revelation 13: 11-17 as a two-horned “wild beast.” As such he is depicted as performing in front of the seven-headed “wild beast” the signs with which he misleads “those who received the mark of the wild beast and those who render worship to its image.”—Rev. 19:20.

Since the “wild beast” and the “false prophet” are symbolic, the “lake of fire” is necessarily symbolic.

Further supporting this conclusion is the fact that the abstract thing, “death,” is also hurled into the “lake of fire.” Death cannot be literally burned.

Moreover, the demons are thrown into the “lake.” These are angels, spirit persons. Being spirit, they cannot be hurt by literal fire, which is a physical product of chemical combustion. In fact, we read often of spirit persons manifesting themselves to humans in a flame.—Ex. 3:1-5; Acts 7:30; Judg. 13:20; Ps. 104:4; Dan. 7:9, 10.

Of what, then, is the “lake of fire” a symbol? The Bible says that it is, or that

it means or symbolizes, the "second death." (Rev. 20:14) This cannot mean that everything that goes into it dies a second time, for "death and Hades" have not died or gone out of existence in the past. The expression "second death" distinguishes this death, which is permanent and everlasting and from which there is no resurrection, from the death brought upon the human race by Adam. Adamic death is one "kind" of death, a death that all men inherit through no personal fault of their own. The "second death" is another "kind" of death. Individuals that go into the "second death" merit it because of their own deliberate choice of sin and enmity toward God. This is evident by the action of those the Bible speaks of as being sentenced to the "second death."

Further evidence or testimony as to what the "lake of fire" represents and who finally receive the judgment of this death is found in Revelation 21:7, 8. After describing the good effects that the New Jerusalem will bring about in the earth, the prophecy quotes the words of God, saying: "Anyone conquering will inherit these things, and I shall be his God and he will be my son. But as for the cowards and those without faith and those who are disgusting in their filth and murderers and fornicators and those practicing spiritism and idolaters and all the liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulphur. This means the second death." All persons who choose such a way of life and spurn God's provision of Christ's atonement sacrifice for recovering from such a degraded condition will thus be obliterated forever from existence.

So God's fiery judgment comes upon all those who are his avowed enemies. Of those of the "Gog and Magog" crowd who follow the Devil in his renewed attack on God's sovereignty at the end of the thou-

sand years, we read: "Fire came down out of heaven and devoured them." They go into the "second death." The "lake of fire" likewise burns up all humans who do not obey the "things written in the scrolls" of instruction during Christ's thousand-year rule. None of these finally find their names written in the "book of life." (Rev. 20:9, 12, 15) The same punishment of "second death" is executed upon Satan and his demons, who are hurled into the "lake of fire." All are everlastingly dead.

There is not a spark of life in the "second death," which is the everlasting punishment for those who willfully disobey God. There was not a bit of life in the first kind of death, that which came to Adam's offspring by his first sin. That first kind of death would have been permanent had it not been for the love and undeserved kindness of Jehovah God in providing Christ's sacrifice. The "second death" is permanent, for there is no atonement sacrifice for those going into it. The apostle Paul wrote:

"If we practice sin willfully after having received the accurate knowledge of the truth, there is no longer any sacrifice for sins left, but there is a certain fearful expectation of judgment and there is a fiery jealousy that is going to consume those in opposition."—Heb. 10:26, 27.

NO CONSCIOUS TORMENT

Those in the "lake of fire" do not have life. Their names are not written in any "book of life." And life is life, whether spent in pleasure or in suffering pain. Accordingly, there is no consciousness or feeling of pain or suffering in the "lake of fire," because there is no life there at all. Why, then, does the Bible speak of the Devil, the "wild beast" and the "false prophet" as being "tormented day and

night forever and ever" in this "lake"? —Rev. 20:10.

It is because they are under the torment of restraint. When Jesus was on earth, the demons entreated him not to order them to go away into the "abyss." (Luke 8:31) In a parallel account of the same incident, the demons asked Jesus: "Did you come here to torment us before the appointed time?" (Matt. 8:29) This being put into the "abyss" will be a "torment" because it will be a restraint.

Satan and his demons are, therefore, to suffer the "torment" of restraint by being hurled into the "abyss" just prior to the thousand-year reign of Christ. They will be restrained from all activity during that thousand years. Then they will be loosed after the thousand years end. (Rev. 20:7; compare Revelation 11:7; 17:8.) After the final attack on God's sovereignty, the Devil and his demons are hurled into the "lake of fire," where they suffer the "torment" of everlasting restraint, without letup, in the "second death." They are completely annihilated, never to appear again. Moreover, all that they accomplished, all their works, will be erased from the universe.—1 John 3:8.

The truth that this being put into the "lake of fire" does not mean conscious pain of torment is shown in that the "wild beast" and the "false prophet," both symbolic of systems or organizations, are spoken of as being "tormented day and night." But systems or organizations cannot suffer pain. The "lake of fire" annihilates, destroys them. They are restrained from operating, forever. Never will such wicked organizations rise up to dominate or disturb mankind.

Also, death and Hades, mankind's common grave, are done away with in the "lake of fire," in that Adamic death will have been completely wiped out and Hades

will have been emptied and will receive no more such dead. (Rev. 20:14) Certainly these two inanimate things can feel or experience no conscious suffering, but they can be restrained, put out of the way, forever.

ITS PURPOSE

The "lake of fire," which means, or symbolizes, the "second death," also 'burns with sulphur.' (Rev. 21:8) Sulphur ignites at a low temperature and burns quickly, thus tending to consume things that would not otherwise burn so readily. Sulphur was anciently used in fumigation. Thus the "lake that burns with fire and sulphur" would well represent a complete, everlasting destruction universally of everything and everyone that has "contaminated" it, carrying on filthy practices, challenging God's sovereignty and bringing reproach upon his name. The "lake of fire" or "second death," though always possible for God to use on the willfully disobedient, will not hold any threat to those who have been proved everlastingly loyal through the test of Satan's loosing after the end of the thousand years of Christ's reign. The faithful survivors of that test will have God's guarantee of protection and the sustaining of their lives forever.—Rom. 8:21.

Thus the "lake of fire" is an important

IN COMING ISSUES

- How Women Can Really Be Liberated.
- "Gird Yourselves with Lowliness of Mind."
- "When You See Jerusalem Surrounded by Encamped Armies."

factor in God's purposes. It is not something contrary to the personality of Jehovah God, who never conceived nor would ever countenance the eternal *conscious* torment of anyone. (Jer. 19:5; 32:35) It is in harmony with his personality of justice and loving-kindness, however, for God to clear out wicked troublemakers forever. For it is essential that justice be carried out in the universe for the sake of peace and order in behalf of those who want to do what is right.—Ps. 145:20.

Jehovah is not a ruler who is going to let crime and criminals continue to run rampant, taking away all peace and joy of living from law-abiding people. Neither is God harsh, so that there is no help for those who want to change their ways.

(1 Tim. 2:3, 4) He allows full and fair opportunity

portunity for all. Those who go into the "lake of fire," which is the "second death," actually choose everlasting death rather than life, of their own free will and accord, because they selfishly violate the laws of the Universal Sovereign. He rightly requires respect and exclusive devotion. This cleaning out of such hardened rebels is the only way the universe can have peace. May all who want life learn about Jehovah's ways so as to have their names written in the "book of life" for everlasting happiness.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

July 14: 'Living No Longer for Ourselves.'
Page 369. Songs to Be Used: 79, 112.

July 21: Serve with Eternity in View. Page 375. Songs to Be Used: 111, 93.