

# The **WATCHTOWER**

©WTB&TS

OCTOBER 15, 1966

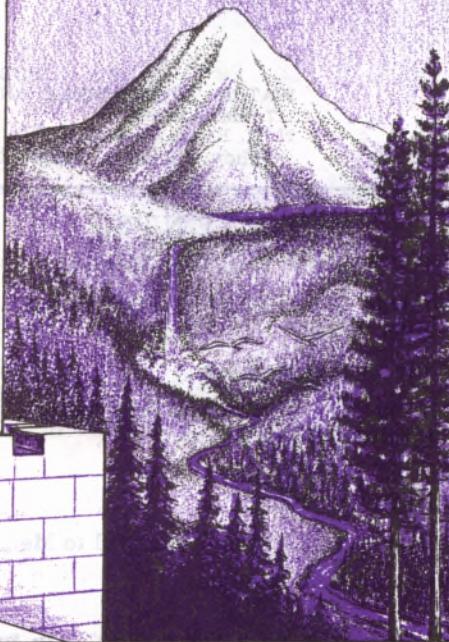
Semimonthly

*What has  
GOD'S KINGDOM  
been doing  
SINCE*

**1914**



*Announcing  
JEHOVAH'S  
KINGDOM*



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

## THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER"

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

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

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

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

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

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

## CONTENTS

Greece Threatens Legalized Murder	611
What Has God's Kingdom Been Doing Since 1914?	613
A Note of Appreciation	626
Rejoicing over "God's Sons of Liberty" Spiritual Feast	627
Disturbance in Symbolic Sun Distresses Earth	632
God Has Been Good and Merciful to Me	636
Questions from Readers	639

Average printing each issue: 4,850,000 Five cents a copy	
"The Watchtower" is Published in the Following 70 languages	
Semimonthly	Monthly
Afrikaans	Finnish
Arabic	French
Cebuano	German
Chinese	Greek
Chishona	Hiligaynon
Clibemba	Iloko
Cinyanja	Italian
Danish	Japanese
Dutch	Korean
English	Malagasy
Norwegian	Armenian
Bengali	Icelandic
Sesotho	Kanarese
Burmese	Kikongo
Slovenian	Lingala
Spanish	Croatian
Swedish	Malayalam
Efik	Marathi
Ewe	Melanesian-
Twi	Swahili
Filian	Tamil
Xhosa	Motu
Gun	Tswana
Hebrew	Pampango
Hungarian	Pangasinan
Ibanang	Ukrainian
Ibo	Polish
	Urdu
Russian	Yoruba

Yearly subscription rates for semimonthly editions	
America, U.S., 117 Adams St., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201	\$1
Australia, 11 Beresford Rd., Strathfield, N.S.W.	\$1
Canada, 150 Bridgecliff Ave., Toronto 19, Ontario	\$1
England, Watch Tower House, The Ridgeway, London N.W. 7	7/6
Jamaica, W.I., 41 Trafalgar Rd., Kingston 10	7/-
New Zealand, 621 New North Rd., Auckland S.W. 1	7/-
South Africa, Private Bag 2, P.O. Elandsfontein, Transvaal	70c
Trinidad, W.I., 21 Taylor St., Woodbrook, Port of Spain	\$1.75

Monthly editions cost half the above rates.

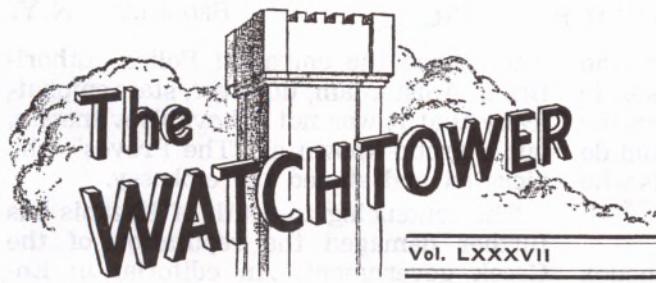
Remittances for subscriptions should be sent to the office in your country. Otherwise send your remittance to Brooklyn. Notice of expiration is sent at least two issues before subscription expires.

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

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

Printed in U.S.A.

The Bible translation used in "The Watchtower" is the New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures, 1961 edition. When other translations are used the following symbols will appear behind the citations:  
AS - American Standard Version      Le - Isaac Leeser's version  
AT - An American Translation      Mo - James Moffatt's version  
AV - Authorized Version (1611)      Ro - J. B. Rotherham's version  
Dy - Catholic Douay version      RS - Revised Standard Version  
JP - Jewish Publication Soc.      Yg - Robert Young's version



Announcing  
JEHOVAH'S  
KINGDOM

Vol. LXXXVII

October 15, 1966

Number 20

# Greece THREATENS LEGALIZED MURDER

ON August 8, 1966, twenty-two-year-old Christos Kazanis was sentenced to death by a military court in Athens, Greece. Was he a vile criminal, perhaps a murderer? No, his "crime" in the eyes of the Greek government was that, because of strong religious convictions, he refused to bear arms. This sentence came after Kazanis had already served a two-year prison term for conscientious objection!

This is not the first time that a Greek court has sentenced to death one of Jehovah's witnesses because of conscientious objection to military service. About six months before, another death sentence had been passed, on George Roussopoulos. However, after a review of the trial, his sentence was commuted to seven years' imprisonment, which he is now serving.

Many individuals, organizations and government officials throughout

the world were shocked by the Greek action. It is truly appalling for a country that claims to be the "cradle of democracy" to threaten what amounts to the legalized murder of its own peaceful citizens!

Even more reprehensible are the religious leaders of the Orthodox Church in Greece. They have been the prime instigators in using the government to try to crush Jehovah's witnesses. This was made clear when Greece's Orthodox primate, Archbishop Chrysostomos, was questioned about the death sentence for Kazanis. The archbishop said: "The Greek Orthodox Church regards the members of this heresy as enemy No. 1." Showing how the Greek Orthodox Church has attempted to use the State as its tool, the archbishop stated: "We have repeatedly appealed to the authorities to intervene and prosecute or arrest those of them who engage in proselytism."

An example of this was in 1963 when, as the *New York Times* of August 17, 1966, declared: "The Greek Government, under strong pressure from [the Greek] Orthodox organization, revoked its permission for an international convention of Jehovah's witnesses in Athens ten days before it was due to begin." Fifteen hundred delegates were already in Athens or on their way at the time.

As to the death sentence of Kazanis, Archbishop Chrysostomos said: "The church does not wish to interfere with the decision of the state, that is, military justice." He considers it "justice" for the Greek government to murder a man because he puts first in his life obedience to the law of God!

Who was it that used the secular government to persecute others in the first century of our Common Era? Did Jesus Christ or his disciples? Not at all! The religious clergy who

were enemies of Jesus were the ones who used the Roman government to persecute Jesus and the early Christians! When the Roman governor asked what he should do with Jesus, it was the fanatical priests who shouted: "Let him be impaled!"—Matt. 27:20-23.

How like the leaders of the Orthodox Church in Greece today! They, like the religious hypocrites in Jesus' day, want to murder innocent ones who conscientiously strive to do the will of God. And to do their dirty work, these Greek clergymen, like those in Jesus' day, use the State.

But do not think that this goes unnoticed by the Almighty God of the universe. At his set time he will call to account those who persecute innocent ones. Bible prophecy declares for a certainty, just as though it had already happened, that God "has avenged the blood of his slaves." (Rev. 19:2) This avenging will come soon at the end of this system of things when God destroys religious systems that persecute his servants.—Rev. 18:8.

As a result of indignation over the death sentence, several members of the British Parliament sent telegrams of protest to the King of Greece, and some organizations have demonstrated against Greek embassies in different parts of the world. In the Netherlands stones were even thrown through Greek embassy windows. But Jehovah's witnesses did not participate in this violence, nor did they participate in protest marches staged in New York and elsewhere.

However, Jehovah's witnesses have been slandered by the Greek press in this matter too. A headline in the Athens newspaper *Eleftheros Kosmos* (*Free World*) proclaimed: "Jehovah's Witnesses Stone Our Consulate in Amsterdam." Yet, the article that followed stated: "Last night the windows of the local Greek Consulate were stoned by unknown persons." The paper admits that the persons were unknown at that time. But the prejudiced editor headlined the article with the assertion that it was Jehovah's witnesses

who stoned the embassy! Police authorities in Amsterdam, however, state emphatically that it was not Jehovah's witnesses, but a group known as "The Provos" who picketed and stoned the embassy.

The sentencing to death of Kazanis has further damaged the reputation of the Greek government. An editorial in England in the Manchester *Guardian* of August 16 showed this when it stated: "The Greeks, not for the first time, have sentenced a conscientious objector to death . . . this harsh sentence, decided on by a military court of one of our NATO allies, is shocking. We are allied with Greece in common defence against external attack and in order to preserve the ideals of liberty and freedom that were reputedly enshrined in the customs of ancient Athens but sometimes seem to be rather lacking in the Greece of today. If the Greek Government and the military authorities are so insensible to the demands of conscience that they can countenance such a dire sentence, there is no doubt that Greece, like Portugal, will find herself rejected by humanitarian opinion and isolated within the Western alliance. The sentence, like the last one, may be commuted to . . . imprisonment. But this, though less harsh, is no advertisement for a free society."

On August 30 the case was reviewed by a Greek military court and the sentence was commuted to four and a half years in prison. What does this mean? Not merely years in prison, but that on his release Kazanis will be faced with the same ordeal all over again! Is there something you can do about it? Yes, indeed.

You can write a letter of protest to any of the following Greek government officials: King Constantine, Royal Palace, Athens, Greece; Premier Stefanos Stefanopoulos, Athens, Greece; and also the Greek ambassador or consul in your country. We encourage you to do this now. In this way you can add your voice of protest against the Greek government's continuing threat to carry out legalized murder of innocent Christians.

THE year 1914 is now more than fifty years in the past. Yet it lives in the memory of millions of people today living. The first world war that began then and the train of events that has followed are part of the personal experience of those millions of living people. The year 1914 and what happened then is, for them, no mere human history that happened before their time. They have lived these things, they recall them, they can still tell about them to people born since. These millions are part of a generation of mankind that is destined to see even more wonderful things, things that will finally spell out correctly, without any danger of being misread, the real meaning of what has happened and of what began back there in the unforgettable year 1914. Not with any possibility of failure the greatest prophet of all time said nineteen centuries ago: "This genera-

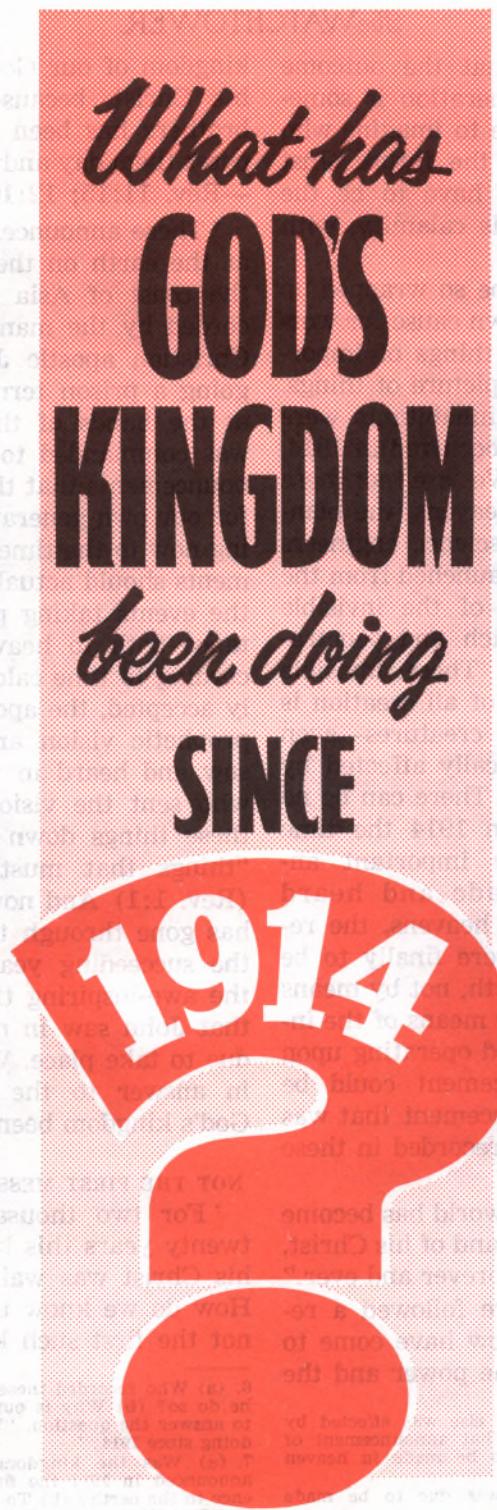
ation will by no means pass away until all these things occur."

—Matt. 24:34.

<sup>2</sup> This earth has never been the same since the year 1914. We say this, not just because of the increasing number of earthquakes that have taken place since then and that have noticeably changed the face of the earth. Neither because of the widespread polluting of the air, sea and soil. We say this because of the changed conditions among the people on earth, in the political structure of things, in morals, in scientific thinking, in religion, in warfare, and, strange as it may sound, in superhuman invisible forces that are now playing upon mankind. Well has it been remarked by observant historians that 1913 was the last normal year of the modern world. Since then we have found ourselves in an age of violence, disturbance and unsettledness that is without parallel in all human history. There is a continual building up of threat-

1. Are the year 1914 and the train of events since then mere history of before the time of everybody living today, and what did the greatest prophet say of people of our generation?

2. In what way has the earth never been the same since 1914, and what may be said for the future outlook?



ening circumstances. What the outcome will yet be with this generation is something terrifying for those to imagine who have no sure guide for the future. Just why did our generation have to be the one to experience all this calamity, with worse yet to come?

<sup>3</sup> However, let us not be so wrapped up in ourselves and in our own cause for worry as to overlook other things of importance in the big general picture of things. Not only earth and its inhabitants were keenly affected by what occurred in 1914, but also heaven was. We are not here speaking of the visible heavens, the planets in outer space that science engineers are hitting with rockets launched from the earth. We are speaking of the invisible heavens, beyond the reach and penetration of human science. These invisible heavens, where the God of all creation is seen by his spiritual creatures—even these heavens were radically affected by what took place in 1914. There can be no mistake about it that in 1914 the time came for a universally important announcement to be made and heard throughout the invisible heavens, the reverberations of which were finally to be picked up here at the earth, not by means of radio telescopes but by means of the invisible active force of God operating upon his people. No announcement could be greater than that announcement that was actually heard and then recorded in these inspired words:

<sup>4</sup> "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will rule as king forever and ever."

<sup>5</sup> Some time later there followed a related announcement: "Now have come to pass the salvation and the power and the

3, 4. (a) Besides our earth, what else was affected by what took place in 1914? (b) What announcement of universal importance was due to be made in heaven that year?

5. What related announcement was due to be made later in heaven?

kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ, because the accuser of our brothers has been hurled down, who accuses them day and night before our God!"—Rev. 11:15; 12:10.

<sup>6</sup> These announcements were first heard at the earth on the island of Patmos, off the coast of Asia Minor. They were recorded by the man who heard them, the Christian apostle John, who was undergoing a prison term on that penal island at the hands of the Roman Empire. He was commanded to write down these announcements that they might be preserved for our own generation, who would be living now in the time when these announcements should actually be made to describe the events taking place, events of importance both to heaven and to earth. According to time calculations quite generally accepted, the apostle John recorded his prophetic vision and the things that he saw and heard in the year 96 C.E. God, who sent the vision, told John to write these things down because they foretold "things that must shortly take place." (Rev. 1:1) And now our generation, that has gone through the events of 1914 and the succeeding years, has been living in the awe-inspiring time when these things that John saw in miraculous vision were due to take place. What, then, can we say in answer to the question, "What has God's kingdom been doing since 1914?"

#### NOT THE FIRST MESSIANIC KINGDOM OF GOD

<sup>7</sup> For two thousand five hundred and twenty years this kingdom of God and of his Christ was waiting to be established. How do we know that? Because this was not the first such kingdom of God to ex-

6. (a) Who recorded these announcements, and why did he do so? (b) Why is our generation the one qualified to answer the question, "What has God's kingdom been doing since 1914?"

7. (a) Was the kingdom of God and of his Christ announced in 1914 the first such kingdom with reference to the earth? (b) To whom did the title "Messiah" or "Christ" use to apply?

ist with reference to this earth. Bear in mind that the title "Christ" means "Anointed One" and corresponds with the Hebrew word "Messiah." Just as from the Greek word "Christ" we get the adjective "Christian," so from the Hebrew word "Messiah" we get the words "Messianic" and "Messianist." Every true Christian is a Messianist. Long ago the word "Christ" or "Messiah" used to apply to kings who reigned in Jerusalem down to the year 607 Before Our Common Era. That was the year of the overthrow of the last king of the long royal line that began with King David. In lamenting over him, the prophet Jeremiah said: "The very breath of our nostrils, the anointed one [the Messiah] of Jehovah, has been captured in their large pit, the one of whom we have said: 'In his shade we shall live among the nations.'"—Lam. 4:20; Hebrew text.

<sup>8</sup> As for King David himself, he began to reign in Jerusalem in the year 1070 B.C.E. As he had been anointed at the command of Jehovah God to be king over his people, David was called the Anointed One or Messiah or Christ. Hence regarding Jerusalem, where David reigned, God said: "There I shall cause the horn of David to grow. I have set in order a lamp for my anointed one [Messiah]." (Ps. 132:17) At first Jehovah God himself had been the one King heavenly and invisible over David's people, even from the days of the prophet Moses, who sang: "Jehovah will rule as king to time indefinite, even forever." (Ex. 15:18) Consequently, King David sat on the throne of Jerusalem as the visible human representative of Jehovah. The Holy Bible says that King David sat on "Jehovah's throne," as did also David's successor, King Solomon. (1 Chron. 29:23) So, when the aged King David

was abdicating his throne to his young son Solomon, he publicly prayed to God and said: "Everything in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O Jehovah." (1 Chron. 29:11) Thus that was a kingdom of God and of his Anointed One.

#### FROM 607 B.C.E. TO 1914 C.E.

<sup>9</sup> In that first kingdom of God and of his Christ or Anointed One at Jerusalem the visible kings were, of course, imperfect humans. Because of misrule that developed in that earthly kingdom, God himself overturned it, using King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon to do it in the year 607 B.C.E. When announcing its coming overthrow, God spoke by the mouth of his prophet Ezekiel and said to Jerusalem's last king: "Remove the turban, and lift off the crown. This will not be the same. Put on high even what is low, and bring low even the high one. A ruin, a ruin, a ruin I shall make it. As for this also, it will certainly become no one's until he comes who has the legal right, and I must give it to him." (Ezek. 21:25-27) At the ruining of King David's royal house in the summer of 607 B.C.E., the despised Gentile world power of Babylon was put on high, and about October 1 of that same year the site of Jerusalem and all the land of Judah were left desolate without even a local governor from among the royal relationship of King David.

<sup>10</sup> Till then Jerusalem had stood for the kingdom of Jehovah God by means of his Anointed One or Christ. But now, from 607 B.C.E. onward, Jerusalem never again had a king of David's line. God's kingdom by his Anointed One or Christ began to be trodden down by the Gentiles. A long

8. (a) So what title was applied to King David also, and on whose throne did he sit in Jerusalem? (b) To whom did King David acknowledge the kingdom to belong?

9. (a) When was the royal house of David brought to a ruin, and why, and by whom? (b) What that was low was then put on high?

10. (a) What marked period of time began in that year of 607 B.C.E.? (b) Till whose coming was that period of time to continue?

period of complete Gentile domination of all the earth without interference from any kingdom of God by Christ began. According to Ezekiel's prophecy, this period of Gentile domination was to keep on until the coming of the person with the legal right to the royal crown, at which time God would carry out his promise to give it to that one. The Persian Empire, then the Grecian Empire, and next the Roman Empire took control of the rebuilt Jerusalem, but they allowed no kingdom of God by means of an Anointed One of David's family to be set up at Jerusalem.

<sup>11</sup> Right on time, during the reign of Tiberius Caesar of Rome, Jesus, a descendant of King David, was anointed at the Jordan River, not by a Jewish priest or prophet, but by Jehovah God, not with anointing oil from the olive tree, but with holy spirit from heaven. John the Baptist, who baptized Jesus in water, bore witness to this fact. He also declared Jesus to be the Son of God. (John 1:29-34) There Jesus became Jesus the Anointed One or Jesus Christ. He became the Promised One with the "legal right" to God's Messianic kingdom. But God did not give it to him back there in the year of his baptism in water.

<sup>12</sup> Three and a half years later, near Passover time of the year 33 of our Common Era, Jesus Christ foretold the then-impending destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans and said: "When you see Jerusalem surrounded by encamped armies, then know that the desolating of her has drawn near. . . . and they will fall by the edge of the sword and be led captive into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled on by the nations, until the app-

pointed times of the nations are fulfilled." (Luke 21:20-24) By these words Jesus Christ indicated that the appointed times of Gentile domination of the whole earth without interference from God's Messianic kingdom were to continue on beyond the year 70 C.E., when the Roman armies destroyed the Jewish-built Jerusalem and its holy temple. Sixty-one years later the Romans built a new city on the ruins of old Jerusalem, but not for any anointed king of David's royal line to rule in defiance of the Roman Caesar. Consequently, down to the year 1914 C.E. the very ground where the ancient Jewish-built city of Jerusalem used to stand was literally trampled on by the Gentiles, by the Romans, by the Mohammedans, by the Roman Catholic Crusaders and by the Turks, as history shows.

<sup>13</sup> But are not the Gentile Times of world domination still in operation? Even since 1914 does not the walled city of Jerusalem continue to be trodden down by the Gentiles or non-Jews? Seemingly so, for the ancient Roman-built walled city of Jerusalem has indeed been trampled on by the non-Jewish nations since 1914, and no Messianic king of David's royal line has reigned there since 1914. Furthermore, even the modern Jerusalem built by the Jews to the west of the ancient walled Jerusalem has no Messianic king of David's family reigning in it. It is, rather, the capital city of the Republic of Israel. This Jewish Republic, instead of resting its hopes in the Messianic prophecies of Jehovah God, pins its hopes to the Gentile United Nations, of which it became the fifty-ninth member on May 11, 1949. Still, all this does not mean that the Gentile Times did not end in 1914, about October 1. Why not? Because an earthly Jerusalem

11. (a) How did Jesus become the Christ or Anointed One, and when? (b) Did God give him the Messianic kingdom at that time?

12. (a) In connection with what event did Jesus mention the "appointed times of the nations" or Gentile Times? (b) After 70 C.E. the very ground of Jerusalem continued to be trampled on by whom?

13. (a) Why does it seem that the Gentile Times of world domination did not end in 1914? (b) However, why do such affairs of earthly Jerusalem not prove that to be so?

will never be the throne city of God's Messianic King, and so the Gentile nations did not need to be pushed out of the earthly Jerusalem in 1914 for the kingdom of God by means of his Messiah to begin reigning.

<sup>14</sup> Since the days of Jesus Christ the earthly city of Jerusalem is not what counts. Rather, the thing that counts is what the Jewish city of Jerusalem symbolized at the time that it was destroyed by the Babylonians in the year 607 B.C.E., when the Gentile Times began. Well, then, what had Jerusalem symbolized up till then? It had symbolized God's kingdom by means of his anointed one of the royal house of David. True, Jerusalem was rebuilt seventy years later, but what about the Messianic kingdom of God by means of an heir of David? This continued to be trampled on by the Gentile nations. Being thus out of existence for the length of the Gentile Times, the Messianic kingdom of God offered no interference to the Gentile nations dominating the whole earth. By God's own decree, he estopped himself from interfering with Gentile domination of all the earth till the year 1914 C.E.

<sup>15</sup> However, at the appointed time Jehovah God himself brought the uninterrupted domination of the Gentile Times to an end. By his prophet Daniel as his mouth-piece Jehovah God fixed the very time for Messiah the Prince or Leader to make his appearance on earth as a man, and the time fixed for that was nineteen hundred years ago, in our first century C.E. (Dan. 9:24-27) The baptism of Jesus and the anointing of him with holy spirit from God marked the exact time that the Messiah, the Christ, the Anointed One, appeared. By the same prophet Daniel, Jeho-

vah God made known the length of the Gentile Times as being "seven times," or 2,520 years from their start in 607 B.C.E. (Dan. 4:16, 23, 25) This enabled Christian Bible students to find out in advance when the Gentile Times would end. More than thirty-five years in advance, by help of God's holy spirit, dedicated Bible students calculated the Gentile Times as due to expire in the early autumn of 1914, but the religious clergy of Christendom criticized them and mocked them for publishing such a Bible time schedule. But the events of 1914 silenced the critics, though they were not converted.

#### VERIFYING THE DATE 1914

<sup>16</sup> Since autumn of 1914 was due to mark the end of the Gentile Times, what, according to God's will, was then due to take place? This, namely, the stoppage of the trampling of the Gentile nations on what was symbolized by the ancient Davidic city of Jerusalem. The kingdom of Jehovah God by means of his anointed one of the royal line of David was no longer to be trampled on in contempt by the Gentile nations. The beginning of those Gentile Times was in 607 B.C.E. and was marked by the ruining of the kingdom of God. In opposite fashion, the end of the Gentile Times in 1914 C.E. was to be marked by the revival, the rebirth, of God's kingdom in the hands of his anointed one or Messiah, Christ. It was the time marked for the coming of the Anointed One with the "legal right" to the crown and the time for Jehovah God to give it to him. This Messianic kingdom of God would then be a divine government for the Gentile nations to reckon with henceforth. Never would they be able to trample on it

14. (a) What, then, was it that counted, the old walled city of Jerusalem, or what? (b) What, then, was it that did not interfere with Gentile domination of the earth, and why?

15. (a) Who brought the Gentile Times to their end, and this at the time indicated by what prophet? (b) Who calculated in advance the date of those Times to end, and how were critics silenced?

16. (a) As opposite from what happened in 607 B.C.E., what was due to happen at the end of the Gentile Times in 1914? (b) From 1914 onward, what would the Gentile nations have to reckon with, never trampling on it again?

victoriously, even though they kept up their selfish endeavors to hold on to the sovereignty of all parts of the earth. Why so?

<sup>17</sup> It was because the Messianic kingdom of God that was due to be born in 1914 is a heavenly government. It is beyond the reach of the Gentile governments and their spaceships and rockets. The earthly Jerusalem has nothing to do with it. Since Jesus Christ was put to death on Calvary outside the walls of Jerusalem in the year 33 C.E., that city has no connection with God's Messianic kingdom.

<sup>18</sup> Five days before his death Jesus rode into Jerusalem accompanied by a great crowd of joyful people. He offered himself to Jerusalem as her king. (Zech. 9:9; Matt. 21:1-11) But the ruling factors of Jerusalem rejected him. No earthly kingdom was given him. However, he had not preached an earthly kingdom. He preached the good news of God's Messianic kingdom, and he and his disciples cried out: "The kingdom of the heavens has drawn near." (Matt. 4:17; 10:1-7) The long-foretold Messianic kingdom was to be a heavenly kingdom, a government whose seat was to be in what the Holy Bible symbolically calls "a city of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem." (Heb. 12:22) With a view to the setting up of the heavenly Messianic kingdom in 1914, Jehovah God raised his Son Jesus Christ from death on the third day and had him ascend back to heaven forty days later.—Acts 1:1-12.

<sup>19</sup> However, Jesus' ascension to heaven and his reappearance in the heavenly presence of Jehovah God did not bring the Gentile Times to an end, but God kept to His time schedule, looking forward to

1914. Jesus Christ had to wait, just as the inspired Bible writer of Hebrews 10:12, 13 tells us, saying: "This man offered one sacrifice for sins perpetually and sat down at the right hand of God, from then on awaiting until his enemies should be placed as a stool for his feet." This is a reference to Psalm 110:1, 2, where King David said prophetically concerning the coming Messiah or Christ: "The utterance of Jehovah to my Lord is: 'Sit at my right hand until I place your enemies as a stool for your feet.' The rod of your strength Jehovah will send out of Zion, saying: 'Go subduing in the midst of your enemies.'"

<sup>20</sup> God's appointed time for the Lord Jesus Christ to start doing this was at the end of the Gentile Times in 1914, and it was until that momentous date that he was awaiting while seated at God's right hand on the heavenly throne. That date 1914 was the time for the tables to be turned, the time for him as installed king to go subduing in the midst of his enemies rather than for the Gentiles to continue trampling on God's Messianic kingdom.

<sup>21</sup> Can there be any question that the heavenly kingdom of God by means of his anointed one or Messiah, Christ, was born and came to power at the end of the Gentile Times in early autumn of 1914? No! It is true that we who were then living on earth did not hear the announcement resounding throughout the heavens: "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will rule as king forever and ever." (Rev. 11:15) But we do remember seeing and hearing something here at the earth. What? The declaration of war by nation against nation; the tramping of millions of men marching to war; the total mobiliza-

17, 18. (a) Why could the Gentile nations not tread upon such a government after 1914? (b) What kind of kingdom had Jesus and his apostles preached, and in what city was it to be located?

19. (a) Did the Gentile Times end with Jesus' ascension to heaven and his reappearance before God? (b) What does Hebrews 10:12, 13 indicate regarding fulfillment of Psalm 110:1, 2?

20. At that appointed time, how were the tables to be turned as between Jesus Christ and the Gentile nations?

21. (a) Did people alive on earth in 1914 hear the heavenly announcement about the kingdom of the world? (b) But what did they see here at the earth, and also hear?

tion of nations for all-out war; the clanking of heavy mechanized firing equipment lumbering off to the front; the pious voices of priests and preachers of all denominations on both sides of the battle lines praying God's blessing upon the soldiers on their side face to face with soldiers of the same religious faith on the enemy side; the religious chaplains acting as cheerleaders

to the fighters; the contagion of war spreading, with already nine nations and globe-encircling empires locked in war by October 1, 1914. We did hear and see this, from 1914 onward.

<sup>22</sup> That first world war was not started by Jesus Christ, the newly enthroned King in heaven. Yet, was this not exactly what he had foretold three days before his death outside Jerusalem, saying: "Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be food shortages and earthquakes in one place after another. All these things are a beginning of pangs of distress"?

Now, what was the question in answer to which Jesus Christ said this prophecy? This question of his apostles: "When will these things be, and what will be the sign of your presence and of the conclusion of the system of things?" (Matt. 24:3, 7, 8) Even more so than any count of time, those events of 1914 and subsequent years marked that year as beginning the "con-

clusion of the system of things," inasmuch as the Gentile Times ended in autumn of that year. All this was visible and audible evidence that Jesus Christ had come into his heavenly kingdom, that he was present in his Messianic kingdom, that the realization of the vision seen by the prophet Daniel had taken place in the heavens:

<sup>23</sup> "See there! with the clouds of the heavens someone like a son of man happened to be coming; and to the Ancient of Days he gained access, and they brought him up close even before that One. And to him there were given rulership and dignity and kingdom, that the peoples, national groups and languages should all serve even him. His rulership is an indefinitely lasting rulership that will not pass away, and

his kingdom one that will not be brought to ruin."—Dan. 7:13, 14.

<sup>24</sup> Decades in advance searching Bible students had pointed forward to 1914 as the Biblically marked date. But when the accuracy of the time was confirmed by world events fulfilling Bible prophecy, our conviction too of what had taken place in the invisible heavens became overwhelming, and we were impelled to join with God's faithful worshipers up in heaven in saying: "We thank you, Jehovah God, the



22, 23. (a) Had Jesus Christ in heaven started that world war, or what connection did he have with it? (b) What did those events mark 1914 as signifying with regard to rulership?

24. To what date had searching Bible Students pointed forward, and what were they impelled to say after the accuracy of the date was confirmed by events?

Almighty, the one who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and begun ruling as king. But the nations became wrathful, and your own wrath came, and the appointed time for the dead to be judged, and to give their reward to your slaves the prophets and to the holy ones and to those fearing your name, the small and the great, and to bring to ruin those ruining the earth."—Rev. 11:16-18.

<sup>25</sup> Yes, at the end of the Gentile Times for the Gentile domination of the earth, Jehovah God the Almighty took to himself his great power to reign once again as King of all the realm of creation, including our earth. Having patiently permitted the Gentile domination of mankind for 2,520 years since 607 B.C.E., Jehovah God enthroned his Son, the Messianic Heir of King David, and turned over to this One with the "legal right" the domination of all the earth. This Messianic King, ruling in the "heavenly Jerusalem," will bring to ruin all the Gentiles who are ruining the earth, but his own God-given kingdom will never be brought to ruin.

#### ACTION AGAINST ENEMIES

<sup>26</sup> Let it stand now as a settled fact that the Messianic kingdom of God was established, unseen to us, in the heavens in 1914. Well, then, since that date has it stood still? Certainly the world of mankind has not stood still since 1914. The Gentile nations have not stood still, and many new nations have since come into existence. In the half century since that critical year of 1914 astounding history has been made. If human creation has been on the move since then, what shall we say about the Creator God Almighty?

25. Jehovah God thus took to himself his great power to reign in what capacity, and what did he turn over to the one having the "legal right"?

26. Why do we ask whether God's Messianic kingdom has stood still since 1914, and, therefore, what blunt question are we obliged to ask?

He is not static either! His kingdom, which is the most powerful government in existence, could never be static. It has too great a role to fulfill since its birth. So, what history has it been making to prove that it exists and is functioning? To be blunt, what has God's kingdom been doing since 1914?

<sup>27</sup> It has gone into action against its enemies, who are God's enemies, Christ's enemies, man's enemies. We should have expected that, for, according to the prophecy addressed to the Messiah by King David, he was to sit at God's right hand until the time for God to make his enemies his footstool to be trampled on. After that time, what? Then, according to Psalm 110:1, 2, "the rod of your strength Jehovah will send out of Zion, saying: 'Go subduing in the midst of your enemies.'

<sup>28</sup> So, against which enemy of God's Messianic kingdom was the Messiah's 'rod of strength' stretched out first? Against the Gentile nations on earth? No; for Messiah the King did not start World War I on earth, to weaken them so as to be more easily subdued because of destroying one another. No; but his 'rod of strength' was stretched out first against the god of those Gentile nations, that is to say, Satan the Devil. The Gentile nations are merely human; their god, Satan the Devil, is superhuman, supernatural, spiritual. He is the most powerful enemy of all. Being spiritual, this chief enemy has had access to the holy heavens far beyond the neighborhood of our earth for millenniums of time prior to 1914. The Bible shows that.

<sup>29</sup> Nineteen centuries ago Satan the Devil tried to have the baby Jesus destroyed

27, 28. (a) Against whom has the Kingdom gone into action, as was to be expected according to Psalm 110:1, 2? (b) Was it against someone on earth or someone in heaven that the Kingdom acted first?

29. (a) What kind of time was it when Jesus was born nineteen centuries ago? (b) According to the prophecies of Revelation, what was the birth of God's kingdom to usher in?

at Bethlehem by inciting the fearful King Herod the Great to send soldiers there to kill all the little boys two years old and younger. (Matt. 2:1-18) Jesus' birth had taken place in Bethlehem as foretold (Mic. 5:2), and during a time of peace called the *Pax Romana*. But the birth of God's Messianic kingdom in 1914 was not meant to usher in a time of peace for either heaven or earth! Chapter eleven of the book of Revelation foretold that, when God took to himself his great power to reign universally and "the kingdom of the world" became the kingdom of our Lord God and of his Christ, the Gentile nations would be wrathful. Those nations did become wrathful, both inside and outside of Christendom. Prophesying still further of hostility, chapter twelve of Revelation gave a symbolical picture of the birth of God's Messianic kingdom in the heavens and described the attempt of Satan the Devil to devour the kingdom at its birth, when it would seemingly be weakest, like a newborn babe. So this enemy in heaven needed to be ousted! That called for war!

<sup>30</sup> In Revelation 12:5-12 we read concerning God's heavenly organization: "She gave birth to a son, a male, who is to shepherd all the nations with an iron rod. And her child was caught away to God and to his throne. . . . And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels battled with the dragon, and the dragon and its angels battled but it did not prevail, neither was a place found for them any longer in heaven. So down the great dragon was hurled, the original serpent, the one called Devil and Satan, who is misleading the entire inhabited earth; he was hurled down to the earth, and his angels were hurled down with him. And I [says the apostle John] heard a loud voice in heaven say:

30, 31. According to Revelation 12:5-12, what events in heaven did John see take place, followed by what announcement?

<sup>31</sup> "Now have come to pass the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ [Messiah], because the accuser of our brothers has been hurled down, who accuses them day and night before our God!"

<sup>32</sup> Someone may say skeptically, 'Do you mean to say that God's kingdom hurled Satan the Devil and his demons out of heaven and down to our earth? What reason is there for me to believe that? I never saw it.' No, you did not; that is, not with your natural eyes. But you are inescapably feeling the effects of it, for the apostle John heard the heavenly voice continue on to say: "On this account be glad, you heavens and you who reside in them! Woe for the earth and for the sea, because the Devil has come down to you, having great anger, knowing he has a short period of time."

<sup>33</sup> The Devil and his demons would certainly have to make their invisible presence here at the earth felt if it is to be a woe for us on land and sea to have them excluded forever from heaven and confined here to the vicinity of our earth. Prior to his ouster from heaven, the situation was as the apostle Peter said: "Your adversary, the Devil, walks about like a roaring lion, seeking to devour someone." (1 Pet. 5:8) At the same time he was "misleading the entire inhabited earth." But since his ouster from heaven he has "great anger," because he knows he has but a short time of activity here at the earth before something worse befalls him and his demons. Inasmuch as World War I was already raging on earth when God's Messianic kingdom was born about Octo-

32. What were people on earth who did not see those heavenly events due to feel as a result of them?

33. (a) What makes the difference between Satan's activity at the earth before his ouster from heaven and his activity here since then? (b) How do World War I and the war in heaven to oust Satan compare in time?

ber 1, 1914, the war in heaven to oust Satan and his demons must have run for some time along with the international conflict here on earth. To those persons, then, who argue that there was no ouster of Satan and his demons from heaven, because they did not see it and they do not see demons walking around on earth, we say:

<sup>34</sup> Since the end of World War I in 1918 has there been a time of healing for the Gentile nations? In fulfillment of wartime propaganda, did the war prove to be the war that ended all war, and did it make the world safe for democracy, that is, democracy of the Western style? Did the League of Nations fulfill its chartered purpose and maintain the peace and security of the world? Did the happiness of the world increase with all the achievements of science and medicine? Were the morals of the world raised to a higher level or changed for the better by psychologists and sociologists? Were the religious piety, godly living and the brotherhood of men of all races deepened and broadened by the merging of religious denominations, the establishment of national councils of churches, the setting up of a world council of churches of Protestantism, the celebrating of a Holy Year in 1933 and of religious Jubilees, and, more recently, the four sessions of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council in Rome?

<sup>35</sup> Or, on the contrary, has it been, as the voice from heaven foretold, a time of "woe for the earth and for the sea"? Does the outlook for the future give promise of early relief from our woes? Is the misleading of the people increasing, also the cheating, the false propaganda, the religious confusion and bewilderment? Is the

demonic spirit, instead of the spirit of the one living and true God, spreading, yes, spreading even throughout Christendom and obsessing the people and blindly leading them into outright opposition to God's Messianic kingdom? An honest appraisal of the world trends and conditions can answer only one way to these latter questions, and that is Yes! God's prophetic Word gives us the only proper explanation for it, namely, the ouster of Satan and his demons from heaven to be confined here to the earth. God's newborn Messianic kingdom brought this about by a victorious war in heaven, and now it keeps Satan and his demons confined here till it takes further action against them after a "short period of time." That is what God's kingdom has done since 1914!

#### AN AUDIBLE KINGDOM ANNOUNCEMENT

<sup>36</sup> But another thing! The announcement of the birth of God's kingdom at the end of the Gentile Times was not confined to the invisible heavens. Announcement of it has been made for many years now here at the earth, in the hearing of the people, and that on an ever-increasing scale. It is the practice of a new nation, when it comes into existence, to have its government make an announcement of its coming into being, after which it begins to have dealings with other nations and opens up diplomatic relations with them. As an illustration, in the year 1037 B.C.E., when Solomon was anointed to be king to succeed his father David, the joyful announcement of this was made, and the crowd in attendance from Jerusalem jubilantly shouted: "Let King Solomon live!" (1 Ki. 1:38-41) When John the Baptist acted as a forerunner of Jesus Christ, he called attention to the Messiah's earthly coming, saying: "Repent, for the kingdom

34. To indicate the effect of Satan's ouster from heaven upon us, what questions concerning the healing and bettering of world conditions do we ask?

35. (a) What contrary questions do we ask, and with only what honest answer possible? (b) What explanation does the Bible give to account for the situation?

36. (a) Announcement of the birth of God's kingdom has been made where? (b) What Biblical patterns has such making of announcement followed?

of the heavens has drawn near." And when Jesus Christ returned to John after forty days of fasting and temptation in the wilderness, John pointed to him and cried out within the hearing of all present: "See, the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world!"—Matt. 3:1, 2; John 1:29, 36.

<sup>37</sup> No less so, when the Messianic kingdom of God was installed in heaven, there had to be a worldwide proclamation of that new government of the universe, for that was to be the government for doing away with all the imperfect Gentile governments of the earth and for giving the people a perfect government. This had to be, not just to follow historical examples, but because Jesus the Messiah had long ago committed the Messianic kingdom of God to making such a worldwide proclamation. Nineteen centuries ago, after foretelling the rising of nation against nation and of kingdom against kingdom, in World War I, with hard times to follow, Jesus told his disciples: "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come." (Matt. 24:7-14) Has God's Messianic kingdom been having that done on earth since 1914? Have the Gentile nations been receiving this Kingdom witness? Yes!

<sup>38</sup> If any nation is so ignorant or so blind to the facts of history as to say No! then we can point to the record of Jehovah's Christian witnesses from the postwar year of 1919 down till this present time. In 1919 the leading spokesman of these Christian witnesses of the Most High God emerged from the national prison where they had been confined on false charges

37. Why did there have to be an announcement of the new government of the universe here on the earth?

38, 39. (a) In proof, to whose record since 1919 can we point? (b) What article regarding the Kingdom was published in the *Watch Tower* issue of September 15, 1919, and how did it remind the privileged ones of the capacity in which they served?

during the world war. They began a work of revitalizing and reorganizing the International Bible Students who had been crippled by religious persecution during the war. Clearly they set before this worldwide Christian organization its postwar work. Immediately following upon a general assembly of thousands of Bible Students at Cedar Point, Ohio, U.S.A., the organization's official magazine, *The Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence*, in its issue of September 15, 1919, published a two-and-a-half-page article under the title "Announcing the Kingdom." In its closing paragraphs on page 281 it said to those who were announcing the Kingdom:

<sup>39</sup> "You are an ambassador of the King of kings and Lord of lords, announcing to the people in this dignified manner the incoming of the Golden Age, the glorious kingdom of our Lord and Master, for which the Christians have hoped and prayed for many centuries. You are an angel of peace, bearing to a war-torn, sick, sorrowing and broken-hearted world the glad message of salvation. How wonderful is our privilege! . . . Ask the Lord for his guidance and direction that he may make you a true, faithful, and an efficient ambassador."

#### AMBASSADORS

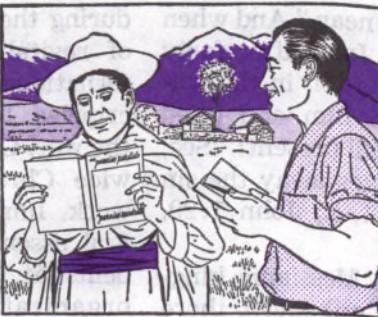
<sup>40</sup> The sending forth of ambassadors from one government to another is an ancient practice. The Holy Bible takes note of ambassadors as far back as the fifteenth century Before Our Common Era. (Josh. 9:3-15, AV; AS; JPS) When the Christian apostle Paul was jailed for preaching God's kingdom, he wrote: "I am acting as an ambassador in chains." (Eph. 6:20) And to fellow Christians in Corinth, Greece, he

40. How old is the practice of sending ambassadors, and what did Paul say about it to Christians long before 1914?

wrote: "We are therefore ambassadors substituting for Christ, as though God was making entreaty through us. As substitutes for Christ we beg: 'Become reconciled to God.'" (2 Cor. 5:19, 20) Paul and his fellow Christians were sent as ambassadors instead of Christ to a hostile world, estranged from God and needing to be reconciled. That was about nineteen centuries before God's Messianic kingdom was born in 1914.

<sup>41</sup> What about now, since the Kingdom's birth? The Gentile nations are still estranged from God. They became wrathful in 1914, for they hate God's kingdom and they have chosen, instead, their League of Nations and its successor, the United Nations. Did that call for a change in dealing? No! Courageously God's newborn Messianic kingdom sent forth its ambassadors to these Gentile nations even though some of these ambassadors were to become, like Paul, "an ambassador in chains." The people of the hostile nations need to be reconciled to God and his kingdom for governing all the earth. Otherwise, the people who remain in their hostility will be destroyed in the world's approaching Armageddon. (Rev. 16:14-16) In

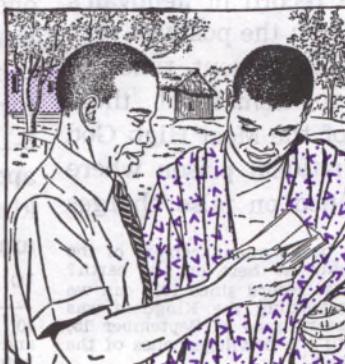
41. (a) What attitude toward the Kingdom did nations take in 1914 and thereafter, and did this call for a change of dealing with them? (b) Why do people need now more than before the services of ambassadors, and who have been serving as such?



fairness to the people of all earthly nations, in mercy to them, God's Messianic kingdom has sent out its anointed ambassadors to all the inhabited earth. These are the Christian Bible Students who, particularly since 1919, have been fulfilling Jesus' prophetic command set out in Matthew 24:14, preaching this good news of God's newborn kingdom in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations before their end comes.

<sup>42</sup> Satan the Devil, when in heaven, tried to devour God's kingdom at its birth. Now that he has been ousted from heaven, he hates that kingdom more than ever before. He also hates the anointed ambassadors of that kingdom. His hatred accounts for the worldwide persecution of these ambassadors. The source of such persecution is uncovered in Revelation 12: 13-17, which reads: "When the dragon saw that it was hurled down to the earth, it persecuted the woman that gave birth to the male child [symbol of the Kingdom]. . . . And the dragon grew wrathful at the woman, and went off to wage war with the remaining ones of her seed, who observe the commandments of God and have the work of bearing witness to Jesus."

<sup>43</sup> So, in his prophecy on the



42, 43. (a) What accounts for the persecution of the anointed ambassadors? (b) How did this accord with what Jesus foretold, and what has God's kingdom been doing about it since 1914?

"conclusion of the system of things," Jesus had correctly said to his disciples concerning our time: "Then people will deliver you up to tribulation and will kill you, and you will be objects of hatred by all the nations on account of my name." (Matt. 24:9) But what has God's Messianic kingdom done about this since 1914? It has protected its anointed ambassadors. Adolf Hitler tried to kill them off in his Greater German Reich. Benito Mussolini tried to suppress them in the then Fascist Italy. Joseph Stalin and Nikita Khrushchev tried to put them out of action in Communist Russia, and other dictatorial rulers and states have tried to do the same in their lands. But thousands of these anointed ambassadors, who have heavenly citizenship, have survived till today and are still active, working for the reconciliation of the estranged peoples. God's Messianic kingdom has preserved them!

#### GAINING MANY SUBJECTS

<sup>44</sup> Every government that actually exists and functions has more than ambassadors. It also has subjects. True to pattern, God's Messianic kingdom has for years, particularly since 1935, been gathering willing subjects, who desire to live forever on earth under the heavenly kingdom. They have heard the Kingdom ambassadors preaching the good news. From Bible prophecies they have learned that God's Messianic kingdom is the only rightful government to take charge of all the earth after the coming "war of the great day of

#### COMING IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- Building on a Right Foundation with Fire-Resistant Materials.
- The Need of Noninflammable Materials.
- What Price Government?
- Is There More than One Way of Being a Christian?

God the Almighty." So they have taken the steps to be reconciled to Jehovah God and his Messianic kingdom. By now about a million of them have dedicated themselves to God and been baptized in water, thus taking their stand on the side of God's kingdom. In further proof of this, they have joined the Kingdom ambassadors in actively preaching the Kingdom good news in about two hundred lands, in a hundred and sixty-four languages. This modern phenomenon is not

accidental, but by it the prophetic vision that the apostle John saw and described is being fulfilled:

<sup>45</sup> "I saw, and, look! a great crowd, which no man was able to number, out of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne [of God] and before the Lamb [Jesus Christ], dressed in white robes; and there were palm branches in their hands. And they keep on crying with a loud voice, saying: 'Salvation we owe to our God, who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb.'" —Rev. 7:9, 10.

<sup>46</sup> Let no one now be blinded by the Kingdom's enemy, Satan the Devil. Behold the evidence that God's Messianic kingdom exists! It is in power in the heavens since 1914. It has since then been doing things, not just in the invisible heavens, but also here at the earth. God's kingdom by means of his Messiah, Christ, is now the biggest issue before all mankind in this time of decision. The people of all nations are being divided over this issue, like sheep and goats. Things are occurring just

44, 45. (a) Besides ambassadors, what else does a government have, and since when has the Kingdom been gathering these on earth? (b) What active step have these taken, and what shows that all of this is not accidental?

46. (a) In view of the evidence, what should we recognize to be the biggest issue before all mankind in this day of decision? (b) How are things actually occurring according to Jesus' parable of the sheep and goats?

as the Lord Jesus Christ said in his prophecy on the "conclusion of the system of things," namely: "When the Son of man arrives in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit down on his glorious throne. And all the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another, just as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats." —Matt. 25:31, 32.

<sup>47</sup> It will prove disastrous to you if you prove yourself a symbolic "goat" that has shown no favor to the Kingdom ambassadors, the spiritual brothers of the reigning King. Remember: God's Messianic kingdom has already been doing things since 1914, and these are an ironclad guarantee that it will do all the other things foretold in the prophecies of the Holy Bible, namely, destroy all the goat-like people on earth, bring the world empire of false religion to everlasting ruin, bring an Armageddon of destruction upon

47. (a) Proving oneself a "goat" would mean what for one? (b) What God's kingdom has already done since 1914 is an ironclad guarantee of what else about it?

all Gentile nations that continue refusing to yield over the domination of the earth to God's rightful government, remove Satan the Devil and his demons from earth's vicinity by hurling them, completely chained, into the abyss, and give all mankind a clean, uplifting, life-giving worldwide government, even resurrecting the ransomed and redeemed dead from their graves to enjoy an earthly paradise with the sheeplike survivors of Armageddon.

<sup>48</sup> Let everybody become alive to the reality of God's Messianic kingdom since 1914! Wisely, then, prove yourself a sheep-like person. Be gathered to the Shepherd-King's right side of favor and preservation. Then, in due time, you will hear his approving words welcoming you into blessed everlasting life on a paradise earth under God's Messianic kingdom. (Matt. 25:32-46) Let God's kingdom lovingly do this for you!

48. To what reality should everybody become alive, and then what should one prove oneself, with God's kingdom then bound to do what for one?

### A Note of Appreciation

In a letter to the Watch Tower Society signed by both her daughter and granddaughter, one of Jehovah's witnesses in England writes:

"Do you remember how Jehovah reproached Israel (Isa. 43:24) and said that His people had brought Him no 'sweet cane'? That seems such a small thing for the God of all the earth to mention, but how understandable. Everything is his, for he made all good things. He originated the aromatic 'sweet cane' and all other delightful things of the earth, yet it grieved him that the Israelites had not wanted to share with him the good things he had given them.

"When my children were little, how warm it made my heart when they broke off a piece of the chocolate I had bought them and popped it into my mouth. The loving response to love, how valuable it is! And that brings us to the point of why we are writing to you. We wish to send the 'sweet cane' of our thanks to all the dear brothers and sisters who help in doing Jehovah's work, especially in preparing our dearly loved *Watchtower*. We indeed feel a part of a big and devoted family. So please accept our loving thanks and thoughts."

**L**IBERTY is a compelling desire of all men, irrespective of their race, religion or nationality. Yet satisfying fulfillment of this desire has eluded the vast majority of the world's inhabitants. Nevertheless, liberty or freedom is achievable. And the "God's Sons of Liberty" District Assemblies of Jehovah's Witnesses

held this summer throughout the United States, Canada and the British Isles, have proved beyond all doubt that there is Christian freedom in abundant measure among the people of God.

Jehovah's witnesses are a liberated people, a free people, spiritually speaking. Their elaborate district assembly program was designed to safeguard and expand the freedom that is theirs. In every one of the twenty assembly cities, the program was, for the most part, identical. The theme permeating the five days of sessions echoed the delight and warning expressed by the apostle Paul to the Galatians (5:1): "For such freedom Christ set us free. Therefore stand fast, and do not let yourselves be confined again in a yoke of slavery."

The assembled throngs, numbering hundreds of thousands, were called upon by the chairmen to '*Listen! Listen! Listen!*' Jehovah God provided for and has called his people together. Being a God of purpose, he has something to say. So *Listen!* Listeners carried away with them a rich blessing. What did they hear?

Perhaps the first blessing was to hear



music and songs from the new songbook, "Singing and Accompanying Yourselves with Music in Your Hearts." The brilliant color of the songbook created an appearance of a sea of purple flickering flowers. At many conventions, expressions of delight and applause followed song after song!

#### THE BIBLE MADE ALIVE

"Electrifying," "thrilling," "spectacular," were some of the expressions used by conventioners to describe their reaction to portions of the Bible enacted at the assemblies. Never was the account of the prophet Daniel made more real. As the sound of dramatic music echoed over the loudspeaker systems and the reproduced voices of the prophet Daniel, King Nebuchadnezzar and Shadrach were heard, the words of the Bible came alive. One felt himself there with the three Hebrews. The threat to pure worship became real. There was a searching of the heart integrity-wise by conventioners. The need for greater spiritual strength and faith was keenly felt by most attentive listeners.

The unforgettable scenes demonstrating Jeremiah's ministry and trials (with costume and sound effects) made the prophet's ordeal come alive. Young and old alike experienced the truthfulness of the saying that a picture is worth a thousand words. Jeremiah standing alone, with a howling mob demanding his life, emphasized the trust worshipers must place in

Jehovah and how they must endure even in the face of death. These lessons were driven home in a most brilliant way.

What adult or youth will forget that it is wrong to steal, after seeing the drama of Joshua and the thief Achan? What Christian will dismiss from mind the Bible principle that "bad associations spoil useful habits," after watching the scene depicting Dinah's unwise association with Canaanite Shechem? (1 Cor. 15:33) How could any young man or woman forget the scene enacted between Joseph and Potiphar's wife, illustrating the need for morality, even when under extreme temptation? What beauty in virtue and wisdom in Joseph's words: "How could I commit this great badness and actually sin against God?" (Gen. 39:9) Did you not appreciate more fully the need of keeping the congregation clean after seeing what happened at Corinth? Were you not moved by these demonstrations to be a better servant of God? That was their purpose. A stranger, attending the assembly at Blackpool, England, said: "I was particularly impressed with the colourful tableaus (demonstrations). I think it is a wonderful way of teaching the Bible." Are these not your sentiments?

Those who came to the assemblies for only the weekend found that they missed some of the best portions of the program. The demonstrations put on early in the program were "spectacular," "unforgettable," fixing Bible principles indelibly in mind.

#### THRILLING DISCOURSES

Think of building people! That is what Jehovah's witnesses are doing. "Jehovah's witnesses are making Christians out of people who already exist as humans," conventioners in Toronto and other assembly cities heard President N. H. Knorr of the Watch Tower Society say in the

keynote address, "Building on a Right Foundation with Fire-Resistant Materials." (1 Cor. 3:9-15) "Jehovah's witnesses are building on the right foundation, Jesus Christ," Knorr said, "and they are making true Christians with fire-resistant materials," which the Bible compares with gold, silver, corals and precious stones. This means that "the persons whom we are striving to make disciples of Christ we must educate, train, discipline in the godly qualities of heavenly wisdom, spiritual discernment, appreciation of integrity, devotion to Bible principles, respect for the laws, commandments, orders, reminders and judicial decisions of Jehovah God, faith in his written Word, sticking to the theocratic organization of God's people, love of God's 'sheep' that are in the care of the Fine Shepherd Jesus Christ, unbreakable attachment to God's Messianic kingdom and a fearless willingness to bear witness to it." This will result in our own everlasting life and that of others on whom we do building work, the speaker assured his listeners.

Only a liberated people can preach a release to captives, conventioners were told in the speech "Preach a Release to the Captives," which thrilled them with its hopeful outlook. "Jehovah, the God of freedom and liberty, has freed his people from Babylonish bondage and has given them a work of liberation to do. That work of liberation and salvation must go on to the finish! To give aid today in this critical time to prospective sons of God," announced President Knorr, "a new book in English, entitled '*Life Everlasting—in Freedom of the Sons of God*,' has been published." At all assembly points where it was released, the book was received enthusiastically. Crowds gathered around stands and soon supplies of the book were depleted. Immediately its contents were examined. It did not take the brothers

very long to find the chart beginning on page 31, showing that 6,000 years of man's existence end in 1975. Discussion of 1975 overshadowed about everything else. "The new book compels us to realize that Armageddon is, in fact, very close indeed," said a conventioner. Surely it was one of the outstanding blessings to be carried home!

"Liberty is to know Christian truth," the eager audiences at a number of the assemblies heard F. W. Franz, the Watch Tower Society's vice-president, say in his discourse "Liberty-giving Worship and Freedom of Worship." "It is those who worship the one living and true God Jehovah through his Son Jesus Christ that are set free. Jehovah's witnesses strive to keep the liberty that their practice of pure worship gives to them," declared Franz.

Among the more thought-provoking talks at the 1966 "God's Sons of Liberty" District Assemblies was the speech "Making Grateful Use of a Penny." (Matt. 20: 1-16) The assembled crowds learned that in the first century the symbolic "penny" was the privilege that went with the receiving of the holy spirit, namely, the privilege of being a member of spiritual Israel, authorized to prophesy in fulfillment of Joel 2:28, 29, anointed to preach the good news of God's Messianic kingdom. The "penny" today is likewise the honor of serving as anointed ambassadors of God's newborn Messianic kingdom from 1919 on till the coming "battle of the great day of God the Almighty" at Armageddon. The "penny" has been used in gathering the "great crowd" of sheeplike persons foretold in Revelation 7:9-17. What a reward this has already been to the anointed Kingdom ambassadors!

Human freedom or liberty is inseparably linked with the kingdom of God. The public address on Sunday, therefore, aroused great curiosity, for the subject was "What

Has God's Kingdom Been Doing Since 1914?" Over 386,600 present for this discourse in the twenty assembly cities heard proof that the kingdom of God is a reality. What has that kingdom done since 1914? It has gone into action against its enemies in heaven (Rev. 12:12); it has made its influence felt in the worldwide proclamation of the Kingdom in all the earth for a witness today; it has protected and preserved its anointed ambassadors through unspeakable trials; it has acquired subjects of whom about a million have dedicated themselves to God and his Messianic kingdom. 'Let everybody become alive to the reality of 1914, as well as to the reality of the heavenly kingdom!' appealed the speaker.

#### OTHER DISCOURSES

In addition to these informative and enlightening discourses, there were many excellent half-hour talks, such as one that gave practical illustrations on how to teach as Jesus did by the use of questions. "I don't mean just the frequency with which he used questions," said the speaker, "but I mean the way he taught by questions—when it might have seemed so much easier just to tell the person the point. Let me give you an example. . . . Let's look at Matthew 17:24-27." Questions make people think and remember too. People, by answering questions asked, are more ready to accept conclusions that they themselves have expressed than if someone else expresses them. By means of questions we can help people educate their consciences, to begin thinking seriously in terms of right and wrong so that they will come to love what is right and hate what is wrong.

Other discourses helped conventioners to see how they can fight indifference with endurance; how the full-time service has helped many freedom lovers to keep their

eyes on the prize of life. For example, one speaker said that "full-time service demands your all. You can't be speaking about the kingdom and everlasting life without having your own mind on those things." Other talks caused listeners to do some deep soul-searching. The speech "My Responsibility Toward the House of My God" showed that attendance and active participation at meetings are responsibilities to be met by Christians, along with the providing of material support. Husbands and wives especially appreciated the admonition in the discourse, "Husbands, Assume Your Responsibilities of Headship." It was pointed out that the husband's voice must be the deciding one in the family, that he must give direction, and that this is to be given in love. When this happens, both the wife and the children enjoy security and the husband wins for himself self-respect.

For more than 4,900 who symbolized their dedication to Jehovah by being immersed in water, the talk "Responsibilities of a Baptized Witness" will no doubt live long in their memory. They heard speakers say that baptism shows faith in Jehovah and Christ, that it symbolizes full dedication to God made in prayer, that it is a necessary step to take and that dedication is to be fulfilled faithfully.

A question-and-answer session highlighted interesting points about modern-day modes of dress, hair styles and grooming in general. Conventioners were told not to follow the example of those whose way of dress is really a reflection of their immoral thoughts. About dating, the parents and young people assembled were reminded that dating is not a form of recreation. It is a course that naturally leads to marriage. "It is not up to the young person to decide at what age this [dating] is to be permitted or if a chaperon will be required," the youths heard the speak-

er say. "That is the God-given responsibility of the father; and, if there is no living father in the home, the responsibility rests with the mother." Parents were urged to shoulder their parental responsibility. Other vital questions were also asked and answered.

#### FINAL REMARKS

Especially enjoyable were the extemporeaneous remarks of the president of the Society at the many assemblies where he was able to be personally present. For more than an hour his listeners clung to every word said. He touched on the high points of the assembly, the theme of liberty and building with the right materials on the right foundation. "Never slack the hand," he pleaded. "Be on guard against internal dissension, materialism and persecution!"

He told of increasing opposition to the Kingdom work in various lands, such as in Cuba, where Kingdom Halls have been burned; in Burma, where the Society's missionaries have been expelled; in Zambia, where the branch servant was told to leave the country; in Portugal, where forty-nine of Jehovah's witnesses have stood trial. But he also had some encouraging figures. While in some of the larger countries there was little increase in numbers of Kingdom preachers this past April, still others have done very well: France saw a 12-percent increase; Italy, 15 percent; Brazil, 21 percent; Chile, 22 percent; the Dominican Republic, 40-percent increase.

He also told of the way the Swedish Parliament solved the problem of dealing with Jehovah's witnesses who refused military service. Upon the recommendation of the defense minister himself, the government will not call for duty any who are Jehovah's witnesses. However, yearly a

check will be made to see whether they still are Jehovah's witnesses or not.

#### THE YEAR 1975

At the Baltimore assembly Brother Franz in his closing remarks made some interesting comments regarding the year 1975. He began casually by saying, "Just before I got on the platform a young man came to me and said, 'Say, what does this 1975 mean? Does it mean this, that or any other thing?'" In part, Brother Franz went on to say: 'You have noticed the chart [on pages 31-35 in the book *Life Everlasting—in Freedom of the Sons of God*]. It shows that 6,000 years of human experience will end in 1975, about nine years from now. What does that mean? Does it mean that God's rest day began 4026 B.C.E.? It could have. The *Life Everlasting* book does not say it did not. The book merely presents the chronology. You can accept it or reject it. If that is the case, what does that mean to us? [He went into some length showing the feasibility of the 4026 B.C.E. date as being the beginning of God's rest day.]

'What about the year 1975? What is it going to mean, dear friends?' asked Brother Franz. 'Does it mean that Armageddon is going to be finished, with Satan bound, by 1975? It could! It could! All things are possible with God. Does it mean that Babylon the Great is going to go down by 1975? It could. Does it mean that the attack of Gog of Magog is going to be made on Jehovah's witnesses to wipe them out, then Gog himself will be put out of action? It could. But we are not saying. All things are possible with God. But we are not saying. And don't any of you be specific in saying anything that is going to happen between now and 1975. But the big point of it all is this, dear friends: Time is short. Time is running out, no question about that.'

'When we were approaching the end of the Gentile Times in 1914, there was no sign that the Gentile Times were going to end. Conditions on earth gave us no hint of what was to come, even as late as June of that year. Then suddenly there was a murder. World War I broke out. You know the rest. Famines, earthquakes and pestilences followed, as Jesus foretold would happen.'

'But what do we have today as we approach 1975? Conditions have not been peaceful. We've been having world wars, famines, earthquakes, pestilences and we have these conditions still as we approach 1975. Do these things mean something? These things mean that we're in the "time of the end." And the end has to come sometime. Jesus said: "As these things start to occur, raise yourselves erect and lift your heads up, because your deliverance is getting near." (Luke 21:28) So we know that as we come to 1975 our deliverance is that much nearer.'

"Let us make the most of the time and get in all the good hard work to Jehovah while the opportunity affords," he urged.

In closing, at most assemblies, plans for the coming year were unfolded, to have a large number of district assemblies in the smaller cities throughout each country. Then the happy gatherings were dismissed as they had begun their five-day assemblies, with song and prayer to Jehovah God. Conventioners, though somewhat reluctant to leave assembly cities and relinquish the close association of their brothers, nevertheless felt enriched by the spiritual feast they had enjoyed. They were glad to be Jehovah's witnesses. The convention was a most rewarding, prayerful experience for which they were most grateful to Jehovah their God. They were determined to remain on guard and to maintain the glorious spiritual freedom with which they have been blessed.

**I**N THE search for sources of energy to bolster up the earth's diminishing reserves, the sun is acknowledged to be far greater than any other energy source yet found. From this stupendous nuclear furnace, the sun, the portion of the sunlight that falls on the United States alone in just two days supplies energy equal to all our remaining fossil fuel reserves. The problem is to find a way to harness it. Many methods have been tried to utilize the sun's energy economically, with only fair success.

Not only is sunlight the greatest source of energy but its many forms of radiation affect our lives tremendously. When there is sunspot activity, for example, radio communication is greatly disrupted and scientists believe that sunspots may also have a great effect upon our lives physically and psychologically.

#### GOD'S ANGER BRINGS DISTURBANCE

Among the ancient Babylonians the sun was worshiped as a god, the judge of heaven, under the name of Shamash. He was the second god in one of the Babylonian triads of gods. Apostate Israelites imitated the Babylonians in taking up the worship of the sun, as indicated in Ezekiel 8:15, 16 and Deuteronomy 4:19. Today some of the backward people of the earth still worship the sun. These people look upon the sun as more than a source of energy; they also look and pray to it as if it were an intelligent provider. Of course, in this modern time intellectual, educated people of the earth do not worship the sun directly, though they do understand its importance to mankind.

This tremendous orb in space around which our small planet revolves was not made for man to worship. It is, rather, another evidence of the might and loving-kindness of our great Creator Jehovah God, who placed it there. Without it all life would quickly disappear from the earth.

## DISTURBANCE IN SYMBOLIC SUN

### DISTRESSES EARTH

We should be thankful to him for it. Due to its importance to man, it is logical that the Creator would use the sun as a symbol or "sign" in the Bible to illustrate something to which man looks for life, light and direction. Sometimes he uses the symbol with a good and beneficial significance, such as when he speaks of the sun of righteousness, and sometimes with a bad connotation, when he speaks of pouring out a plague upon the sun, as he does in Revelation 16:8.

It is in the latter sense that he uses the term in connection with the fourth plague of the seven plagues of the book of Revelation. The angel handling this plague poured out his bowl of God's anger upon the symbolic sun, causing disturbances in it, with results to men on earth that we wish to discuss here. After describing the first three plagues, John says: "And the fourth one poured out his bowl upon the sun; and to the sun it was granted to scorch the men with fire."—Rev. 16:8.

To get an understanding of what this plague is it is helpful first to turn to Jesus'

prophetic illustration of the wheat and the weeds at Matthew 13:38, 39, 43. He said to his disciples: "As for the fine seed, these are the sons of the kingdom; . . . The harvest is a conclusion of a system of things, . . . At that time the righteous ones will shine as brightly as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." He was speaking of those who proclaim the message of the kingdom under Christ the Messiah, who is the light of the world, and in doing so they shine like the sun in blessing the people who hear. (John 1:4, 9; Matt. 5:14) They receive their energy from God and his Word. There are others with a sun-like brilliance, however, but they shine in the kingdoms of this world and they certainly impart no such blessing to mankind. Their shining is to make a name for themselves in world history and to be idolized.

#### DECLARING THE PLAGUE

It follows that there would be enmity on the part of the ones who shine as the sun of this world toward those who shine as the sun in the Kingdom. This is because the sons of the Kingdom are commanded by God, not only to declare the good news of the Kingdom, but also to expose the motives of the "sun" of this world and the results of its rays beating down upon the people. This declaration constitutes an announcement of the fourth of the seven plagues that are poured out by the angelic servants of God. Accordingly, on August 29, 1925, at a convention of the International Bible Students in Indianapolis, Indiana, a resolution entitled "Message of Hope" was adopted. In part it said:

"World powers, science and philosophy, commerce and religion, have each in turn offered their respective remedies for man's relief. In the name and under the guise of democracy, these combine in offering their joint and several powers to meet the requirements of man. Together they claim

to be the sunlight of the world, holding forth all the light that shines to enlighten and guide the human race."

The resolution gave no glory or praise to the name of men shining in the worldly firmament, as it went on to say a few paragraphs later:

"Therefore, in the name and in the spirit of the Lord, the standard of God's truth and righteousness is here lifted up against the enemy and for the benefit of the peoples, which standard is, to wit:

"That Jehovah is the only true God, the Most High, the Almighty, the author and finisher of the great purpose for the salvation of man, and is the rewarder of all that diligently seek and obey him; that the Bible is his revealed Word of truth; that his beloved Son Christ Jesus is the Redeemer and Deliverer of man and, true to his promise, has come to rule and bless the peoples . . ."

#### A SCORCHING SUN

The effects of pouring out this bowl were: "To the sun it was granted to scorch the men with fire. And the men were scorched with great heat." (Rev. 16:8, 9) How did this come about? Well, by this time, 1925, Benito Mussolini had established himself as dictator of Italy. Stalin was manipulating things so as to be the absolute master of the Communist Russian giant by the end of 1927. Adolf Hitler was fanatically working his way toward becoming the National Socialist dictator over Germany. Japan was molding plans to extend its imperialism on the mainland of Asia, while the rest of the world was still trying to readjust itself from the holocaust of World War I. Yet all these adjustments and changes were not bringing any light of freedom and warmth of blessings to the people. Rather, the symbolic worldly "sun" was oppressively becoming scorchingly hot, and the people were suffering under the greater pressures, just as Jehovah's witnesses had foretold. The people looking to the "sun" of this world to

bring recovery and blessings after World War I certainly were disappointed, for it proved to be no "sun of righteousness" with "healing in its wings."—Mal. 4:2.

Jehovah's witnesses were telling the people that the Gentile Times had ended in 1914 and that at this time God's kingdom was established in the heavens. Giving men a warning before his kingdom would crush and put an end to the kingdoms of the world, God permitted the governments of this world to exist for a while longer as the "superior authorities." (Rom. 13:1) Men grasped at this fact as an excuse to blame God for the troubles that were taking place and to increase their hostility toward Jehovah's witnesses, who ascribed the scorching heat to the worldly "sun." As Revelation 16:9 foretold: "They blasphemed the name of God, who has the authority over these plagues, and they did not repent so as to give glory to him."

Now with the Kingdom established in the heavens and the enlightenment that God's people had on this, they began to see more than ever before the importance of God's personal name Jehovah, and that he would make his name great before all the earth by means of his kingdom. They circulated the resolution adopted at the Indianapolis convention throughout the earth in many millions of copies in many languages. Additionally, the *Watch Tower* issue of December 15, 1925, had the following to say under the heading "His Name":

The world, particularly the governing factors of the nations, have pushed the name of God aside. Now the time is come when God will make for himself a name in the earth. . . .

Now Satan and his evil allies are gathering all their forces for the great and final conflict. . . . In that fight the Lord God will make for himself a name, that the peoples and nations of earth may know that he is God.—Page 375.

Therefore, while the "sun" of this world began to be more oppressive and scorchingly hot, at the same time defaming Jehovah's name, Jesus' prophecy came true that his people would shine forth "as the sun in the kingdom of their father." In the very next issue of *The Watch Tower*, that of January 1, 1926, the feature article was "Who Will Honor Jehovah?" In its opening paragraph it said:

These ["Blessed be the Lord out of Zion." —Ps. 135:21a] are the words for our text for the year 1926. Blessed or bless, as used in this text, means to venerate, to adore, to worship, to honor and to glorify. Who will come within the class that thus honors Jehovah God? They that abide in Zion will do so with gladness.

#### GOD'S ILLUSTRIOS NAME SHINES ON HIS PEOPLE

The plague and its effects began to be more distinct as the worldly governments stepped up their oppressiveness, while at the same time Jehovah's people were more determined to honor God. Correspondingly, from then on the Watch Tower publications quoted and directed these Christians to the words of Isaiah 43:10-12, in which Jehovah tells his dedicated people that they are his witnesses. More and more they came to appreciate their relationship and responsibility toward God. Finally, on Sunday, July 26, 1931, at their international assembly in Columbus, Ohio, they adopted the resolution in favor of the Scripturally backed name for themselves, "Jehovah's witnesses."

They did not invent the name Jehovah's witnesses or take it upon themselves. It was a *Scripturally given name*, God-given, proving that they were getting their light from the true source of all light and blessings. At the same time they have increased the publicizing of God's name and now, especially with the name being called upon his people, the "sun" of the world has beamed its anger directly against God's

personal name and has blasphemed it. God's name Jehovah is hated so badly that the clergy of Christendom, who have looked to the worldly "sun," have denied it as being the Creator's name, have removed it from their modern translations of the Bible, have said it is not the name of the God of Christians and thereby have left Jehovah's witnesses alone to bear the distinguished divine Name. Little do they know that this is a maneuvering of God, for he respects his sacred name, and has arranged it so that only those devoted to him may bear it.

#### A LIGHT THAT FAILED

That the plague was truly on, and the fact that the "sun" of this world would not bring help to the people, it was the privilege of Jehovah's witnesses to declare on the occasion of the so-called Holy Year of 1933. Pope Pius XI of Vatican City, who was a Concordat partner of dictators Mussolini and Hitler, proclaimed 1933 to be a holy year. At its inauguration on April 2, the pope held out hopes of peace and prosperity as a result of observing that year as holy. But President J. F. Rutherford of the Watch Tower Society, only three weeks later, namely, on April 23, 1933, broadcast an hour's address on the subject "Effect of Holy Year on Peace and Prosperity." WBBR, Staten Island, New York, was the key station linked with more than 54 other radio stations. This exposé of the Holy Year was transcribed on phonograph records and a broadcast of these was made the following June 25 over 158 radio stations. An excerpt from the president's speech stated:

" . . . With all kindness and sincerity I remind you who listened to the 'Holy Hour Service' held in New York on the 2d of April that the name of man was there exalted by frequently using and applying to men such terms as 'Holy Father,' 'Your Eminence,' and 'Your Excellency'; whereas the name of

Jehovah God, His King and His kingdom were not mentioned at all. No reference was made to God's expressed purpose of dealing with the human race by and through His kingdom. . . .

"The act of declaring this a 'holy year' for the bringing in of peace and prosperity is a presumptuous sin before Almighty God. No man or company of men are running Jehovah's business so as to enable them to 'change times and laws,' and it is so stated in Daniel 7:25. . . .

" . . . Peace and prosperity cannot be brought to the earth by men, but will come by God's kingdom under Christ. . . ."—*The Golden Age*, as of May 10, 1933, pages 483-490.

The symbolic "sun" of this world has not let up since then in its scorching of the people. To the contrary, it has grown worse. The terrible persecution of Jehovah's witnesses by Hitler, worse than that he inflicted on the Jews, took place. Then came World War II, which proved to be many times more destructive than World War I. This was climaxed by the exploding of atomic bombs on Japan. Now the Communist scourge and the fear that it brings, with the possibility of nuclear war, which scientists fear could wipe mankind off the earth, makes many wonder how long anyone will last under the scorching heat of the world's "sun."

Jehovah's witnesses, on the other hand, continue to increase both in peace and in numbers, for many persons see that they have the true light of God's Word, which the psalmist called "a lamp to my foot, and a light to my roadway." (Ps. 119:105) Just as Jehovah God in his undeserved kindness and love for humankind created for them all things for their comfort, including the sun, which provides the energy for man's life as well as light for his guidance, so he has provided the symbolic "sun of righteousness" for mankind's everlasting enlightenment, life and blessing. Hundreds of thousands hope to realize the truth of God's promise: "To you who are in fear

of my name the sun of righteousness will certainly shine forth, with healing in its wings." (Mal. 4:2) Contrariwise, the men who continue to look to the "sun" of this world, who are getting horribly scorched, become more and more blasphemous and angry against the name of God. They do

not repent so as to give glory to him. The plague will continue on them until they are removed along with the world's "sun" at the battle of Armageddon.

For a discussion of the remaining three plagues of Revelation, chapter 16, see succeeding issues of *The Watchtower*, or the book "*Babylon the Great Has Fallen!*" *God's Kingdom Rules!* by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, Brooklyn, New York.

## God Has Been Good and Merciful to Me

As told by  
George D. Gangas

**I** WAS born on February 17, 1896, in an insignificant town of Asia Minor named New Ephesus (Turkish: Koushadasi). It was located about eight miles from ancient Ephesus, where some 1,900 years ago the apostle Paul preached and wrote his first letter to the Corinthians.

When I was about five or six years old, my father died. My mother was a devout, God-fearing woman. But she did not have access to the Bible and so did not know how to rear her children "in the discipline and authoritative advice of Jehovah." (Eph. 6:4) In fact, almost 95 percent of the Orthodox people did not have Bibles, nor did they ever see one. So, not having any guide to show me the right way to go, I pursued a careless life, bringing dishonor to God.

Nevertheless, in my early years I attended church and was a choir boy, singing hymns. From these hymns and from the religious education I received in school, I learned the church's teaching about the twofold destiny of mankind: good people go straight to heaven at death; bad ones

go to hellfire. I still remember a hymn sung to Mary begging her to deliver us from eternal torment. That doctrine was embedded into my heart, and I was certain of the existence of such a place for the wicked. After all, the Orthodox Church taught it, and I believed that my church taught right doctrines, the word "orthodox" itself meaning "right opinion (*orthos*, right or true; *doxa*, opinion)."

Since I was a bad young man I knew for sure that someday I would land in hell to be burned forever. But here is the strange thing: although I knew I would go there someday, I would not reform. What I could not explain was, What satisfaction does God get by tormenting billions of people forever? I had learned that God is good, but I asked myself, Where was his goodness if he tormented people eternally?

When I was eleven years old I left New Ephesus and went to the island of Chios, where for three years I attended a business school. Then World War I broke out. I left Chios and went to Athens, where

I suffered the worst famine in my life, for Greece had been blockaded and nothing could come in. From there I went to Paris, and after the end of the war I came to Marseilles to wait for a ship that was going to the United States.

One evening while in Marseilles I saw members of the Salvation Army singing in the street. Not knowing what kind of people they were, I followed them to their place of meeting and found out they were a religious organization. Once more the thought about hell came to my mind, and I asked the preacher about it. His answer was the same as I had learned in the Orthodox Church.

#### CHANGING PERSONALITY

Finally, I arrived in the United States in 1920. One day as I was working at a lunch counter in Marietta, Ohio, a man came in and began speaking about the Bible. Others listened, and I did too. I immediately perceived that he was talking altogether differently from other religious people. What he said made sense.

He told us that at death one does not go to heaven or to hellfire but to the grave. I took issue with him; so he handed me his Bible and said, "Read there." He pointed to John 3:13. I read it, then reread it. Each time it read, "No man has ascended into heaven." I was so surprised that I did not know what to say.

Seeing that he could answer my questions by using the Bible, I said to myself, "Let me ask him about hellfire." So I said to him: "What do you people believe about hellfire? Does it exist or not?" "Listen," he said, "suppose you were married and you had a child who was the worst child in the world. Would you, as a father, have the nerve to put that child in the fire and hear him screaming?" I answered: "I can't even think of such a thing." He responded: "If you, being bad, cannot do such a thing to your child, why do you

attribute such a devilish act to God, who is love?" That clinched it!

This man, who was one of the Bible Students, as Jehovah's witnesses were called in those days, went on to explain from the Bible what the word "hell" means. My delight and curiosity reached its apex, and I asked him how and where he learned these things. I asked him to bring me a book that had stories about Abraham, Joseph and other Bible characters, not knowing that these true stories were in the Bible itself. In a few days he brought me a Bible and the Bible-study aid *The Divine Plan of the Ages*. That night I read until past midnight!

The next day as I was making coffee where I worked my mind was revolving around what I had read the previous night. I must have made some mistake, because I heard customers saying, "That young man acts strangely today. Something must have happened to him." They were right! Something was taking place in me. I was undergoing a change in my life. I was emerging from gross darkness into a marvelous light. I was turning my back on an old system and looking to a new one, which I could not yet completely explain.

#### CRAVING FOR ASSOCIATION

The study of the book together with the Bible generated in me such joy and such desires that I asked the one who brought me these truths if there were people like him in Marietta. He said no, and that I should go to Wheeling, West Virginia. There I would also find others who spoke my language, Greek, and who would help answer my questions. So a few days later I went to Wheeling and was employed as a dishwasher at a restaurant.

In a short time news reached my older brother that I was crazy. He visited me in the restaurant and found me peeling potatoes. He said: "Come with me and I

will pay you more. You will be like a boss. I will make you a partner and we will make a lot of money." But I did not accept, for the goodness of God and the understanding of what his kingdom is and what it will accomplish made such an impression on me and developed in my heart such joy and love for Jehovah that, although I came to America for the purpose of making money, that desire vanished.

Not long afterward I symbolized my dedication by water baptism. During all this time I did not fail to attend meetings to study the Bible, even though I did not understand English. However, those who were dedicated to do God's will and who spoke the Greek language helped me.

From Wheeling a few of us moved to Beech Bottom, a very small town. There we formed a small congregation that steadily increased. We made a thorough study of the Bible and came to love and relish the things we were learning so much that after the regular study we would have another informal study on various subjects. We would not waste time. It seemed we were not learning fast enough. We talked and talked about the goodness of our God.

Jehovah's mercy and goodness to me made such an impression on me and stirred in me such love for the brothers that I prayed to God and asked him to permit me other disappointments, but not to permit me to miss any meetings with the brothers. Jehovah faithfully granted me this request, because over these forty-five years that I have enjoyed his mercy and goodness, I have been regular in attending meetings.

To me, meeting with the brothers is one of life's greatest pleasures and a source of encouragement. I love to be at the Kingdom Hall among the first, and leave among the last, if possible. I feel an inward joy when talking with God's people. When I am among them I feel at home with my

family, in a spiritual paradise. Also, at meetings I feel Jehovah's spirit in a greater measure. And as soon as the meeting is over I like to talk with the newly interested people. As the compass always points to the north, just so my innermost thought and desire is to attend the meetings. I fully appreciate the inspired statement of the psalmist: 'What I look for is to dwell in the house of Jehovah all the days of my life.'—Ps. 27:4.

#### SERVING AT BETHEL

God's goodwill was further manifested to me when, one day in 1928, I received a letter from the Watch Tower Society asking me to come to the Bethel headquarters at Brooklyn, New York, and serve as a translator. I could hardly believe it. I, a translator? I was then in the restaurant business! But I recalled that Noah had not been a boatbuilder. And did Moses know how to erect tabernacles? Both of them learned. I would do the same.

In Bethel I tasted to a greater degree Jehovah's mercy and goodness. What a joy to find myself in the midst of some 200 (now over 800) brothers and sisters in the faith! What gladness and delight I felt, and still enjoy, to sit down with them at meals three times a day, and each morning to discuss a portion of the Bible!

In Bethel I was helped to mature and develop the fruits of God's spirit. I recall the time I gave my first six-minute talk. I was not confident in myself so I wrote it down. But when I got up to give it, audience fear gripped me and I stuttered and muttered, losing my thoughts. Then I resorted to reading from the manuscript. But my hands were trembling so much that the lines were jumping up and down! The Devil tried to discourage me by putting into my mind the thought that I was no good, that I had better quit. He tried hard for several days. I struggled, and Je-

hovah, being merciful, helped me thwart Satan's attacks. From then on I learned the lesson—never, never quit.

Anything I say about Bethel falls short of what I feel for it in my heart. Year by year my appreciation for it increases, and day after day I thank Jehovah for tolerating me all these years. Bethel to me is the center of Jehovah's visible organization in operation. The thought that I am employed at the headquarters of this visible organization fills my heart with joy and gratitude. In Bethel I associate with brothers and sisters who have been and still are an example to me in their devotion and dedication to Jehovah. Over these long years I have seen young brothers who did not know much when they first came, but after seven or eight years of faithful service they were made overseers and later were used as circuit and district servants. If it were in my power, I would cry out in a loud voice to all young brothers, Come to Bethel and taste Jehovah's loving-kindness and goodness! With all the experience I have gained over the thirty-eight years of my service in Bethel, I can truthfully say that it is the best place on earth for enhancing the capabilities of ministers to Jehovah's praise.

Here at Bethel I also learned to speak Spanish. When I saw that the territory in which I was assigned to preach was mostly Spanish, I got a grammar book, and with the help of our literature and by listening

to the way the Spanish people pronounced words, I learned Spanish! Many are the studies I have held in the homes of these humble people.

From boyhood I had an inferiority complex. I could not face people and talk with them. But what a difference now! By Jehovah's help I can stand before large audiences and talk an hour. This change was effected by a study of the Scriptures and with the help of God's spirit.

God's goodness, which helped me to change my former bad personality, impels me now wherever I am to divulge the knowledge He gave me, that others, too, might see that Jehovah is good. God's Word contains sayings of everlasting life. (John 6:68) I love life and I want my brothers also to gain life. I consider, along with the apostle Paul, that all other things are "loss on account of the excelling value of the knowledge of Christ Jesus." (Phil. 3:8) Yes, all other things will soon be shaken to their destruction, with the exception of the kingdom of God and its interests.—Heb. 12:27, 28.

When I look back over these forty-five years that I have served Jehovah by his undeserved kindness, I fully agree with Moses' words to Israel: "Jehovah your God is a merciful God." (Deut. 4:31) And also with the words of the inspired psalmist: "You, O Jehovah, are good and ready to forgive." (Ps. 86:5) Yes, Jehovah has been good and merciful to me.



- Isaiah 52:14, a prophecy regarding the Messiah, seems to indicate that Jesus Christ

was a disfigured person. How is this to be understood?—J. B., U.S.A.

Jehovah God inspired the prophet Isaiah to write prophetically respecting the Messiah: "Look! My servant will act with insight. He will be in high station and will certainly be elevated and exalted very much. To the extent that many have stared at him in amazement—so much was the disfigurement as respects his appearance more than that of any other man and as respects his stately form more

than that of the sons of mankind—he will likewise startle many nations. At him kings will shut their mouth, because what had not been recounted to them they will actually see, and to what they had not heard they must turn their consideration.”—Isa. 52:13-15.

These words of Isaiah apply to Jesus Christ. But what is said in Isaiah 52:14 should not cause us to conclude that Jesus was a person who was physically disfigured. Though the Bible does not describe Christ's facial appearance or physical form, the oldest archaeological evidence is not to the effect that Jesus had an unpleasant visage or grotesque features. For example, in considering early paintings in which Christ is depicted, American scholar Jack Finegan wrote: "The almost destroyed painting of Christ in the Catacomb of Priscilla at Rome [the Resurrection of Lazarus] probably belongs, as we have seen, to the middle of the second century. The painting at Dura [the Healing of the Paralytic] is dated even more definitely in the first part of the third century. In both pictures Christ is shown as a young and beardless man with short hair and wearing the ordinary costume of the day. These and similar portrayals are the earliest type of Christ as far as is now known in early Christian art." (*Light from the Ancient Past*, 1946)

edition, page 408) Hence, the oldest extant paintings depicting Jesus Christ do not indicate that he was disfigured in any way.

What, then, is meant at Isaiah 52:14? Evidently these words have reference to the humiliation Jesus Christ experienced. Many viewed him as a sinner and reviled him. (1 Pet. 2:22, 23) As a man on earth Jesus did righteous works that others could not do, but he was hated without cause despite the good things that he did. Nonetheless, he bore such reproach, proving his integrity to God. For this Jesus was exalted—John 15:17-25.

Jesus was a staunch advocate of truth and righteousness. He boldly exposed religious leaders of his day as being hypocrites, even liars and murderers. (Matt. 23:1-39; John 8:44) To such exposed ones, understandably, Jesus had no pleasant appearance. They hated him. To the hypocritical religious leaders of his day Jesus' message was repulsive and the bearer of that message had no desirable appearance.

While the Scriptures do not provide an actual description of Christ's facial or physical appearance, we do well to remember that Jesus was a perfect man. (Heb. 7:26) God prepared a body for him. (Heb. 10:5) Undoubtedly, therefore, Jesus had a very pleasing physical form and countenance.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

## FIELD MINISTRY

Many centuries ago Jehovah God foretold a world government that would bring endless peace to mankind, a heavenly government that would be ruled by Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace. (Isa. 9:7) Jehovah's witnesses believe that divine promise, and they publicize that heavenly government. During October they will do this by offering to all interested persons a year's subscription for the *Awake!* magazine, with three booklets, for \$1.

## "WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

November 13: What Has God's Kingdom Been Doing Since 1914? ¶1-25. Page 613. Songs to Be Used: 1, 74.

November 20: What Has God's Kingdom Been  
Doing Since 1914? ¶26-48. Page 620. Songs  
to Be Used: 90, 80.