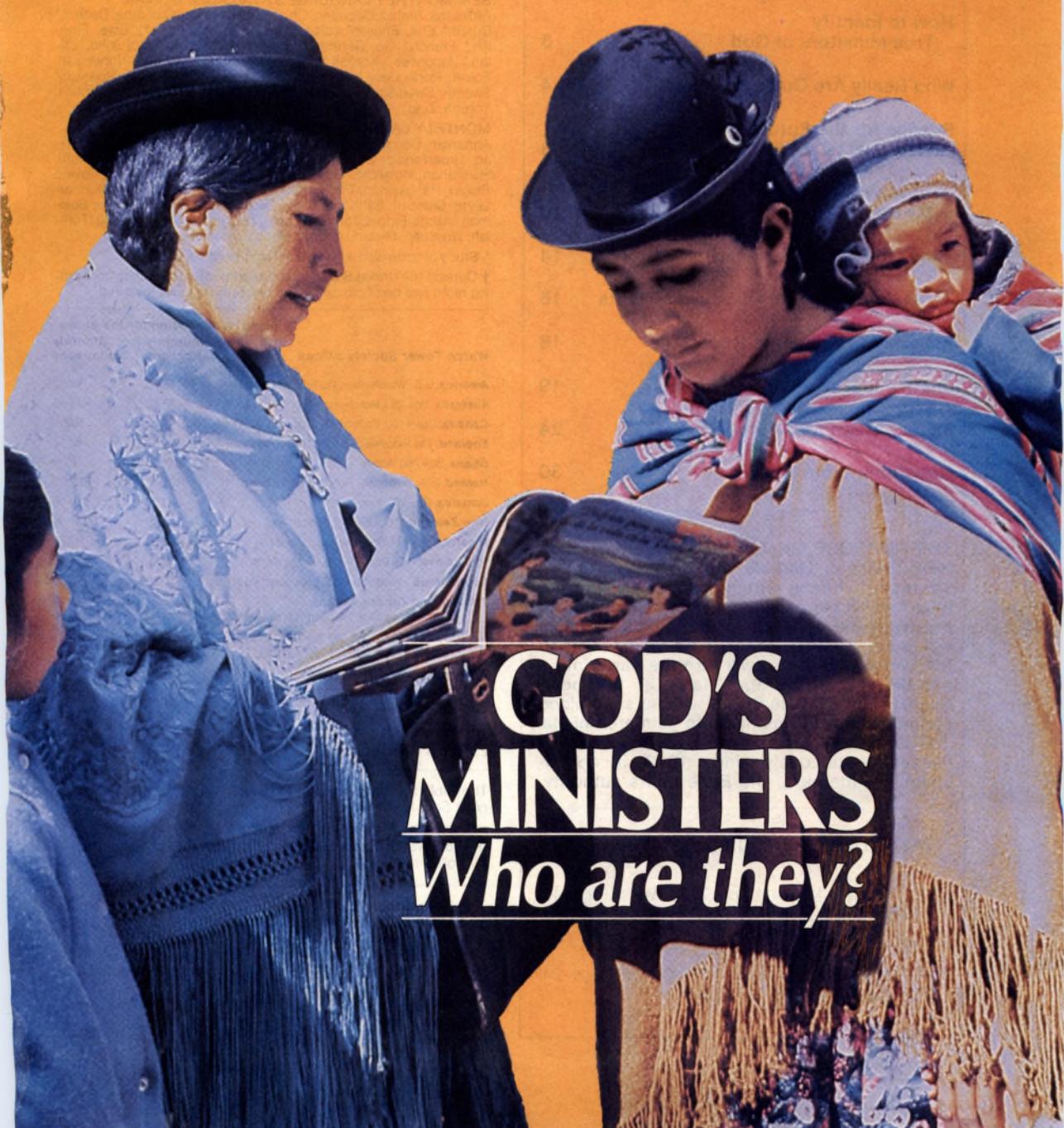


# The Watchtower

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom

March 1, 1989



## GOD'S MINISTERS Who are they?

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THE PURPOSE OF *THE WATCHTOWER* is to exalt Jehovah God as the Sovereign of the universe. It keeps watch on world events as they fulfill Bible prophecy. It comforts all peoples with the good news that God's Kingdom will soon destroy those who oppress their fellowmen and that it will turn the earth into a paradise. It encourages faith in the now-reigning King, Jesus Christ, whose shed blood opens the way for mankind to gain eternal life. *The Watchtower*, published by Jehovah's Witnesses continuously since 1879, is nonpolitical. It adheres to the Bible as its authority.

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# How to Identify TRUE MINISTERS of GOD

**I**T HAPPENED in 1948. Two ministers, Jehovah's Witnesses, were traveling in a dilapidated bus on a bumpy road, heading from a town in northern Spain toward the Pyrenees Mountains. They were on their way to visit an isolated minister. As the bus stopped at the point nearest the village where the minister lived, they noticed him waiting for them with his donkey. But they also noticed nearby an unusual group—four well-armed Civil Guards and a priest! As the ministers climbed the steep path leading to the village, one of the Guards drew his revolver and shouted, "*Manos arriba!*" (Hands up!) The visitors were arrested. Why? The priest had told the Guards that the visitors were terrorists—a blatant lie! As a result, all three ministers were put in prison.

What does this prove? That not all those who claim to be priests or ministers are God's true ministers. In fact, there is often a vast difference between true and false ministers. What are the basic requirements for true ministers?

## The Requirements for True Ministers

The basic meaning of "to minister" is "to render aid or service." True Christian ministers must have a firm belief that the Bible is the inspired Word of God. (John 17:17) However, that basic requirement is not sufficient. They must also have a good knowledge and understanding of the Bible. But they must not use that knowledge selfishly—for their own benefit alone. They should also be ardent preachers of the Gospel—the good news about God's Kingdom and the hope of everlasting life on a paradise earth.—John 17:3; Psalm 37:11, 29.

Incidentally, the fact that Jehovah's Witnesses are preaching the Kingdom good news not only in Spain but throughout the world is in fulfillment of what Jesus prophesied for the time of the end of this wicked old system of things. He said: "And 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."—Matthew 24:14, 33, 34.

Another basic requirement for true ministers is that, as Jesus said, they should be "no part of the world"; hence, they should keep out of politics. (John 15:19) They should also be very humble, loving, and kind, always ready to help deserving ones in need.—1 Corinthians 13:1, 4; 1 Peter 5:6.

This is a very serious matter. To distinguish between true and false ministers is a matter of life and death. It is that serious! In his famous Sermon on the Mount, Jesus warned: "Be on the watch for the false prophets that come to you in sheep's covering, but inside they are ravenous wolves."—Matthew 7:15.

However, true ministers of God not only have duties and requirements but also have many privileges. In fact, as a group, they are the most privileged, the most successful, and by far the happiest group on earth today, as you will see in the next article.

# Who really are GOD'S MINISTERS?

"IN THIS decisive hour we admonish our Catholic soldiers to do their duty in obedience to the Fuehrer [Hitler]."—The Catholic bishops of Germany, as quoted in *The New York Times*, September 25, 1939.

"You know, padre, on our aircraft one of our crew members is a Catholic, and you bless him before we go off on bombing missions over Germany. Now, the same Catholic religion in Germany is blessing a Catholic crew member of a German aircraft that comes over and destroys our cities. So the question I ask is, 'Whose side is God on?'" Thus spoke a British flying officer, David Walker, in a conversation with a Catholic priest during World War II.

In contrast, thousands of Jehovah's Witnesses spent years in the dreadful Nazi concentration camps for refusing to *heil Hitler* or to fight in his armed forces. In Allied countries, many Witnesses were imprisoned for refusing military service.

Who are God's true ministers, and what requirements must they meet?

## Belief in the Bible

A true minister of God must obviously have firm belief in the Bible. He should also know it well enough to teach it to others. But many of Christendom's clergy do not fulfill these basic requirements. A medical doctor in South Africa stated that the ministers of the Anglican Church, to which he used to belong, made "very little use" of the Bible, and sermons seemed to be the personal opinion of the preacher. He also complained about members of the clergy, such as Archbishop Tutu of Cape Town, for getting involved in politics.

In contrast, Jehovah's faithful servants firmly believe in the Bible and spend much of their time studying it and explaining it to others. Their interest in the Bible and their love for it are so deep that



Based on U.S. Army photo

they have produced a thoroughly researched and very accurate translation called *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*, based on authoritative Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek Bible manuscripts. This Bible in its *Reference Edition* has thousands of footnotes and cross-references to help readers understand the Bible better and enable them to explain it to others. Moreover, this outstanding Bible translation has been translated, all or in part, into 10 other languages, and tens of millions of copies have been distributed worldwide.

## True Ministers and Morality

The Bible strongly condemns all forms of sexual sin—including adultery, fornication, homosexuality, and bestiality. (Leviticus 20:10-15; Romans 1:26, 27; Galatians 5:19) True Christian ministers wholeheartedly uphold God's moral standards. Yes, Jehovah's Witnesses take God's law very seriously. They disfellowship those who unrepentantly commit such sins, while they extend mercy to those who truly repent of

immoral acts and clean up their lives.—1 Corinthians 5:11-13; 2 Corinthians 2:5-8.

In South Africa, the Anglican Dean of Cape Town is reported to have said: “Some same-sex relationships are better than their heterosexual counterparts and because of the quality of love, I am sure they make God happier.” The reverse is true. God abhors such relationships.—1 Corinthians 6:9, 10.

### True Ministers Teach True Doctrines

True ministers teach doctrines that are based solidly on God’s Word. False ministers teach doctrines that have no support or foundation in the Bible. Consider, for example, the doctrine of the Trinity. As *The Encyclopædia Britannica* (15th Edition) states: “Neither the word Trinity nor the explicit doctrine appears in the New Testament, nor did Jesus and his followers intend to contradict the Shema in the Old Testament: ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord’ (Deut. 6:4).” The Trinity did not become official church teaching until the fourth century C.E. In fact, it was due in part to the Roman emperor Constantine’s prestige and influence that the false doctrine began to be formulated at the Council of Nicaea in 325 C.E.

The Trinity teaching has caused many church members, honest seekers of truth, to lose confidence in their ministers. This was true of a young woman in South Africa who could not believe that her religion, the Dutch Reformed Church, taught such a confusing belief as the Trinity until one of Jehovah’s Witnesses presented her with documentary proof that this is indeed the case! An elderly retired attorney, also of South Africa, resigned from his church because “various stereotyped doctrines taught in churches are completely wrong and misleading.”

Another false teaching of Christendom

is that of hellfire. Although not so widely preached or believed as it used to be, it is still the official teaching of most churches. These claim that at death the body dies but the soul, being immortal, lives on, and those who have led a wicked life are tormented in a burning fire for all eternity. Do you believe that? More importantly, is it true? Not according to the Bible, which says: “The soul that is sinning—it itself will die.” (Ezekiel 18:4, 20) Moreover, the inspired apostle Paul wrote: “The wages sin pays is death”—not hellfire!—Romans 6:23.

Let us now consider what standards genuine Christian ministers must meet.

### The Scriptural Requirements of True Ministers

The English word “minister” is a translation of the Greek word “di-a’ko-nos,” which is of uncertain origin. It refers to one who carries out the commands of another, in particular a master. Hence, the Bible word specifies a servant. The usage of the word in the Bible indicates one who does not let up in humbly rendering thorough service in behalf of others. Jesus emphasized the need for such humble service, as the following example shows.

One day, shortly before Jesus’ death on the torture stake, the mother of James and John approached him and said: “Give the word that these my two sons may sit down, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your kingdom.” The other disciples became indignant at this. Then Jesus kindly taught them an important lesson. He gathered them together and said: “Whoever wants to become great among you must be your minister, and whoever wants to be first among you must be your slave.”—Matthew 20:20, 21, 24-27.

In one of his recorded, upbuilding public talks, Jesus warned the audience about the scribes and the Pharisees. He also pointed

out some of the glaring faults of these false, hypocritical ministers. He described them as very proud and demanding and always wanting prominence.—Matthew 23:1-7.

Today, many clergymen, especially priests of the Catholic Church and, in some cases, Anglicans, demand that they be addressed as "Father." For example, one Church of England priest in Mozambique, when questioned some years ago by one of Jehovah's Witnesses as to why he used the title "Father," replied: "I am proud of it!" And, of course, it is well known that the pope of Rome delights in being addressed as "Holy Father"—in spite of Jesus' instruction to his disciples to "call no one on earth your father, since you have only one Father, and he is in heaven." Jesus added this basic principle: "Anyone who exalts himself will be humbled."—Matthew 23:9-12, *The Jerusalem Bible*.

### Should Women Be Ordained?

In recent times, there has been an increase in the number of women being ordained as members of the clergy. But Paul instructed Timothy: "I do not permit a woman to teach, or to exercise authority over a man." (1 Timothy 2:12) However, this does not mean that a Christian woman cannot teach her children or teach among the general public, but she should not teach *in the congregation*.

Should women, then, never speak at Christian meetings? Jehovah's Witnesses study this magazine, *The Watchtower*, at one of their weekly meetings, using articles that are supplemented by questions on the paragraphs. The minister conducting the study, always a brother, calls for members of the congregation, including sisters, to answer these questions. But these women are not teaching. They are simply expressing in their own words the thoughts

in the article. Even children are encouraged to share in giving answers, and often their comments, usually brief and simple, hit the nail right on the head—to use a popular expression.

Paul also made this statement concerning women: "If, then, they want to learn something, let them question their own husbands at home, for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in a congregation." (1 Corinthians 14:35) This means that if sisters do not understand or are disturbed by certain statements read or made during the meetings, they should not raise points of contention before the congregation. Rather, they should ask their husbands to clarify matters when they are at home.

However, there are occasions when Christian women can preach to men. Jehovah's Witnesses spend a lot of time preaching the good news of the Kingdom from house to house. When a woman preacher encounters a man, must she simply excuse herself and walk away? Of course not. In this case, she is not preaching to a congregation but to one person who may be an unbeliever. Likewise, a female minister can study the Bible with a non-Christian family even though the father is present.

### Jesus Christ—A Shining Example

Jesus was a shining example that we do well to try to copy! He was the best teacher, the finest preacher, the most zealous worker, and the most loving counselor who ever lived on earth. To follow in his footsteps is a very great privilege. Are you trying to do that?

Millions of Jehovah's Witnesses are doing their best to copy him, albeit imperfectly. His methods were very different from those of most clergymen today. He did not ring church bells and wait for people to come to him, although many did

come of their own accord. Instead, he went to the people and taught them in their homes, in public places, on mountains, and on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. At times he addressed groups numbering thousands, as illustrated below.—Matthew 9:35; 13:36; Luke 8:1.

### Helping the Poor, the Sick, and the Elderly

How many of these are there today? Hundreds of millions. And the number is fast increasing as world conditions rapidly deteriorate and the present system of things approaches its complete end at the battle of Armageddon. (Revelation 16:16) Natural disasters, famines, and epidemics add to the damage and suffering. The early Christians also had to deal with such problems. About 46 C.E., when Claudius was emperor of Rome, there was a widespread famine. So, what did the disciples do? They “determined, each of them according as anyone could afford it, to send a relief ministration to the brothers dwelling in Judea.”—Acts 11:27-30.

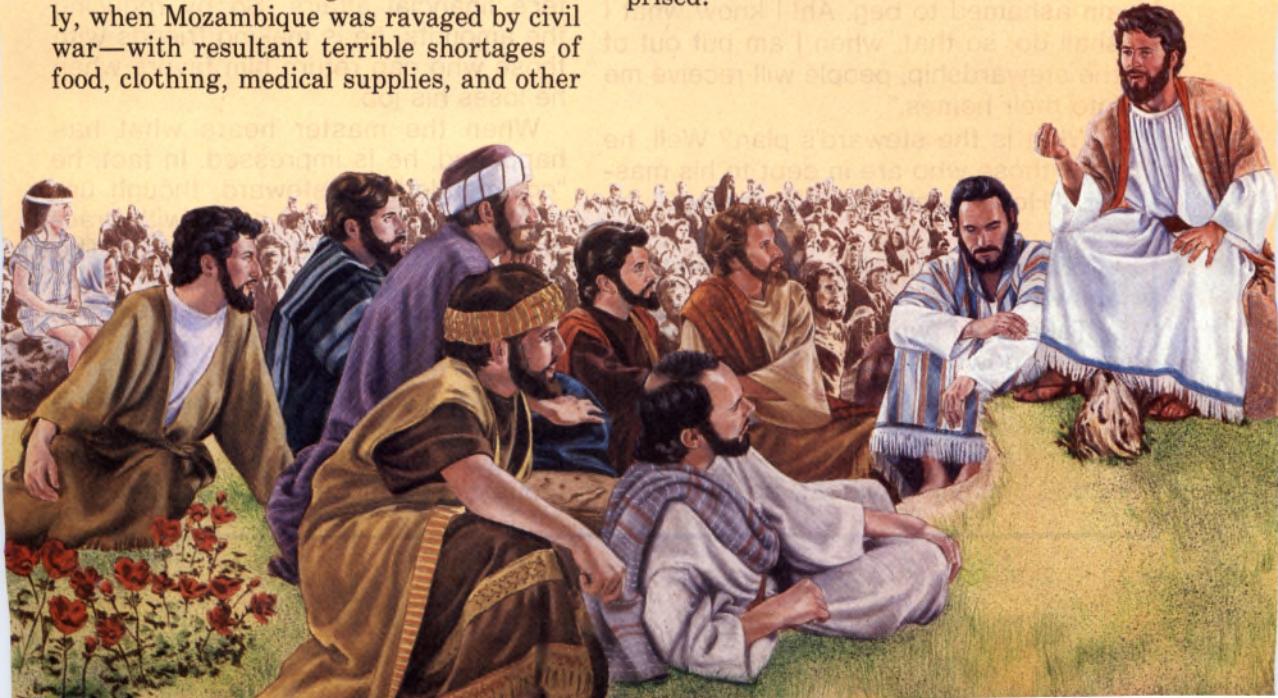
In modern times, Jehovah’s Witnesses have often supplied generous relief to those who are suffering or in need. Recently, when Mozambique was ravaged by civil war—with resultant terrible shortages of food, clothing, medical supplies, and other

basics—Jehovah’s Witnesses in neighboring South Africa came to the aid of their brothers in distress. Large quantities of food, clothing, and other items were collected and sent to Maputo, the capital city, in huge trucks.

### Fulfilling Bible Prophecy

Yes, God’s true ministers today have the marvelous privilege of participating in the fulfillment of Bible prophecies. How? On the historic occasion when the disciples asked Jesus: “When will these things be, and what will be the sign of your presence and of the conclusion of the system of things?” he replied that in a time of world wars, famines, earthquakes, and lawlessness, “this good news of the kingdom [would] be preached in all the inhabited earth.” (Matthew 24:3, 14) Paul set the example for all true ministers by preaching “from house to house.”—Acts 20:20.

Jehovah’s Witnesses are known worldwide for their zeal in this preaching work. Maybe they have at times called at your home. Have you ever given them a good hearing? If not, why not do so the next time they call? You may be agreeably surprised!



## Provide for the Future With Practical Wisdom

JESUS has just finished telling the story of the prodigal son to a crowd that includes his disciples, dishonest tax collectors and other recognized sinners, and scribes and Pharisees. Now, addressing his disciples, he relates an illustration regarding a rich man who has received an unfavorable report about his house manager, or steward.

According to Jesus, the rich man calls his steward and tells him that he is going to dismiss him. "What am I to do, seeing that my master will take the stewardship away from me?" the steward wonders. "I am not strong enough to dig, I am ashamed to beg. Ah! I know what I shall do, so that, when I am put out of the stewardship, people will receive me into their homes."

What is the steward's plan? Well, he calls those who are in debt to his master. "How much are you owing?" he asks.

'580 gallons of olive oil,' the first one answers.

'Take your written agreement back and sit down and quickly write 290,' he tells him.

He asks another one: 'Now you, how much are you owing?'

'630 bushels of wheat,' he says.



'Take your written agreement back and write 504.'

The steward is within his rights in reducing the bills owed to his master, since he is still in charge of his master's financial affairs. So by reducing the amounts, he is making friends with those who can return him favors when he loses his job.

When the master hears what has happened, he is impressed. In fact, he "commended the steward, though unrighteous, because he acted with practical wisdom." Indeed, Jesus adds: "The sons of this system of things are wiser in a practical way toward their own generation than the sons of the light are."

Now, drawing the lesson for his disciples, Jesus encourages: "Make friends for yourselves by means of the unrighteous riches, so that, when such fail,

in the Paradise earth. Since only Jehovah God and his Son can receive persons into these places, we should be diligent in using any "unrighteous riches" we may have to support Kingdom interests and thus cultivate friendship with them. Then, when material riches fail or perish, as they surely will, our everlasting future will be assured.

Jesus goes on to say that persons faithful in caring for even these material, or least, things will also be faithful in caring for matters of greater importance. "Therefore," he continued, "if you have not proved yourselves faithful in connection with the unrighteous riches, who will entrust you with what is true, [that is, spiritual, or Kingdom, interests]? And if you have not proved yourselves faithful in connection with what is another's [the Kingdom interests with which God entrusts his servants], who will give you what is for yourselves [the reward of life in everlasting dwelling places]?"

they may receive you into the everlasting dwelling places."

Jesus is not commanding the steward for his unrighteousness but for his farsighted, *practical wisdom*. Often "the sons of this system of things" shrewdly use their money or position to make friends with those who can return them favors. So God's servants, "the sons of the light," also need to use their material assets, their "unrighteous riches," in a wise way to benefit themselves.

But as Jesus says, they should make friends by means of these riches with those who may receive them "into the everlasting dwelling places." For members of the little flock, these places are in heaven; for the other sheep, they are

We simply cannot be true servants of God and at the same time be slaves to unrighteous riches, material riches, as Jesus concludes: "No house servant can be a slave to two masters; for, either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will stick to the one and despise the other. You cannot be slaves to God and to riches." **Luke 15:1, 2; 16:1-13.**

- ♦ How does the steward in Jesus' illustration make friends with those who can help him later?
- ♦ What are "unrighteous riches," and how can we make friends by means of them?
- ♦ Who can receive us "into the everlasting dwelling places," and what places are these?

# JEHOVAH HAS BEEN MY REFUGE AND MY STRONGHOLD

As related by Margaret West

**I**MAGINE living in the castle where Queen Anna Sophie of Denmark was crowned in the year 1721. This summer residence of the Danish royal family, set amid beautiful parks, was my childhood home. The sumptuous rooms, the monumental staircases, the ceilings painted by old French masters, seemed at the time to be the stuff dreams were made of.

Just a short walk from the castle was another building, much more modest, but my 30 years in this building enriched my life much more. It was the Danish Bethel, branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses in Denmark.

But first let me tell you how I came to live in Frederiksberg Castle in Copenhagen. My father, a colonel in the Danish army, directed the military academy whose headquarters were in the castle. This position entitled him and his family to live in these privileged surroundings. For a young girl, this was a fairy-tale life, shielded from harm within the confines of this beautiful setting. I thought that these happy, exciting days of childhood would never end. But this dream was shattered one unforgettable day in 1921.

We children were summoned to father's bedroom. I could see him lying there, look-



ing very white, with both hands on top of the sheet. Mother put her arms around us. Our doctor, who was also at the bedside, looked very grave. Mother said in a low voice: "Father is dead." My first thought was: 'That's impossible! He's hardly been ill.' It was an overwhelming experience for a child of ten. Little did I then realize that this tragic death was to lead me to the understanding of the purpose of life.

Father's death meant a tremendous change in our lives. The castle was an official residence, so Mother had to find another place for us to live. It was a difficult time, and to help us get over the tragedy, she did something that startled our family and friends. She took all of us out of school, and we embarked on a tour of Europe for a whole year.

## A Search Is Rewarded

Back home in Denmark, however, the death of Father still hung over us, and Mother kept asking herself, time and time again, Why? Why? Why? In order to find an answer, she began to investigate Eastern philosophies, but these did not satisfy her logical mind. Then she decided to turn to the Bible, thinking that it might contain some answers. As she reached for the

Bible on the bookshelf, she spotted a red book alongside it, a book she had never seen before. It was called *The Divine Plan of the Ages*. My brother had just bought it from a Bible Student who called on us.

Mother began reading the book and was soon convinced that she had discovered the answers to her questions. At this time, I was attending school in France, but when I returned home on holiday a few months later, Mother eagerly told me about her newfound treasure. She told me about the Kingdom of God—a Kingdom that would rule over all the earth and put an end to all wars, a Kingdom that would bring untold blessings to mankind, including the resurrection of the dead. It was wonderful. We had at last found a refuge from doubt and uncertainty.

That evening when I went to bed, I prayed for the first time in my life. We had never been a religious family, but in school we had been taught the Lord's Prayer. So I hesitantly began to recite this prayer. When I came to the words, "Thy Kingdom come . . .," my heart almost burst for joy. At last I understood what I was asking for! Sixty years have passed, but I still remember clearly the indescribable joy I felt that night.

After finishing my schooling in France, I went to England for a year to practice my English. Mother had insisted: "A girl should learn languages, a boy mathematics." Eventually, I learned five languages, all of which have been invaluable, and in later years I have often thanked Mother for giving me this opportunity.

When I arrived in England, I found that Mother had put the book *The Harp of God* in my suitcase. I studied it carefully and began to witness about what I had learned to the English family with whom I was staying. A relative of this family visited the home on one occasion, so I also witnessed to her. (I was getting quite profi-

cient at 'playing the ten strings' of this "harp.") As this lady wanted a book for herself, I wrote to the London branch office of the Watch Tower Society, and they directed me to the local brothers.

Thus I started associating with this small group in Wickford, Essex, that met in the home of one of the Bible Students. At one meeting, it was announced that the following Sunday there would be an "excursion," and I was also invited. I looked forward to an interesting outing in the local countryside, but when I arrived, a prayer was said, and I was given some literature and sent off with an elderly sister to preach!

After returning to Denmark, I continued to associate with the Bible Students, and in 1929 I was baptized. An unforgettable experience was the assembly in Copenhagen in 1931. It was at this assembly that we took the name Jehovah's Witnesses. In order to notify the rulers of this, Brother Rutherford's talk and the subsequent resolution adopted at the assembly were published in the booklet *The Kingdom, the Hope of the World*. We were to deliver it personally to all the prominent persons in the community, including judges, members of the government, well-known businessmen, and also all the clergymen.

### The Little Lady and the Bishop

The king of Denmark received his copy in an audience that was granted to the branch overseer. I was given a stack of booklets, together with the envelopes that had the names and addresses of the people I was to visit in this campaign. The first name on the list really shocked me. It was a prominent Lutheran bishop who was well known for his opposition to Jehovah's Witnesses.

The bishop lived in an exclusive part of Copenhagen, and when I rang the bell, I

must admit I felt even smaller than my diminutive five feet. A maid opened the door, looked me up and down suspiciously, and asked: "What do you want, please?" "Thank you, I want to speak with the bishop," I replied firmly. Mother had lent me an elegant astrakhan coat for the occasion, and perhaps this convinced the maid that my request should be granted, for after a long pause that seemed like an eternity, she said: "Just a minute." Soon she returned and ushered me through a long corridor, opened the door, and there behind an enormous desk sat the bishop. He was a tall, burly man. He looked up and smiled at me benignly.

I reminded myself that the One behind me was greater than the one in front of me, explained to him the purpose of my visit, and handed him the envelope. He took it and then threw it on the desk as if it were on fire. He jumped up, took hold of my hand, and marched me backward along the endless corridor to the front door. The door slammed shut, but I smiled to myself. The booklet was on his desk; my job was done.

In 1933 I started pioneering, as I felt that it was an ideal way to serve Jehovah more fully. A year later I married Brother Albert West, an English brother who had been assigned to Denmark a couple of years earlier. Together we served in the Danish Bethel for 30 years.

### The Nazi Occupation

April 9, 1940, was a day I shall never forget. I was awakened at six o'clock by the steady drone of aircraft that seemed to be flying directly overhead. What was happening? Denmark was a neutral country. Outside, people were gathering on the streets, rumors ran high, the atmosphere was tense. Then the radio announced: "Denmark has been occupied by the German forces."

An immediate problem was what to do with all the literature that we had stored in the building. The brothers in Copenhagen showed marvelous foresight and prudence. Soon the books were distributed to local brothers, and branch records were safely deposited with an alert elderly sister, who kept them under her bed for the duration of the war.

Another problem was what to do with 350,000 booklets that had just arrived. It was decided to distribute them immediately. I would never have believed that you could climb so many stairs in just two days. All of this was done without arousing the suspicions of the German soldiers who were patrolling the streets. When they passed by, we tried to give the impression that we were window-shopping. All the brothers, both young and old, had a share in this lightning distribution, and after a 48-hour blitz, all the booklets were in the hands of the public.

With the invasion, all contact with headquarters in Brooklyn was cut off, but the supply of spiritual food did not dry up. There were one or two brothers who worked in the diplomatic service, and their luggage was not searched. As they made regular trips to Sweden, they were able to bring us *The Watchtower* in Swedish. I had some knowledge of Swedish, so I was assigned the task of translating each issue into Danish. A daunting challenge, but I got busy learning as much as I could. In this way, we had a regular supply of *The Watchtower* throughout the war.

In fact, we were even able to send some Danish copies to the brothers in Norway. Cartons of eggs destined for Nazi officials were regularly sent from Denmark to Norway. We were able to wrap the eggs in pages of the Danish *Watchtower* magazine, which Norwegian brothers carefully unwrapped before the eggs were handed over to the Germans.

### An Unusual Encounter

During the war, Brother Enerothe, who was the branch servant in Sweden, got permission to visit Denmark, and Albert went to the ferry to meet him. When Brother Enerothe climbed down the gangway, two German officers appeared and asked Albert and Brother Enerothe to accompany them.

They were taken to the Hotel Cosmopolite, one of the military headquarters of the German army, and were escorted to an office on the second floor, where they were met by a German in plain clothes. Addressing them in perfect English, he said: "As you are well aware, there is a war going on. I am a businessman from Hamburg, and I have been assigned here as censor. I am censoring all the correspondence of the Watchtower Bible Society [between Denmark and Sweden]. It is something that goes against my grain, but I have no choice. May I compliment you on your correspondence, which is honest and refreshing to read. You cannot imagine the deceit I find in the letters of some companies."

He put a question to the brothers. "What is a back-call?" Albert proceeded to give a short demonstration of a back-call, or return visit, using Brother Enerothe as his householder. The officer then concluded the interview, saying: "Thank you, gentlemen, that is all I wanted to know." Perhaps this was his way of warning the brothers to be careful about what they put in their letters.

### An Invitation to Gilead

At the end of 1945, we received a very welcome visit from Brothers Knorr and Henschel. During this visit, Albert and I were invited to the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead, and we attended the 11th class of this missionary school in 1948. After our Gilead training, I served with

my husband who was assigned circuit work for six months in Maryland, Virginia, and Washington, D.C., before returning to Denmark.

A few years later, Albert got sick, and the illness was eventually diagnosed as cancer. I nursed him for ten years while doing what I could as a translator, until he died in 1963. The following year, I was faced with another responsibility to consider. My mother was now 88 years old and needed somebody to look after her. Thus, regretfully, I had to leave full-time service. Mother lived till she was 101 and continued faithful down to the end.

### Busy Retirement

During the final years of my mother's life, we spent the winter months in Spain. So when she died, I decided to stay there. I had learned Spanish and also felt that in this way I would be serving in a foreign field. Although I cannot do as much as I would like, because of my age and other responsibilities, I am still able to auxiliary pioneer on a regular basis.

Over 20 years of my life have been spent looking after a sick husband and an elderly mother. However, I never looked upon this as a burden. I always felt that they both deserved such care and consideration, and I viewed it as part of my service to Jehovah, who always helped me to face up to the sadness and trials that have to be endured under such circumstances.

Now I live in a small flat, so different from the impressive castle where I was born. But buildings can never give security, as I found out early in life. On the other hand, I did discover a greater refuge and stronghold, one that has never failed me. I can truly say, as did the psalmist: "You are my refuge and my stronghold, my God, in whom I will trust."—Psalm 91:2.

# Jehovah Our God Is Merciful

Lessons From the Scriptures: Hosea 1:1–14:9

**J**EHOVAH is "a God of acts of forgiveness, gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abundant in loving-kindness." (Nehemiah 9:17) He abides by his righteous standards but invites wrongdoers to repent and enjoy a good relationship with him. How well this was illustrated by what God said to the wayward Israelites through his prophet Hosea!

The Bible book bearing Hosea's name was completed by the prophet in the district of Samaria after his long service of some 59 years (from about 804 B.C.E. to after 745 B.C.E.). Hosea prophesied in the ten-tribe kingdom of Israel in the days of King Jeroboam II and Judah's rulers Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. (Hosea 1:1) Be-

cause Israel ignored calls for repentance, the nation fell to the Assyrians, and its capital city, Samaria, was destroyed in 740 B.C.E. Though Hosea's prophecy was directed to people of past centuries, it contains lessons for us regarding the mercy of our God, Jehovah.

## Israel's Wayward Course

**Jehovah grants mercy on the basis of a sinner's heartfelt repentance.** (Psalm 51:17; Proverbs 28:13) God's willingness to show mercy to Israel was illustrated by Hosea's dealings with his wife, Gomer. As commanded, he took "a wife of fornication." After bearing one child to Hosea, Gomer evidently bore two children in adultery. Yet, the prophet mercifully took his wife back.

## BIBLE TEXTS EXAMINED

o 2:21-23—Jezreel means "God Will Sow Seed." Jehovah would gather a faithful remnant and sow them like seed in Judah, where there would be grain, sweet wine, and oil. In behalf of the needy remnant, these good things would ask the earth to release minerals to the grain stalks, the grapevines, and the olive trees. The earth would appeal to the heavens for rain, and they would ask God to produce clouds that would give needed rainfall.

o 5:1—The apostate priests and kings of Israel became a trap and a net for the people by enticing them to engage in false worship. Likely, Mount Tabor (west of the Jordan) and Mizpah (a city east of that river) were centers of false worship. Throughout Israel, people were practicing idolatry because of the bad example of their leaders, who would experience God's adverse judgment.

o 7:4-8—Adulterous Israelites were likened to a baker's oven, or furnace, apparently because of the evil desires burning within them. For mingling with the nations by adopting their ways and seeking alliances with them, Ephraim (Israel) was also like a round cake baked on only one side.

o 9:10—The Israelites 'dedicated themselves to the shameful thing' when they became attached to the Baal of Peor on the plains of Moab. (Numbers 25:1-5) Hosea used a Hebrew verb meaning

"to withdraw themselves to; to hold themselves separate for." The Israelites were dedicated to God but separated themselves to Baal of Peor. That incident may have been cited because the worship of Baal was a principal sin of the ten-tribe kingdom. (Hosea 2:8, 13) May we heed this warning and never break our dedication to Jehovah.—1 Corinthians 10:8, 11.

o 10:5—Beth-aven (meaning "House of Hurtfulness") was used in a derogatory sense for Beth-el, which means "House of God." Bethel had been a house of God but became a house of hurtfulness because of the calf worship practiced there. (1 Kings 12:28-30) When the calf idol was carried into exile, the people would be frightened for it. The lifeless idol could not protect itself, much less those who worshiped it.—Psalm 115:4-8.

o 13:14—Jehovah would not spare the disobedient Israelites by rescuing them at that time from the power of Sheol or recovering them from death. He would show no compassion, for they did not deserve mercy. But the apostle Paul showed that God would eventually swallow up death forever and nullify its victory. Jehovah demonstrated his power to do so by raising Jesus Christ from death and Sheol, thus giving a guarantee that persons in God's memory will be resurrected by his Son under Kingdom rule.—John 5:28, 29.

Similarly, Israel was like an unfaithful wife to Jehovah, wrongly ascribing blessings to the false god Baal. But Jehovah was willing to show them mercy if they repented of their spiritual adultery.—1:1-3:5.

**Sinners desiring divine mercy must turn from their sinful course and conform to the knowledge of God.** (Psalm 119:59, 66, 67) Jehovah had a legal case against Israel's inhabitants because truth, loving-kindness, and the knowledge of God were lacking in their land. Since they rejected knowledge, Jehovah would reject them. There would be an accounting for idolatrous Israel and Judah. But it was foretold that they would seek God when they found themselves "in sore straits."

—4:1-5:15.

#### Reaping a Storm Wind!

**Works befitting repentance are essential if wrongdoers are to experience God's mercy.** (Acts 26:20) "Let us return to Jehovah," pleaded Hosea. But the loving-kindness of Israel (called Ephraim for its chief tribe) and Judah was "like the dew that early goes away." The people had overstepped God's covenant and produced no fruits befitting repentance. "Like a simpleminded dove without heart," they sought aid from Egypt and Assyria. But these political measures would do them no more good than "a loose bow" unable to shoot arrows at a target. —6:1-7:16.

**To reap what is good, those seeking Jehovah's mercy must sow what is good.** (Galatians 6:7, 8) Because the Israelites cast off good, they reaped what was bad. 'They kept sowing wind and would reap a storm wind.' God would "give attention to their sins," and they would reap not his mercy but his adverse judgment. They would become "fugitives among the nations," Assyrian conquest likely contributing to this situation.—8:1-9:17; Deuteronomy 28:

64, 65; 2 Kings 15:29; 17:1-6, 22, 23; 18:9-12; 1 Chronicles 5:26.

**We will keep on benefiting from God's mercy only if we continue to appreciate sacred things.** (Hebrews 12:14-16) The Israelites lacked such appreciation. Instead of sowing seed in righteousness and reaping in accord with loving-kindness, they plowed wickedness and reaped unrighteousness. God called Israel out of Egypt as a son, but His love was repaid with deception. "To your God you should return, keeping loving-kindness and justice," Jehovah counseled. But Ephraim engaged in gross wrongdoing and deserved reproof instead of mercy. —10:1-12:14.

#### Return to Jehovah

**Even those who err seriously can return to Jehovah and be shown mercy.** (Psalm 145:8, 9) Hosea again cited God's tender care for the Israelites. Though the nation turned against Jehovah, he promised restoration, saying: 'From Sheol I shall redeem them; from death I shall recover them.' Samaria (Israel) would have to pay a price for rebelliousness. But the Israelites were urged to come back to God with wholesome words, 'the young bulls of the lips.' The prophecy concluded with the comforting thought that the wise and righteous who walk in Jehovah's upright ways would enjoy his mercy and love.—13:1-14:9.



**Lessons to remember:** Jehovah grants mercy on the basis of a wrongdoer's heartfelt repentance. But sinners desiring his mercy must conform to the knowledge of God and produce works befitting repentance. They need to sow what is good and must continue to appreciate sacred things. And comfort can be drawn from the knowledge that even those who err seriously can return to the Most High with hope, for Jehovah our God is merciful.

## *Scenes From the Promised Land*

# JERUSALEM CENTER OF BIBLICAL EVENTS



Pictorial Archive (Near Eastern History) Est.

WHILE most nations have a capital, a major city housing the seat of government, Bible students might think of Jerusalem as a capital for humanity. This is so because the momentous things that happened there are important to all of us.

Above, you can see the view you would have if you stood on elevated ground south of Jerusalem.\* Two valleys meet about where the patch of dark-green trees is. The Kidron Valley comes down from the right; on the west, or left, side is the Hinnom Valley, which gave rise to the Biblical name Gehenna. (Matthew 10:28; 23:33) In between (visible in the sunlit patch in front of the existing walls) is where the ancient City of David was built. Inside the walls are two distinctive Muslim buildings in a historic location. Nearest the wall is the silver-blue dome of a mosque, and behind is the larger

\* The 1989 Calendar of Jehovah's Witnesses contains this picture in larger size.

golden cupola of the Dome of the Rock.

But why should Jerusalem, and particularly the leveled area where the two domed buildings now stand, be significant to you? Well, what Biblical account does the picture of a ram entangled in a tree bring to your mind? Probably that of Abraham. Yes, it was he that traveled with his son Isaac to Mount Moriah, which evidently was at or near the rocky eminence where you see the two domes. In faith, Abraham was willing to sacrifice his beloved son, but an angel stayed his hand. Then Abraham found "a ram caught by its horns in a thicket" and sacrificed this "in place of his son." So viewing Jerusalem may bring to mind this dramatic event.—Genesis 22:1-13.

Other sacrifices came to the fore later when Solomon built a mag-



Pictorial Archive (Near Eastern History) Est.

nificent temple to Jehovah on a leveled site about where the domed buildings now are. (2 Chronicles 3:1) Try to imagine Israelites coming here from all parts of the land with their animal sacrifices for the annual festivals. The most solemn of these was the Day of Atonement. On that day, one goat was selected and sent "away for Azazel into the

wilderness," possibly down into the Kidron Valley and then southeast into the wilderness of Judea. Another goat and a bull were slaughtered and their blood used in sacrifice to make atonement for the priests and the people. Some blood was even taken beyond the curtain into the Most Holy of the temple. So you can look at the picture of the city with that in mind.

—Leviticus 16:1-34.

All these sacrifices in Jerusalem pointed forward to the perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ. On his final night on earth, which was about the time of a full moon, Jesus assembled with his apostles to celebrate the last valid Passover. This was in an upper room that is thought to have been in the higher part of the city to the left (west) of the temple area. After Jesus instituted the Lord's Evening Meal, he took the apostles to the Mount of

Olives, which is across the Kidron Valley, to the east (right) of the temple.—Luke 22:14-39.

As an aid in visualizing this, look at the photograph below, which was taken looking eastward from within Jerusalem, possibly from the area where Jesus held the Lord's Evening Meal. From this perspective, you see in the lower left the dome (bluish in the moonlight) of the mosque on the temple-mount area. Farther east is the Kidron Valley (below the line of vision) and then trees of the Garden of Gethsemane. Higher up to the right is the Mount of Olives.

The moon will also be about full on March 22, 1989, when congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses around the globe will meet (after sunset) for the Lord's Evening Meal, commemorating Jesus' sacrificial death.\* Please plan to be there. On that day, you may also want to meditate on some of the past events centering in Jerusalem and around it in connection with Jesus' pouring out his soul in death. Thus Jesus vindicated Jehovah's righteousness and ransomed believing mankind from sin and death.—1 Corinthians 11:23-26; Hebrews 9:11-28.

\* See *The Watchtower*, June 15, 1977, page 383, for further details regarding calculating the time for celebrating the Lord's Evening Meal.



# Kingdom Proclaimers Report

## Jehovah Sustains His Faithful Servants

JESUS said: "A slave is not greater than his master. If they have persecuted me, they will persecute you also." (John 15:20) But Jehovah's faithful servants are assured that he will sustain them. (Psalm 18:2; Nahum 1:7) In an African country where the peaceful work of Jehovah's Witnesses is severely restricted, Jehovah sustained his servants in the face of beatings and arrests, as the following report shows:

"A circuit overseer and four local brothers were arbitrarily arrested and thrown into a small room normally kept for stray dogs," says the report. "They were kept there for 123 days in their underclothes and were not even allowed to go out to the toilet." A member of Parliament heard of the inhuman conditions and began to protest, and finally, after 123 days, the brothers were released. Jehovah sus-

tained these faithful brothers by his spirit.

Another experience from this same country shows the beneficial effects of our preaching work. The report relates: "In one village, the people had a reputation for violence and rebellion. However, after Jehovah's Witnesses preached there, many came to respect the local authorities and started to participate in the weekly community work on the roads." One local chief wanted to know the reason for this change in attitude of the people and was told: "It was because of the teaching of the 'pastor' of Jehovah's Witnesses." "One day this chief invited me to his house," says the Witness, "and encouraged me to continue this good work. He gave me a gift of a big chicken to eat with my family." On another occasion, the local mayor came to visit the brother, and

the brother invited him in and gave him a witness. The mayor "requested some magazines and said, 'We don't think you do any harm. Keep making appeals. We have no orders to arrest you. I think that soon the State will handle your problem.'"

A special pioneer writes: "Following accusations from the secretary of the political party, the local chief ordered my arrest and imprisonment in a filthy cell soiled by animal urine and manure. I was kept in this darkness for five days. On the way there, I prayed to Jehovah and remembered Psalm 50:15. The guards there had pity on me and did not fully close the door so that I could breathe some fresh air. After five days in this prison, I was put to the test when they gave me a goat to take to the local chief, with no escort. Since I did not flee, I was given freedom every day from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. I could meet with the brothers, and we could preach together. Even though I became ill during this difficult time and my enemies hoped I would die, Jehovah never left me. This experience has brought me close to Jehovah, and I am sure that persecution will never separate me from Jehovah's people."

—Compare Romans 8:35-39.

Jehovah's Witnesses appreciate how God sustains them in times of difficulty. They also appreciate those who show kindness to them as they carry on this most important lifesaving work of preaching the good news. Jehovah will not forget such kindness.—Matthew 25:40.



# J . U . S . T . I . C . E MARKS ALL OF GOD'S WAYS

*"The Rock, perfect is his activity, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness, with whom there is no injustice; righteous and upright is he." —DEUTERONOMY 32:4.*

**J**EHOVAH, supreme Judge, Statute-Giver, and King, "is a lover of righteousness and justice." (Psalm 33:5; Isaiah 33:22) Moses, mediator of the Law covenant and a prophet "whom Jehovah knew face to face," became intimately acquainted with Jehovah's just ways. (Deuteronomy 34:10; John 1:17) Shortly before Moses died, he highlighted the excelling quality of Jehovah's justice. In the hearing of all the congregation of Israel, he called out the words of this song: "Give ear, O heavens, and let me speak; and let the earth hear the sayings of my mouth. . . . I shall declare the name of Jehovah. Do you attribute greatness to our God! The Rock, perfect is his activity, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness, with whom there is no injustice; righteous and upright is he." —Deuteronomy 32:1, 3, 4.

<sup>2</sup> Justice marks all of Jehovah's activities, and it is always exercised in perfect harmony with his wisdom, love, and power. At Job 37:23, God's servant Elihu reminded Job: "As for the Almighty, we have not found him out; he is exalted in power, and justice and abundance of righteousness he will not belittle." And King



David wrote: "Jehovah is a lover of justice, and he will not leave his loyal ones." (Psalm 37:28) What comforting assurance! In all of God's ways, he will never for one moment abandon those loyal to him. God's justice guarantees this!

## Why Justice Is Lacking

<sup>3</sup> Since Jehovah is the God of Justice, the One who loves justice, and "the Creator of the extremities of the earth," why is justice so lacking among men today? (Isaiah 40:28) Moses answers at Deuteronomy 32:5: "They have acted ruinously on their own part; they are not his children, the defect is their own. A generation crooked and twisted!" Man's ruinous activity has so separated him from his Creator that God's thoughts and ways are described as higher than those of man "as the heavens are higher than the earth." —Isaiah 55:8, 9.

<sup>4</sup> Never forget that man was not designed by his Creator to act independently of Him. Jeremiah rightly assesses the situation for us, saying: "I well know, O Jehovah, that to earthling man his way does not belong. It does not belong to man who is walking even to direct his step." (Jeremiah 10:23) Man's rejection of God's just ways and rulership has placed him under

3. What is lacking among men today, and how has this affected man's relationship with God?
4. What course has man chosen to take, and where has this led him?

1. What qualities of Jehovah did Moses highlight in his song to the sons of Israel before he died, and why was he qualified to speak as he did?

2. How has justice always marked all of God's activities, and why is this important?

entirely different and very powerful unseen forces, Satan the Devil and his demon accomplices. The apostle John states emphatically: "The whole world is lying in the power of the wicked one." These demonic forces have no interest at all in upholding justice among mankind.—1 John 5:19.

<sup>5</sup> An example of the lack of justice in the closing days of this system of things was highlighted in 1984 by the U.S. attorney general, William French Smith. Commenting on a survey of prison sentences in 12 American states between 1977 and 1983, Smith said: "The public has assumed that the worst offenders—murderers, rapists, drug-traffickers—serve substantial terms. The bureau's study . . . shows how easy it is for hardened crimi-

5. Give examples of the lack of justice in the world today.

nals to get back on the streets to commit new crimes." No wonder Paul Kamenar of the Washington Legal Foundation said: "The justice system is lax too often."

<sup>6</sup> Justice was lax throughout the nation of Judah prior to its fall to Babylonian armies in 607 B.C.E. Hence, God's prophet Habakkuk was divinely inspired to say: "Law grows numb, and justice never goes forth. Because the wicked one is surrounding the righteous one, for that reason justice goes forth crooked." (Habakkuk 1:4) This unjust situation caused the prophet to ask Jehovah: "Why is it that you look on those dealing treacherously, that you keep silent when someone wicked swallows up someone more righteous than he is?" (Habakkuk 1:13) Today, people affected by the practice of injustice in all areas of human activity might also well ask: Why does the God of justice keep looking on the injustice done on the earth? Why does he let 'justice go forth crooked'? Why does he "keep silent"? Important questions these, and only God's precious Word, the Bible, gives the true and satisfying answers.

### Why God Has Permitted Injustice

<sup>7</sup> God's works are perfect, as attested to by Moses. This was true with regard to the perfect human couple God placed in the Paradise of Eden. (Genesis 1:26, 27; 2:7) That whole arrangement was perfect for mankind's well-being and happiness. The divine record tells us: "God saw everything he had made and, look! it was very good." (Genesis 1:31) But Edenic tranquil-

6. (a) What was the moral state of Judah prior to its captivity? (b) What questions did Habakkuk ask, and are they applicable today?
7. (a) Why did man lose the Paradise God gave him? (b) What issues were raised in Eden, and how did God's justice respond to these?

*Moses speaks the words of his song on the plains of Moab*



lity did not last long. Under the influence of a rebellious spirit creature, Eve and her husband, Adam, were drawn into a confrontation with Jehovah over His way of ruling them. The rightness of God's commands to them was now brought into question. (Genesis 3:1-6) This challenge to the justness of God's rulership raised vital moral issues. The historical record of the faithful man Job indicates that now the integrity of all of God's creatures was also being called into question. Justice demanded that time be given to settle these issues of universal importance.—Job 1:6-11; 2:1-5; see also Luke 22:31.

<sup>8</sup> The calamitous condition of mankind, resulting from casting aside God's just ways, is summed up by Paul at Romans 8:22. There the apostle wrote: "All creation keeps on groaning together and being in pain together until now." Much of that "groaning" and "pain" has been due to the lack of justice among humans as "man has dominated man to his injury." (Ecclesiastes 8:9) But thanks be to Almighty God that he is not going to allow such travesty of justice to continue indefinitely! In this regard, note what Moses further stated in his song, at Deuteronomy 32:40, 41: "'As I am alive to time indefinite,' if I [Jehovah] do indeed sharpen my glittering sword, and my hand takes hold on judgment, I will pay back vengeance to my adversaries and render retribution to those who intensely hate me."

<sup>9</sup> Jehovah's hand took "hold on judgment" back there in Eden. Without delay, God justly sentenced man to death for willfully disobeying His commands. He told Adam: "Dust you are and to dust you

8. (a) In what calamitous condition did man now find himself? (b) What ray of hope is seen in Moses' song?

9. Explain how Jehovah's hand took "hold on judgment" when man rebelled.

will return." (Genesis 3:19) Centuries later, the apostle Paul summed up the dire consequences to the whole human family of Adam's sinful course. He wrote: "Just as through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men because they had all sinned."—Romans 5:12.

<sup>10</sup> Following the outbreak of man's rebellion, God also stated: "I shall put enmity between you and the woman and between your seed and her seed. He will bruise you in the head and you will bruise him in the heel." (Genesis 3:15, 17-19) The development of these two seeds has proceeded for 6,000 years, and "enmity" has always existed between them. But through all the changing scenes on earth, Jehovah's just ways have not changed. By his prophet Malachi, he says: "I am Jehovah; I have not changed." (Malachi 3:6) This has ensured that God's ways of dealing with imperfect and rebellious mankind have always been marked by justice. Never once has Jehovah deviated from his lofty, righteous principles, while harmonizing these with his wonderful qualities of wisdom, love, and power.

### God Comes to Man's Rescue

<sup>11</sup> Like the tentacles of a huge octopus, Satan's wicked influence has reached out to embrace the entire human family. Oh, how desperately humans need to be rescued not only from the death sentence resting upon them but also from the unjust systems of imperfect human rulership!

<sup>12</sup> The dreadful plight that man has found himself in since the sentence of death was passed upon him is well stated in the following psalm of the sons of Korah: "Hear this,

10. What two seeds have developed since Adam's rebellion, and how has Jehovah reacted?  
11, 12. How does Psalm 49 well describe man's plight?

all you peoples. Give ear, all you inhabitants of the system of things, you sons of humankind as well as you sons of man, you rich one and you poor one together. Not one of them can by any means redeem even a brother, nor give to God a ransom for him; (and the redemption price of their soul is so precious that it has ceased to time indefinite) that he should still live forever and not see the pit." (Psalm 49:1, 2, 7-9) All of this has come about in view of God's expressed justice!

<sup>13</sup> Where, then, could help come from? Who could rescue man from the power of death? The psalm answers: "God himself will redeem my soul from the hand of Sheol." (Psalm 49:15) Only God's great love, working in harmony with His justice, could rescue man from "the hand of Sheol." Our questions were further answered during a nighttime conversation between Jesus and the cautious Pharisee Nicodemus. Jesus told him: "God loved the world so much that he gave his only-begotten Son, in order that everyone exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) Before God's Son came to the earth, he had been living with his Father in heaven. In this prehuman existence, he was spoken of as being 'fond of the sons of men.' (Proverbs 8:31) How appropriate, then, for Jehovah to choose this particular spirit creature—His only-begotten Son—to redeem mankind!

<sup>14</sup> Regarding Jesus, Paul said: "No matter how many the promises of God are, they have become Yes by means of him." (2 Corinthians 1:20) One of these promises recorded by the prophet Isaiah is referred to at Matthew 12:18, 21, where we read concerning Jesus: "Look! My servant whom I chose, my beloved, whom my soul approved! I will put my spirit upon him,

13, 14. (a) Who alone could rescue man, and why was the one chosen by God so appropriate? (b) How did Jesus become "Yes" to all of God's promises?

and what justice is he will make clear to the nations. Indeed, in his name nations will hope."—See Isaiah 42:1-4.

<sup>15</sup> During Jesus' earthly ministry, he made clear that men of all nations could eventually hope in his name and thus enjoy the benefits of God's justice. Jesus said: "The Son of man came, not to be ministered to, but to minister and to give his soul a ransom in exchange for many." (Matthew 20:28) God's perfect law given to the nation of Israel stated: "Soul will be for soul." (Deuteronomy 19:21) Hence, after Jesus laid down his perfect life in death and was resurrected by God's power to ascend back to heaven, he was in a position to present the value of his perfect human life to Jehovah in exchange for Adam's life rights. In this way, Jesus became "the last [or second] Adam" and is now empowered to act as the "Eternal Father" to all of Adam's believing offspring.—1 Corinthians 15:45; Isaiah 9:6.

<sup>16</sup> God's way of salvation by means of his loving provision of the ransom sacrifice of his Son, Jesus Christ, has thus been 'made clear to the nations.' And it is indeed marked by divine justice. How grateful we should be that God has provided the way for 'our soul to be redeemed from the hand of Sheol'!

### Upholding the Ransom

<sup>17</sup> Like the first-century Christians, Jehovah's Witnesses in modern times have always upheld the teaching of the ransom sacrifice of Jesus Christ. It is interesting to recall that the first president of the Watch Tower Society, Charles Taze Russell, was at one time a coeditor and financial supporter of a religious magazine

15, 16. How was it possible for Jesus to become the "Eternal Father" of Adam's offspring?

17, 18. What partnership did C. T. Russell enter into in the 1870's, but how did Barbour surprise him in 1878?



**God loved the world so much that he gave his only-begotten Son**

called *The Herald of the Morning*. That magazine was originally published by an Adventist, N. H. Barbour of Rochester, New York, U.S.A. Russell was in his 20's, but Barbour was much older.

<sup>18</sup> The partnership seemed to go well until 1878, when Barbour surprisingly published an article denying the doctrine of the ransom. Describing what happened, Russell said: "Mr. Barbour . . . wrote an article for *The Herald* denying the doctrine of the Atonement—denying that the death of Christ was the Ransom-price for Adam and his race, saying that our Lord's death could no more avail for the payment of the penalty of man's sins than would the sticking of a pin through the body of a fly and causing it suffering and death be considered by an earthly parent as a just settlement for misdemeanor in his child."

<sup>19</sup> Russell could have been swayed by his

19. (a) What was Russell's reaction to Barbour's view of the ransom? (b) Has Russell's wish regarding *The Watchtower* been realized?

older partner, but he was not. For several months, a controversy continued in the journal's pages, Barbour denying the ransom and Russell writing in favor of it. Finally, Russell withdrew from any association with Barbour and started to publish this magazine, then called *Zion's Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence*. C. T. Russell expressed these feelings about the new magazine: "From the first, it has been a special advocate of the Ransom; and, by the grace of God, we hope it will be so to the end." Has editor Russell's hope been realized? It certainly has! In explanation, page 2 of this very issue says that the magazine "encourages faith in the now-reigning King, Jesus Christ, whose shed blood opens the way for mankind to gain eternal life."

<sup>20</sup> So far in our discussion, we have followed the course of God's justice in requiring a means for rescuing mankind from the condemnation of sin and death resting upon the human family. Love provided that means. However, such questions as these remain unanswered: How are the benefits of Jesus Christ's ransom sacrifice made available? How can you benefit from them, and how soon? The following article provides answers sure to increase your confidence that justice marks all of God's ways.

20. What questions still remain unanswered?

#### How Would You Answer?

- What importance does God place on justice?
- Why is there so much injustice among mankind?
- How did God provide for man's escape from death?
- To what extent has *The Watchtower* upheld the ransom?

# J U S T I C E SOON FOR ALL NATIONS

"Justice—justice you should pursue, in order that you may keep alive and may indeed take possession of the land that Jehovah your God is giving you."—DEUTERONOMY 16:20.

**J**EHOVAH GOD'S purpose in creating man and woman was to have the earth filled with perfect creatures. All of them would praise him and play their part in subduing the earth. (Genesis 1:26-28) Since man was made in God's image and likeness, he was endowed with the qualities of wisdom, justice, love, and power. Only by the balanced exercise of these qualities could man ever fulfill his Maker's purpose for him.

<sup>2</sup> As noted in the previous article, man rebelled against God's way of doing things and was sentenced to death. Now, because of imperfection, it was impossible for him to carry out God's original purpose for mankind. Man's inability to display perfect justice has been a significant factor in this failure. Little wonder, then, that Moses reminded the sons of Israel: "Justice—justice you should pursue"! Their lives and the ability to take possession of the Promised Land were dependent upon their pursuit of justice.—Deuteronomy 16:20.

## A Shadow of Coming Good Things

<sup>3</sup> Jehovah's dealings with the nation of Israel strengthen our confidence that he

1. What was God's original purpose for man, and how only could he fulfill it?
2. How important was the pursuit of justice for the sons of Israel?
3. Why is an examination of Jehovah's dealings with Israel important to us today?



will indeed make his justice clear to all nations through his chosen Servant, Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul explains matters this way: "For all the things that were written aforetime were written for our instruction, that through our endurance and through the comfort from the Scriptures we might have hope." (Romans 15:4) Since God "is a lover of righteousness and justice," he required that the Israelites imitate him in all their dealings with one another.

(Psalm 33:5) This can be clearly seen by examining a few of the 600 laws given to Israel.

<sup>4</sup> Civil-rights problems were nonexistent when the Mosaic Law was followed. Taking the case of a non-Israelite who came to live in the land, Leviticus 19:34 states: "The alien resident who resides as an alien with you should become to you like a native of yours; and you must love him as yourself." What a just and loving arrangement! Further, judges and witnesses alike were admonished: "You must not testify over a controversy so as to turn aside with the crowd in order to pervert justice. As for the lowly one, you must not show preference in a controversy of his." (Exodus 23:2, 3) Just think of that—justice administered to rich and poor alike!

4. How were civil-rights problems handled under the Mosaic Law?



*"For a certainty I perceive that God is not partial, but in every nation the man that fears him and works righteousness is acceptable to him."—Acts 10:34, 35*

murderer was put to death. This removed a wicked, murderous person from the nation. Nevertheless, mercy was shown to unintentional manslayers.—Numbers 35:9-15, 22-29, 33.

<sup>6</sup> Who can deny, then, that justice marked all of God's judicial dealings with the nation of Israel? Hence, what comfort, what hope, fills us when we contemplate how God's promise at Isaiah 42:1 will be put into effect through Christ Jesus! There we are given the assurance: "Justice to the nations is what he will bring forth."

<sup>5</sup> Under the Mosaic Law code, criminal laws were far superior to the laws on the statute books of nations today. For example, the stealer was not imprisoned so as to impose a burden on hardworking people who obeyed the Law. He had to work and pay double or more for what he had stolen. So the victim suffered no loss. Suppose the stealer refused to work and pay. In that case, he was sold into slavery until restitution was made. If he continued to show a stubborn attitude, he was put to death. In this way justice was done to the victim, and this was a strong deterrent for others who might be inclined to steal. (Exodus 22:1, 3, 4, 7; Deuteronomy 17:12) Moreover, since life is sacred in God's eyes, any

5. Compare criminal laws under the Mosaic Law with those of today.

### Justice Balanced With Mercy

<sup>7</sup> God's justice is balanced with mercy. This was clearly demonstrated when the Israelites began to rebel against God's righteous ways. Listen to Moses' description of Jehovah's merciful care for them during their 40 years in the wilderness: "He came to find him in a wilderness land, and in an empty, howling desert. He began to encircle him, to take care of him, to safeguard him as the pupil of his eye. Just as an eagle stirs up its nest, hovers over its fledglings, spreads out its wings, takes them, carries them on its pinions, Jehovah alone kept leading him."

6. To what conclusion does an examination of Israel's laws lead us?
7. Describe Jehovah's merciful dealings with Israel.

(Deuteronomy 32:10-12) Later, when the nation turned apostate, Jehovah pleaded: "Return, please, from your bad ways and from your bad dealings."—Zechariah 1:4a.

<sup>8</sup> Jehovah's offer of mercy fell on deaf ears. Through the prophet Zechariah, God said: "They did not listen, and they paid no attention to me." (Zechariah 1:4b) So God's merciful justice prompted him to send his only-begotten Son to assist them to return to Him. John the Baptizer introduced God's Son by saying: "See, the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29) For several years, Jesus untiringly taught the Jews God's right ways, performing countless miracles and thus proving that he was the foretold Deliverer. (Luke 24:27; John 5:36) But the people did not listen or believe. Hence, Jesus was moved to exclaim: "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the killer of the prophets and stoner of those sent forth to her,—how often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks together under her wings! But you people did not want it. Look! Your house is abandoned to you."—Matthew 23:37, 38.

<sup>9</sup> God held back the execution of his adverse judgment for another 37 years, until 70 C.E. Then he allowed the Romans to destroy Jerusalem and take thousands of Jews into captivity. When we consider Jehovah's long-suffering and patience over a period of many centuries, who can fail to see the mark of justice in all his dealings with the house of Israel?

### Justice for All Nations

<sup>10</sup> Following Israel's rejection of Jesus, James said: "God for the first time turned

8, 9. (a) To what extent did God show merciful justice to the Jews? (b) What final calamity overtook them, but what can be said of God's way of dealing with them?

10. How was God's justice extended to all nations?

his attention to the nations to take out of them a people for his name." (Acts 15:14) This "people," including those few Jews who accepted Jesus as the Messiah, collectively form "the [spiritual] Israel of God" and is made up of 144,000 spirit-begotten followers of Christ Jesus. (Galatians 6:16; Revelation 7:1-8; 14:1-5) The first uncircumcised Gentile believer was Cornelius. When Cornelius and his household accepted God's way of salvation, Peter said: "For a certainty I perceive that God is not partial, but in every nation the man that fears him and works righteousness is acceptable to him." (Acts 10:34, 35) Paul enlarges on the justness of Jehovah's impartiality when he says: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor freeman, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one person in union with Christ Jesus. Moreover, if you belong to Christ, you are really Abraham's seed, heirs with reference to a promise."—Galatians 3:28, 29.

<sup>11</sup> Here we are reminded of a wonderful promise Jehovah gave to Abraham. Based on that patriarch's willingness to sacrifice his beloved son Isaac, God told him: "By reason of the fact that you have done this thing and you have not withheld your son,

11. What promise was given to Abraham, and how will it be fulfilled?

## In Our Next Issue

■ You Can Find  
Priceless Treasures!

■ Look to Jehovah for Insight

■ Caesarea and the  
Early Christians

your only one, I shall surely bless you . . . And by means of your seed all nations of the earth will certainly bless themselves." (Genesis 22:16-18) How will this promise be fulfilled? "Abraham's seed," made up of Jesus Christ and his 144,000 anointed followers who prove faithful to death, will rule mankind from the heavens for a thousand years. (Revelation 2:10, 26; 20:6) Regarding that blessed time, Jehovah assures us: "To the abundance of the princely rule and to peace there will be no end." Why? Because "the princely rule" of that Messianic Kingdom will be 'sustained by means of justice and righteousness to time indefinite.'—Isaiah 9:7.

<sup>12</sup> But there is no need to wait until the Thousand Year Reign of Jesus Christ begins in order to enjoy the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant. These blessings are already being experienced by "a great crowd" of people "out of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues." By symbolically 'washing their robes and making them white in the blood of the Lamb,' Jesus Christ, they have come to have a righteous standing before Jehovah. Like Abraham, they have become Jehovah's friends! Justice is indeed marking Jehovah's way of salvation for millions out of all nations.—Revelation 7:9, 14.

### Are You Responding to God's Just Ways?

<sup>13</sup> Has your heart been touched and deeply moved by God's way of justice and love in giving his only-begotten Son as a ransom for you? Imagine Abraham's feelings when Jehovah asked him to sacrifice his son, the one he loved so much! But God's feelings go much deeper. Think of

12. To what extent are blessings of the Abrahamic covenant already being experienced?
- 13, 14. (a) What personal heart examination should all of us make? (b) How can our gratitude to Jehovah be expressed?

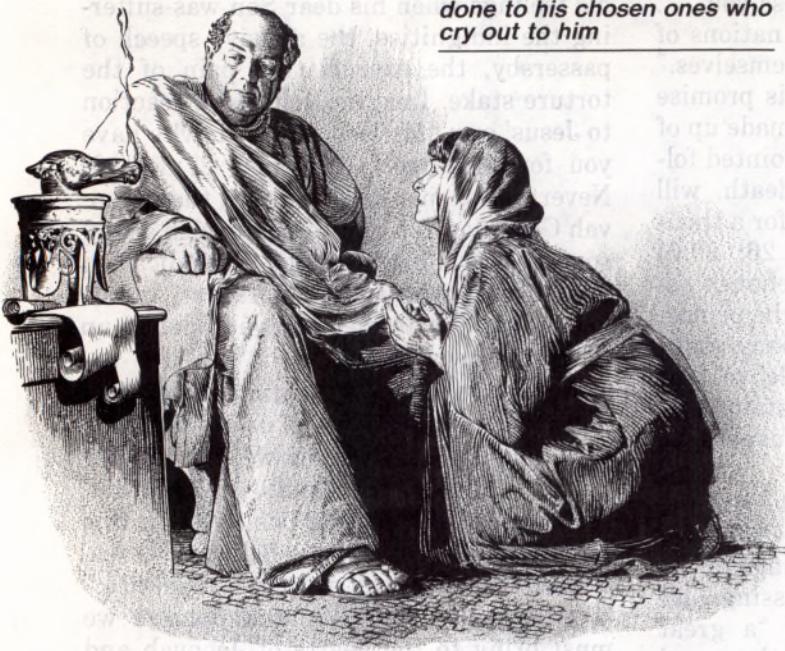
his feelings when his dear Son was suffering the indignities, the abusive speech of passersby, the excruciating pain of the torture stake. Imagine Jehovah's reaction to Jesus' cry: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:39, 46) Nevertheless, justice demanded that Jehovah God allow his Son to die in such a way so as to prove his integrity in vindication of God's righteousness. Moreover, by allowing his Son to die, Jehovah opened up a way of salvation for us.

<sup>14</sup> Surely, then, our gratitude to Jehovah and his Son should move us to acknowledge publicly: "Salvation we owe to our God . . . and to the Lamb." (Revelation 7:10) By our responding positively in this way, we show that we believe Moses' words: "All [Jehovah's] ways are justice." (Deuteronomy 32:4) What happiness we must bring to the hearts of Jehovah and his Son as we acknowledge and then pursue God's just ways for man's salvation!

<sup>15</sup> Are we not happy that our fellow believers in the 1870's took a firm stand on the issue of the ransom sacrifice? Are we not glad that we today belong to an organization that is just as determined to hold to God's just and loving way for man's salvation? If we are, then we should pay special attention to what Jesus told Nicodemus: "God sent forth his Son into the world, not for him to judge the world, but for the world to be saved through him. He that exercises faith in him is not to be judged. . . . He that does what is true comes to the light, in order that his works may be made manifest as having been worked in harmony with God." To escape God's adverse judgment, we must prove our faith in the Son by doing 'works in harmony with God.'—John 3:17, 18, 21.

15. Of what significance to us are Jesus' words to Nicodemus?

*God will cause justice to be done to his chosen ones who cry out to him*



<sup>16</sup> Jesus said: "My Father is glorified in this, that you keep bearing much fruit and prove yourselves my disciples. If you observe my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have observed the commandments of the Father and remain in his love." (John 15:8, 10) What are some of these commandments? One is found at John 13:34, 35, where Jesus told his disciples: "I am giving you a new commandment, that you love one another . . . By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love among yourselves." The fruit of love is evident among Jehovah's Witnesses. Jesus also commanded: "Go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy spirit, teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you." (Matthew 28:19, 20) Are you personally doing these 'works in harmony with God'?

16. How can the disciples of Jesus glorify the heavenly Father?

ally doing these 'works in harmony with God'?

<sup>17</sup> The justice of Jehovah's way in allowing Jesus' followers to do these works of preaching and teaching becomes evident when we consider what was accomplished by Jehovah's Witnesses in just one year. During 1988, there were 239,268 new disciples baptized! Does this not bring joy to your heart?

### The God of Justice Will Act Speedily

<sup>18</sup> The work of witnessing has not been carried on without opposition. Jesus told his followers: "If they have persecuted me, they will persecute you also." (John 15:20)

The modern-day history of Jehovah's Witnesses attests to the truthfulness of that statement. Bans, imprisonments, beatings, and even torture have been experienced by Witnesses in one country after another. Habakkuk's prophetic words again come to our mind: "Law grows numb, and justice never goes forth." Hence, at times, even Jehovah's people may feel like asking: 'Why does Jehovah look on those dealing treacherously? Why does He keep silent when someone wicked swallows up someone more righteous than he is?'—Habakkuk 1: 4, 13.

<sup>19</sup> Jesus gave an illustration that helps to answer such questions and enables us to see things from God's standpoint. At

17. What result shows that the preaching and teaching work are a demonstration of Jehovah's justice?

18. What questions might be raised in view of the persecution of Jehovah's people?

19. What illustration did Jesus give to help us understand matters from God's viewpoint?

Luke 17:22-37, Jesus described the violent conditions that would mark the end of this system of things. He said that they would be comparable to those preceding the Flood in Noah's day and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah in the days of Lot. Then, as described at Luke 18:1-5, Jesus turned to his disciples and "went on to tell them an illustration with regard to the need for them always to pray and not to give up." Jesus told of a widow in great need and of "a certain judge" in a position to satisfy her needs. The widow kept begging: "See that I get justice from my adversary at law." Because of her persistence, the judge finally 'saw that she got justice.'

<sup>20</sup> What is the lesson for us today? Contrasting that unrighteous judge with Jehovah, Jesus said: "Hear what the judge, although unrighteous, said! Certainly, then, shall not God cause justice to be done for his chosen ones who cry out to him day and night, even though he is long-suffering toward them? I tell you, He will cause justice to be done to them speedily."—Luke 18:6-8a.

<sup>21</sup> Always remember that when it comes to our personal problems, any seeming delay in an answer to our petitions is not due to an unwillingness on God's part. (2 Peter 3:9) If we happen to be suffering some sort of persecution or injustice like that widow, we can have faith that God will see that justice is eventually done. How can we show such faith? By praying incessantly and backing up our prayers by maintaining a faithful course of action. (Matthew 10:22; 1 Thessalonians 5:17) By our faithfulness, we will prove that there

20. What lesson does Jesus' illustration hold for us?

21. How should we view and handle our personal problems?

is faith in the earth, that there are true lovers of justice, and that we are among them.—Luke 18:8b.

### "Be Glad, You Nations, With His People"

<sup>22</sup> Many centuries ago, Moses ended his song on this triumphant note: "Be glad, you nations, with his people, for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and he will pay back vengeance to his adversaries and will indeed make atonement for the ground of his people." (Deuteronomy 32: 43) Jehovah's day of vengeance draws ever nearer. How grateful we are that he is still exercising patience along with justice!

<sup>23</sup> The way is still open for those in all nations "to attain to repentance," but there is no time to lose. Peter warned: "Jehovah's day will come as a thief." (2 Peter 3:9, 10) God's justice demands that this wicked system soon be destroyed. When it is, may we be found among those who have responded to the gladsome call: "Be glad, you nations, with his people." Yes, may we be among those happy ones who have seen that justice marks all of God's ways!

22. On what note of triumph did Moses end his song?

23. What happy outcome awaits those who share in the gladness of God's people?

### How Would You Answer?

- Why should the Mosaic Law strengthen our faith in God's justice?
- What should impel us to respond to God's just ways?
- How can Jehovah be glorified?
- Today, where only can true gladness be found?

# Questions From Readers

■ Do Jehovah's Witnesses allow the use of autologous blood (autotransfusion), such as by having their own blood stored and later put back into them?

Medical personnel often distinguish between homologous blood (coming from another person) and autologous blood (the patient's own blood). It is well known that Jehovah's Witnesses do not accept blood from other humans. But what about using autologous blood, a term used regarding a number of procedures?

Some of those procedures are unacceptable to Christians because of being clearly in conflict with the Bible, but others lead to questions. Of course, at the time the Bible was written, transfusions and other such medical uses of blood were unknown. Yet, God provided directions that enable his servants to decide whether certain medical procedures involving blood might displease him.

God's determination is that blood represents life and thus is sacred. He commanded that no human should sustain his life by taking in blood. For instance, God stated: "Every moving animal that is alive may serve as food for you. . . . Only flesh with its soul—its blood—you must not eat." (Genesis 9:3, 4; Leviticus 7:26, 27) According to the Life-Giver, the only acceptable use of blood was in sacrifice: "For the soul of the flesh is in the blood, and I myself have put it upon the altar for you to make atonement for your souls, because it is the blood that makes atonement by the soul in it. That is why I have said to the sons of Israel: 'No soul of you must eat blood.'"—Leviticus 17:11, 12.

Though Christians are not under the Mosaic Law, the Bible says that it is "necessary" for us

to 'abstain from blood,' viewing it as sacred. (Acts 15:28, 29) This is understandable, for the sacrifices under the Law foreshadowed Christ's blood, God's means by which we can gain everlasting life.—Hebrews 9:11-15, 22.

How was blood to be dealt with under the Law if it was not used in sacrifice? We read that when a hunter killed an animal for food, "he must in that case pour its blood out and cover it with dust." (Leviticus 17:13, 14; Deuteronomy 12:22-24) So the blood was not to be used for nutrition or otherwise. If taken from a creature and not used in sacrifice, it was to be disposed of on the earth, God's footstool.—Isaiah 66:1; compare Ezekiel 24:7, 8.

This clearly rules out one common use of autologous blood—preoperative collection, storage, and later infusion of a patient's own blood. In such procedure, this is what is done: Prior to elective surgery, some units of a person's whole blood are banked or the red cells are separated, frozen, and stored. Then if it seems that the patient needs blood during or following surgery, his own stored blood can be returned to him. Current anxieties about blood-borne diseases have made this use of autologous blood popular. Jehovah's Witnesses, though, DO NOT accept this procedure. We have long appreciated that such stored blood certainly is no longer part of the person. It has been completely removed from him, so it should be disposed of in line with God's Law: "You should pour it out upon the ground as water."—Deuteronomy 12:24.

In a somewhat different process, autologous blood can be diverted from a patient to a hemodialysis device (artificial kidney) or a heart-lung pump. The blood flows out through a tube to the artificial organ that pumps and filters (or oxygenates) it, and then it returns to the patient's circulatory system. Some Christians have permitted this if the equipment is not primed with stored blood. They have viewed the external tubing as elongating their circulatory system so that blood might pass through an artificial organ. They have felt that the blood in this closed circuit was still part of them and did not need to be 'poured out.\*

What, though, if the flow of such autologous blood stopped briefly, such as if a heart-lung machine is shut down while the surgeon checks the integrity of coronary-bypass grafts?

Actually, the Biblical emphasis is not on the issue of continuous flow. Even aside from surgery, a person's heart might stop briefly and then resume.\* His circulatory system would not have to be emptied and his blood disposed of just because blood flow had stopped during the cardiac arrest. Hence, a Christian having to decide whether to permit his blood to be diverted through some external device ought to focus, not primarily on whether a brief interruption in flow might occur, but on whether he conscientiously felt that the diverted blood would still be part of his circulatory system.—Galatians 6:5.

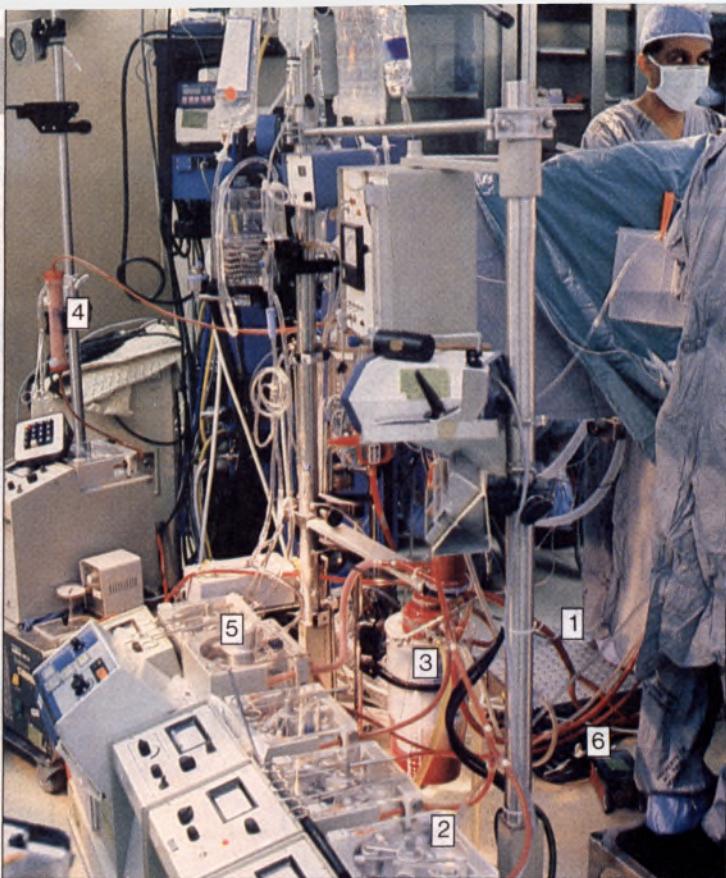
\* See *The Watchtower*, June 15, 1978, page 30.

\* This might result from a heart attack, an electric shock, or extreme hypothermia, such as from submersion in ice-cold water.

*With a heart-lung device, the circuit includes: (1) tubing from patient's vascular system; (2) recovery suction pumps; (3) bubble oxygenator; (4) hollow-fiber hemofilter; (5) main roller pump; (6) return line to patient's circulatory system*

What about induced hemodilution? Some surgeons believe that it is advantageous for a patient's blood to be diluted during surgery. Thus, at the start of an operation, they direct some blood to storage bags outside a patient's body and replace such with non-blood fluids; later, the blood is allowed to flow from the bags back to the patient. Since Christians do not let their blood be stored, some physicians have adapted this procedure, arranging the equipment in a circuit that is constantly linked to the patient's circulatory system. Some Christians have accepted this, others have refused. Again, each individual must decide whether he would consider the blood diverted in such a hemodilution circuit to be similar to that flowing through a heart/lung machine, or he would think of it as blood that left him and therefore should be disposed of.

A final example of autologous blood use involves recovering and reusing blood during surgery. Equipment is used to aspirate blood from the wound, pump it out through a filter (to remove clots or debris) or a centrifuge (to eliminate fluids), and then direct it back into the patient. Many Christians have been very concerned whether in such salvage there might be any brief interruption of blood flow. Yet, as mentioned, a more Biblical concern is whether the blood escaping into a surgical wound is still part of the person. Does the fact that the blood has flowed from his circulatory system into the wound mean that it should be 'poured



out,' like the blood mentioned at Leviticus 17:13? If an individual believes so, he would probably refuse to permit such blood salvage. Yet, another Christian (who also would not let blood flow from him, be stored for some time, and later be put back into him) might conclude that a circuit with recovery from a surgical site and ongoing reinfusion would not violate his trained conscience.

As we can see, there is a growing variety of equipment or techniques involving autologous blood. We cannot and should not try to comment on each variation. When faced with a question in this area, each Christian is responsible to obtain details from medical personnel and then make a personal decision.

Though much has been said here about medical aspects, what is of greatest importance are the religious issues. As a Christian

resolves any doubts or questions about medical processes involving blood, what should predominate should be that he displays faith, that he respects God's command to 'abstain from blood,' and that he maintains a good conscience. Why? Because the most fundamental way in which lives can be saved with blood is not through medical technology but through the saving power of Christ's blood. The apostle Paul wrote: "By means of him we have the release by ransom through the blood of that one." (Ephesians 1:7; Revelation 7:14, 17) While modern medicine might be able to help us extend our lives for a time, we certainly would not want to extend our present life by doing anything that would violate our Christian conscience or would displease our Life-Giver.—Matthew 16:25; 1 Timothy 1:18, 19.



## *An Event to Remember!*

IT was Nisan 14 of the year 33 C.E.

Jesus was sharing a cup of wine and a loaf of unleavened bread with his apostles. His instruction? "Keep doing this in remembrance of me."—Luke 22:19.

So once a year, Jehovah's Witnesses around the world gather to memorialize Jesus' death in the way he instructed on the night he made that statement.

This year, Nisan 14 begins on Wednesday, March 22, at sundown.

You are cordially invited to join us in this remembrance meeting on that Wednesday evening. Please check with Jehovah's Witnesses locally for the exact time and place of the meeting.

