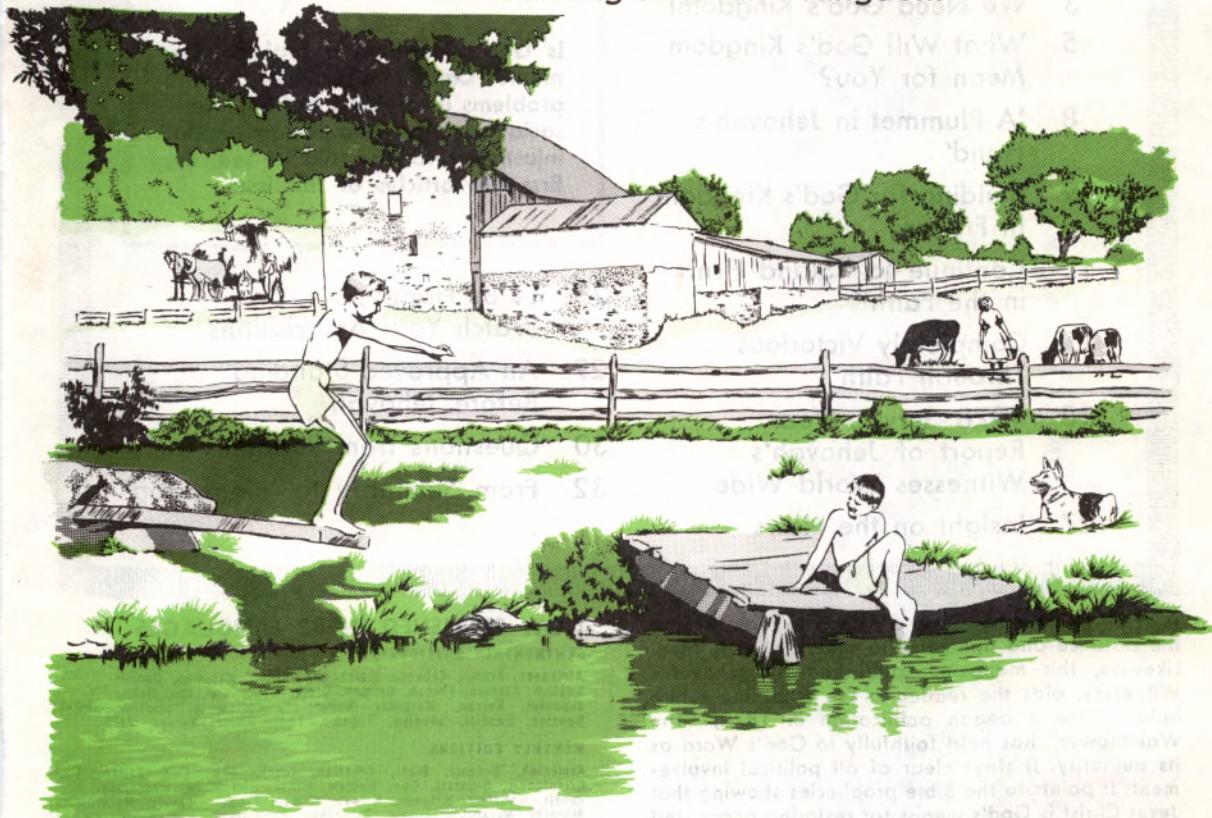


JANUARY 1, 1979

THE WATCHTOWER

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom



What Will God's Kingdom Mean For You?



Watchtower Bible & Tract Society
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Bible Study Department
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IN THIS ISSUE

- | | |
|---|---|
| 3 We Need God's Kingdom! | |
| 5 What Will God's Kingdom Mean for You? | |
| 8 'A Plummet in Jehovah's Hand' | |
| 9 Building for God's Kingdom in France | |
| 12 Continue to "Stand Firm in the Faith" | |
| 17 Completely Victorious Through Faith | |
| 18 1978 Service Year Report of Jehovah's Witnesses World Wide | |
| 27 Insight on the News | |
| | 28 To Be Happy, Watch Your Associations |
| | 29 An Approved Standing Before Jehovah |
| | 30 Questions from Readers |
| | 32 From Seminary to 'Pioneering' |

Is God's kingdom a real government? Can it effectively handle problems involving inflation, crime, social security, health care, racial injustice and the like?—See the first two articles of this issue

A WATCHTOWER enables a person to look far into the distance and announce to others what is seen. Likewise, this magazine, published by Jehovah's Witnesses, aids the reader to see what the future holds. Since it began publication in 1879, "The Watchtower" has held faithfully to God's Word as its authority. It stays clear of all political involvement. It points to the Bible prophecies showing that Jesus Christ is God's means for restoring peace and harmony to this globe. It shows that this Son of God, on the basis of his shed blood, will release mankind from sin and death to enjoy eternal life in happiness on a paradise earth. Because Jehovah God will accomplish all this soon through his kingdom by Jesus Christ, "The Watchtower" announces that kingdom as the real hope for mankind.

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We Need God's Kingdom!

NEVER before has there been such a desperate need for a real change in human affairs. The poor and hungry want food, shelter and clothing. The politically oppressed want freedom. Those weary of war and hate want genuine peace. The many who are victimized by crime want security. The sick want good health.

But more and more people see that the benefits they want are not realistically in sight. Even many who live in wealthier lands now see their way of life being damaged or destroyed by inflation and other economic instabilities. Thus, a college professor in the United States exclaimed: "I don't see any hope!"

Governments of men, however sincere, are not able to bring true and lasting relief from today's enormous burdens. They often do the opposite, and, as a result, people lose hope and confidence. A retired state supreme court judge in America said: "People are becoming suspicious of everybody because of dishonesty in public office."

BURDENS MOUNT

Life in this system of things is becoming more complicated with each passing year, and the burdens grow more intense. Adding to the pressures is the world population growth—about 70 or 80 million a year now, much of it in lands that are already overburdened with problems that are not being solved.

Too, the world is becoming increasingly violent as dissatisfaction and frustration mount. The publication *Il Giornale* of Italy stated: "A characteristic symptom of our times is the undercurrent of violence." It noted that World War II caused 55 million deaths and untold misery, and also that since "peace" came in 1945 there have been "thirty million deaths in 'local' conflicts and massacres." The publication added: "The confusion which reigns in the world . . . is rampant in families and schools, it shakes churches and states to their foundations."

El Diario of Bolivia said regarding this

world: "It can well be asserted now that not only is it unbalanced, but mad. Great parts of the world are insane with hate."

DOES ANYONE KNOW?

So dismal is the outlook from the human point of view that a clergyman of the United Church of Canada asserted: "No one can confidently forecast that a better day is coming. Whether civilization will disappear or whether there will finally be a new society with more abundant life for all, no one surely knows."

But that is totally false! The truth is that Someone does surely know! And that Someone not only knows, but has the power, the wisdom and the will to make the required changes so as to fashion a new society that will satisfy human needs.

That Someone is the Creator of the earth and man. In the communication that he has inspired for our guidance, his Word, the Bible, he says: "From the beginning I predicted the outcome; long ago I foretold what would happen. I said that my [purpose] would never fail, that I would do everything I [delighted in]."—Isa. 46:10, *Today's English Version*.

NEEDED CHANGE COMING

The God whose purposes never fail tells us that a gigantic world change is certain to come. In an inspired prophecy about our time, his Word states: "At the time of those rulers the God of heaven will establish a kingdom that will never end. It will never be conquered, but will completely destroy all those empires and then last forever."—Dan. 2:44, *TEV*.

Did you know that it was God's purpose to rip control away from all earth's present governments, to "destroy all those empires" completely? Were you aware of the fact that "the God of heaven will establish a kingdom that will never end"?

Yes, God's purpose is to replace all the now-existing governments of men. No, not

by some new world federation of nations, nor by any continuation of today's United Nations. Instead, God's kingdom will be his government ruling from heaven, where no human can tamper with it or corrupt it.—John 18:36.

The prophecy observes that this Kingdom government will grind to dust the entire complex of present human rule. (Dan. 2:35) This includes the earthly supporters of this system, "of freemen as well as of slaves and of small ones and great."—Rev. 19:11-21.

Who will survive this gigantic world change? Revelation (the Apocalypse) foretells that "a great crowd" will. Why do they survive? Because they have been rendering God "sacred service day and night."—Rev. 7:9, 15.

This needed world change will pave the way for an entirely new system of things. That is why the apostle Peter could speak of "new heavens and a new earth that we are awaiting according to his promise, and in these righteousness is to dwell."—2 Pet. 3:11-13.

Thus, what will take place is similar to what psychoanalyst Erich Fromm suggested in his book *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*. He observed that the violent and unsatisfactory conditions in human society could be done away with 'only if the whole social and political system as it has existed during the last 6,000 years of history can be replaced by a fundamentally different one.'

While Fromm did not have God's kingdom in mind, nevertheless it will replace this present system of things by 'a fundamentally different one.' That will mean a new human society here on earth, under the control and direction of God's heavenly kingdom. And under Kingdom rule, all the needs and legitimate wants of decent people will be filled beyond their fondest dreams.

WHY SO LONG?

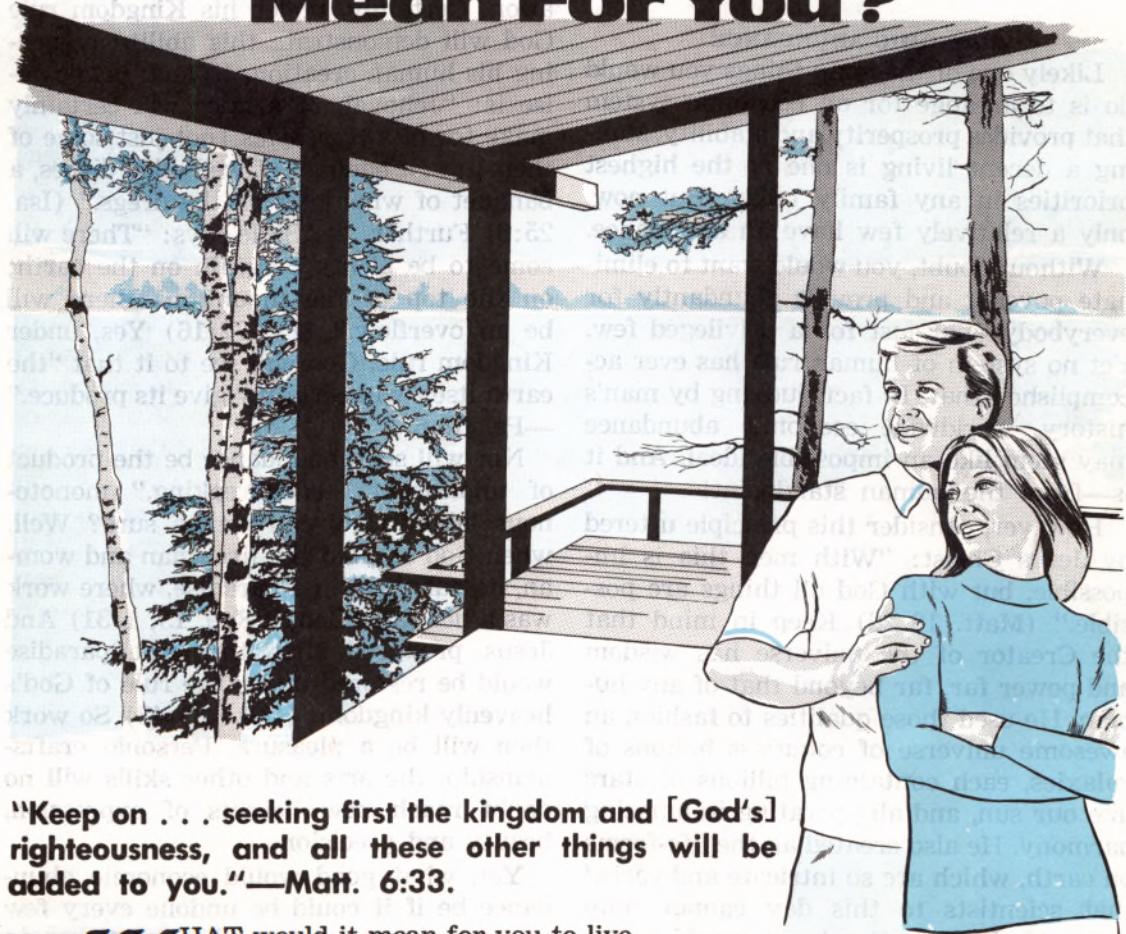
Why has God waited so long to bring about this much needed change? One reason has been to test the claim that man does not need God's direction to be successful. (Gen. 3:4-6) But the past thousands of years have shown how totally unsatisfactory human rule is apart from God.

Every form of human government and society has been tested. The most sophisticated sciences and inventions have been

used to try to help. But nothing has solved man's problems, which have persisted and grown worse. What has been proved beyond reasonable doubt is: "To earthling man his way does not belong. It does not belong to man who is walking even to direct his step."—Jer. 10:23.

What all of this shows is that we need the kingdom of God ruling over us. And when it does take over total control of earth's affairs, what will it mean for you?

What Will God's Kingdom Mean For You?



"Keep on . . . seeking first the kingdom and [God's] righteousness, and all these other things will be added to you."—Matt. 6:33.

WHAT would it mean for you to live under a government controlled and

directed by Almighty God himself? What would life be like 'if God's will were done on earth as it is in heaven'?—Matt. 6:9, 10.

Some idea of what it would mean comes from the words of the psalmist who said of God: "You are opening your hand and satisfying the desire of every living thing." (Ps. 145:16) Think of it! A time is coming when the legitimate needs and desires of every person will be satisfied, and likely far better than any of us imperfect humans can now imagine!

To get some idea of it, ask yourself: If you had the power to change conditions on earth, what would you do? What kind of human society would you fashion?

ECONOMIC ABUNDANCE

Likely one of the main things you would do is to arrange for an economic system that provides prosperity and stability. Making a decent living is one of the highest priorities in any family today. But now, only a relatively few have an abundance.

Without doubt, you would want to eliminate poverty and provide abundantly for everybody—not just for a privileged few. Yet no system of human rule has ever accomplished that. In fact, judging by man's history, worldwide economic abundance may seem like an impossible ideal. And it is—from the human standpoint!

However, consider this principle uttered by Jesus Christ: "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." (Matt. 19:26) Keep in mind that the Creator of the universe has wisdom and power far, far beyond that of any human. He used those qualities to fashion an awesome universe of countless billions of galaxies, each containing billions of stars like our sun, and all operating in amazing harmony. He also created all the life-forms on earth, which are so intricate and varied that scientists to this day cannot fully understand them. Surely, it would be no great thing for such an Almighty Creator

to fashion and regulate a human society that would use this earth and its resources for the benefit of all.

Regarding food, for example, Jesus interestingly commented: "Observe intently the birds of heaven, because they do not sow seed or reap or gather into storehouses; still your heavenly Father feeds them." He also noted this about clothing: "Take a lesson from the lilies of the field, how they are growing; they do not toil, nor do they spin; but I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed as one of these."—Matt. 6:26-29.

This shows that the Creator can provide abundantly for his "lower" earthly creation. Certainly, under his Kingdom rule God will demonstrate this ability regarding his human creation. In fact, his promise is: "Jehovah of armies will certainly make for *all the peoples* [not just some of them] . . . a banquet of well-oiled dishes, a banquet of wine kept on the dregs." (Isa. 25:6) Further, the Bible says: "There will come to be plenty of grain on the earth; on the top of the mountains there will be an overflow." (Ps. 72:16) Yes, under Kingdom rule, God will see to it that "the earth itself will certainly give its produce."

—Ps. 67:6.

Nor will such abundance be the product of unpleasant, "backbreaking," monotonous labor. How can we be sure? Well, when God created the first man and woman, he put them in a paradise, where work was a delight. (Gen. 2:8, 9, 15; 1:31) And Jesus promised that this lost paradise would be restored under the rule of God's heavenly kingdom. (Luke 23:43) So work then will be a pleasure. Personal craftsmanship, the arts and other skills will no doubt reach new heights of expression, beauty and precision.

Yet, what good would economic abundance be if it could be undone every few years by wars, riots and revolutions, as has been the case under human rule? How

can material blessings really be enjoyed if there is no security?

REAL SECURITY

If you had the power to eliminate the things that now cause insecurity, would you not do so? Then would you expect the Almighty God to do any less under his rule? No, for he assures us that he "is making wars to cease *to the extremity of the earth.*" (Ps. 46:9) That means world-wide security for the first time in history, unlike today where any peace or security is only temporary, since wars, riots, insurrections and the like are going on somewhere nearly all the time.

God's Kingdom government will not only enforce earth-wide peace. It will do more. It will continue to educate its subjects in the ways of peace: "He will instruct us about his ways, . . . neither will they learn war anymore." (Isa. 2:3, 4) With God as Enforcer and Teacher, you can see why the Bible says that under Kingdom rule people "will indeed find their *exquisite delight* in the abundance of peace."—Ps. 37:11.

Security is also marred by crime. Today human governments cannot stem the tide of lawless behavior. But with the earth ruled by one government, that of God, and under one set of righteous laws, crime will be speedily eliminated. Any who would want to persist in breaking God's righteous laws then will not be allowed to mar the peace of that new order. The rule will be: "Evildoers themselves will be cut off, . . . the wicked one will be no more." (Ps. 37:9, 10) Thus, human society will be without jails, without police, without locks on doors, yes, without fear. Hence, God's promise is that under his Kingdom rule those living "will actually sit, each one under his vine and under his fig tree, and there will be no one making them tremble."—Mic. 4:4.

However, would it not be a shame to

enjoy economic abundance, with delightful work, in totally peaceful conditions, only to get sick, grow old and die?

HEALTH AND LIFE RESTORED

If you were a doctor who found a permanent cure for every disease, would you use it? Nobel prizes are awarded to men of medicine who bring only a fraction of such benefits. But whatever doctors can do to ease pain, to halt the spread of disease, and to add a few years to one's life-span, the hard fact remains that inevitably sickness, old age and death come on relentlessly—to all.

Under God's kingdom, however, "neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore." "No resident will say: 'I am sick.'" (Rev. 21:4; Isa. 33:24) The entire process of sickness, aging and death will be reversed by God's power, so that bodies and minds will be regenerated. They will be restored to perfect health so that 'a man's flesh will become fresher than in his youth.' (Job 33:25) Conditions will be like those described at Isaiah 35:5, 6: "The eyes of the blind ones will be opened, and the very ears of the deaf ones will be unstopped. At that time the lame one will climb up just as a stag does, and the tongue of the speechless one will cry out in gladness."

But if people did not get sick, or grow old, then they would not die. And that will be the case. No sane persons really want to die. Under Kingdom rule they will not have to, since the promise is: "Death will be no more." (Rev. 21:4) Thus, "the righteous themselves will possess the earth, and they will reside *forever* upon it."—Ps. 37:29.

Even more than this, God, who created man from the elements of the earth, can also *re-create* him. That is why the Bible says: "There is going to be a resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous." (Acts 24:15) So the dead, too, in God's

'memory bank' (far more marvelous than that of any man-made computer) will be brought back to life and given the opportunity of living forever in a righteous environment, on a paradise earth. What a happy time that will be!

PEOPLE WHO CARE

Still, even with all such benefits, happiness can be marred by unfriendly people, people who are selfish and who do not care for your interests. That is why the Bible says: "Better is a dish of vegetables where there is love than a manger-fed bull and hatred along with it." (Prov. 15:17) But since God will bring the beasts of the field into friendly relations with man, will he do less among men?—Isa. 11:6-9; Ezek. 34:25.

The same earth-wide education that will teach people 'not to learn war anymore' will instruct them in how to 'love their neighbors as themselves.' (Isa. 2:4; Matt. 22:39) Furthermore, God's powerful active force, his holy spirit, working on people will produce amazing benefits, as it will in the animal realm. The fruitage of that spirit is "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, mildness, self-control."—Gal. 5:22, 23.

What fine qualities for humans to have! And they will, for the dominating spirit of the New Order will be God's. With that force working through people, and with

the elimination of the miserable conditions of today, which cause so many to be hateful, relations will develop between humans that will be truly heartwarming and pleasurable. Then, the social environment will be as described: "Look! How good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity!"—Ps. 133:1.

Does Kingdom rule appeal to you? If it does, then it is well worth your while to learn more about it. For example, just who will be included in God's heavenly government? What must each of us do to gain God's approval to live forever on earth? Is there any evidence, right now on earth, that Kingdom rule really works? Has God ever demonstrated that he could bring such amazing benefits to mankind as healing the sick, raising the dead, or bringing people of different races and nationalities into true harmony and love? And if people are to live forever under God's kingdom, then will there be a problem with overpopulation?

These and many other questions about God's kingdom are answered in the Bible. Why not ask one of Jehovah's Witnesses to assist you to see where the Bible comments on these matters? When you do, and you fully learn about the great blessings in store for the future, then you will understand why Jesus told his followers: "Keep on, then, seeking first the kingdom and [God's] righteousness."—Matt. 6:33.

'A Plummet in Jehovah's Hand'

The ten-tribe kingdom of Israel is compared to a wall that, as determined by a plummet, was straight but in time began to lean. We read: "Look! Jehovah was stationed on a wall made with a plummet, and there was a plummet in his hand. Then Jehovah said to me: 'What are you seeing, Amos?' So I said: 'A plummet.' And Jehovah went on to say: 'Here I am setting a plummet in the midst of my people Israel. I shall no more do any further excusing of it.'"—Amos 7:7, 8.

Measured by Jehovah's standard or his plummet, Israel as a wall had leaned too far from the perpendicular. No longer would the Most High excuse or pardon the error of the people. Just as a leaning wall must be torn down to prevent injuring passersby, so unfaithful ten-tribe Israel would experience adverse judgment from God.

Building and Planting in France



New Bethel annex at Incarville, France, at time of dedication

SOME criticize Jehovah's Witnesses for 'tearing down' false doctrines long taught by the world's great religions. The Witnesses have indeed been pioneers in combating such religious falsehoods as hellfire, the Trinity and infant baptism—dogmas that some of Christendom's theologians themselves now question.

However, like God's prophet Jeremiah, the Witnesses are also planters and builders. (Jer. 1:10) They have planted God's

Word in many hearts and have built up in them strong faith in Jehovah God, in his Son Jesus Christ and in his Kingdom promises. To that end, Jehovah's Christian witnesses distribute Bibles and Scripture-based books, booklets and magazines. The production and distribution of this literature requires printing and shipping facilities, and increasing demands often necessitate the construction of new buildings.

FIRST BETHEL ANNEX

"Bethel," meaning "house of God," is the name given to the buildings that house the office, the printing and shipping staffs of Jehovah's Witnesses in each country. Until 1972, a small building in Boulogne-Billancourt, on the western outskirts of Paris, was sufficient to accommodate the entire French Bethel family. But in that year land was bought in Louviers, a picturesque little town in Normandy conveniently situated midway between Paris and the seaport of Le Havre, where literature printed at the Watch Tower Society's Brooklyn factory was shipped for distribution in France.

A two-story prefabricated building measuring 57 by 21 meters (187 by 69 feet) was quickly erected, and, on June 9, 1973, it was dedicated. It contained sufficient space to house both the printing and the shipping departments, as well as a kitchen, a dining room, a laundry, bedrooms and a library for the staff. But the expansion of the spiritual building and planting work soon necessitated more literal building.

Therefore, in January 1974, a plot of land was bought in Incarville, a village just outside Louviers. The original plans called for a small building containing a Kingdom Hall for the growing Louviers

congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses, as well as storage space for literature. But before a building permit had been granted, the 22-year-long ban on the *Watchtower* magazine had been lifted (in December 1974) and the decision had been made to truck our magazines from Germany into France, where they would be sent out to the individual subscribers. This meant setting up a new magazine department with increased manpower to handle the extra work.

SECOND BETHEL ANNEX

So the original plans were drastically modified to provide for a much larger building. The building permit was not granted until April 1976. French Witnesses had decided to do all the building work themselves, and a Witness with experience in the building trade kindly offered to coordinate the work as part of a building committee supervised by the branch committee and the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses. A drafting office was set up near Paris, workers' huts were erected at the building site, apartments were rented and furnished for the building crew, and a field kitchen and canteen were organized on the spot.

Ground was broken in May 1976. As work progressed, workshops were set up for metalworking, carpentry, plumbing, electrical work and painting. A second-hand job crane was bought, repaired and set up on a 35-meter (115-foot) runway situated in the center of the building, enabling the 25-meter (82-foot) jib to sweep across the whole site. A 500-liter (132-gallon) concrete mixer was kept busy, for, not only were 5,300 tons of concrete poured (up to 110 tons in one day), but the Witness builders also made all the reinforced concrete posts, beams and slabs.

Representatives of building firms and many individual workers stopped by to offer their services. A fine witness was

In Coming Issues

- **Ebed-Melech—Man of Courage**
- **Traveling Overseers Bring Benefits Today**
- **Is Faith Old-fashioned?**

given to these men, who were greatly impressed when they learned that all the workers were volunteers. Witness congregations all over France hired buses, and on weekends hundreds of volunteer workers came to lend a helping hand. For some skilled trades, loving help was provided by a few voluntary workers from Belgium and Germany.

A BIG UNDERTAKING

Erecting this whole building was a tremendous undertaking. There were various problems and moments of discouragement. But May 24, 1977, will long be remembered by the volunteer builders, for on that day Frederick W. Franz, a member of the Governing Body, visited the Incarville building site. He gave a fine Biblical talk, encouraging the assembled workers to stay on the job and get it finished, as the builders of Jerusalem and its temple had done in ancient times.

Various changes made in the original plans lengthened the time needed to finish the building. For instance, the growth of the spiritual building and planting work in France prompted the Governing Body to suggest using the attic for 10 additional rooms. Later, the decision was made to transfer the dining room, kitchen, cold-storage rooms, laundry and library from the Louviers annex to the new Incarville building, for the greater convenience of the Bethel family, most of whom would be living in the second annex. This also meant a great deal of extra work.

Finally, after much toil and sweat, the building was completed. Measuring 61 by 26 meters (200 by 85 feet), it offers 2,873 square meters (over 30,000 square feet) of floor space. On the ground floor there are offices, a kitchen and cold-storage facilities, a dining room that can seat 150 people, the laundry, a library, a recreation room and space for the shipping department that sends out Bibles and Biblical

literature to 1,192 congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses in France, and to many countries overseas.

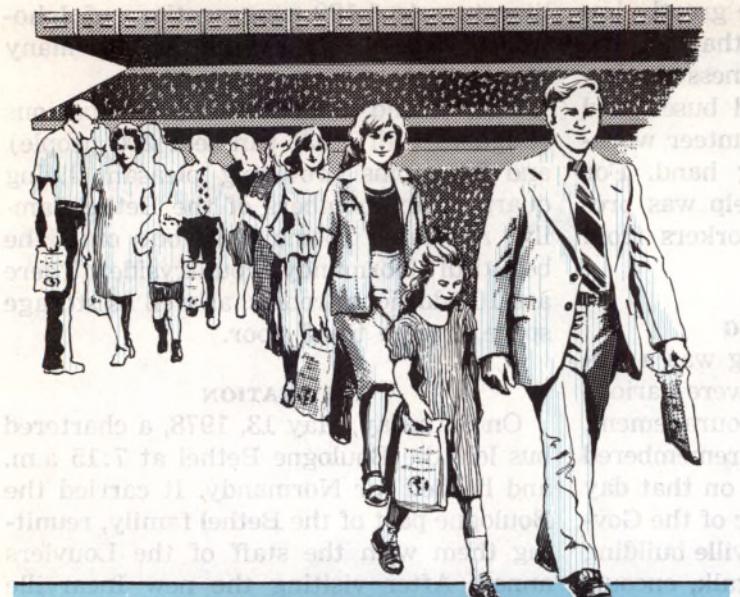
The second floor contains a spacious Kingdom Hall (that can seat 200 people) and 24 rooms providing pleasant living quarters for members of the Bethel family. All these rooms look out onto the beautiful Normandy countryside. There are 10 additional rooms, as well as storage space, on the third floor.

DEDICATION

On Saturday, May 13, 1978, a chartered bus left the Boulogne Bethel at 7:15 a.m. and headed for Normandy. It carried the Boulogne part of the Bethel family, reuniting them with the staff of the Louviers annex. After visiting the new Incarville building, they sat down to an early meal prepared by the Bethel cooks.

After a program retracing the two years of efforts required to put up the new building, several recorded messages from Witnesses in other French-speaking lands were heard. Then Raymond Franz, a member of the Governing Body, gave the dedication talk. He highlighted the importance of serving Jehovah with joy. (Neh. 8:10) The vanity of human efforts and ephemeral glory (such as that of Caesar and Napoleon) were contrasted with the joyful work of preaching the good news of Jehovah's kingdom. (Eccl. 1:3-7, 11) It was shown that if Christians continue finding joy in Jehovah's service, awaiting his due time for destroying wickedness, they will end up by being convinced that everything has worked out perfectly, with "nothing to add" and "nothing to subtract." —Eccl. 3:11, 14.

The dedication of this new Bethel annex was a very happy occasion indeed. And the continued evidences of divine blessing fill us with determination to carry on faithfully in the spiritual building and planting work in France.



CONTINUE TO “STAND FIRM IN THE FAITH”

“Stay awake, stand firm in the faith.”—1 Cor. 16:13.

VICTORIOUS faith is flourishing in the earth! That is the message conveyed by the “Victorious Faith” International Convention of Jehovah’s Witnesses, held in the northern hemisphere this past summer, and as it now moves into many lands south of the equator. For Jehovah’s Witnesses, faith is not something merely to profess. Rather, it must be alive, active and accompanied by works. Jesus described its fruitage in his Sermon on the Mount: “Let your light shine before men, that they may see your fine works and give glory to your Father who is in the heavens.” And he told his intimate companions on his last momentous evening with them: “My Father is glorified in this,

that you keep bearing much fruit and prove yourselves my disciples.”—Matt. 5:16; John 15:8.

It is true in these critical times that “faith is not a possession of all people.” (2 Thess. 3:2) But it is very much a possession of the Christian witnesses of Jehovah. It is our living faith that motivates us to continue telling forth the “good news” publicly in field service. What a grand witness has been given in this way on the third day of the international conventions! It is this same faith that strengthens us to continue giving the witness, even in most difficult territories, and to stand firm in the face of bitter trials and persecutions. It enables us even to rejoice in times of trial, as we look forward with keen anticipation to the revelation of Jesus Christ in Kingdom glory.—1 Pet. 4:12, 13.

Our faith is something real. It is firmly founded on the Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the Christian congregation, the members of which serve in union with him. To these, the apostle Paul gives the admonition: “As you have accepted Christ Jesus the Lord, go on walking in union with him, rooted and being built up in him and being stabilized in the faith, just as you were taught, overflowing with faith in thanksgiving.” (Col. 2:6, 7) And as older ones in the truth go on walking in this victorious faith, so it is our prayer also that new ones, including those re-

1. (a) What is the message conveyed by the “Victorious Faith” conventions? (b) What kind of faith did Jesus advocate?

2. What shows that faith is a “possession” of Jehovah’s Witnesses?

3. (a) Why can it be said that our faith is real? (b) How should faith stimulate old and new ones alike?

cently baptized, will become stabilized in the faith, yes, overflow with faith. It is faith that stimulates all of us to make "public declaration for salvation," telling others the good news.—Rom. 10:10.

⁴ This faith also prompts Christians to fine conduct, which reflects favorably on the precious name of Jehovah our God. (1 Pet. 2:12) During the "Victorious Faith" Convention, the Montreal *La Presse* of July 8 quoted this pertinent comment about Jehovah's Witnesses:

"They have remarkable moral values . . . on a personal level, promoting family values, and opposing divorce and abortion. They have a great concern about the religious instruction of their children."⁵

Exemplary conduct, based on this appreciation of moral values, has been much in evidence at these conventions. A professor from Russia, who works as a journalist, was heard to say at the Munich convention of Jehovah's Witnesses: "Your conduct is your best sermon." And in the same city the *Münchener Merkur* of July 25, 1978, commented:

"They are the most honest and the most punctual tax payers in the Federal Republic. Their obedience to the laws can be seen in the way they drive as well as in crime statistics. . . . They obey those in authority (parents, teachers, government). . . . The Bible, basis for all their actions, is their support. . . . But no one should imagine Jehovah's Witnesses to be daydreamers or sanctimonious persons. In a gigantic cleaning campaign they were able to clean all the seats and toilets in the [Olympic] stadium within a period of three hours. The camping area looked as though it had been 'licked clean.' They are realists who master every situation voluntarily—because that is what the Bible wants."

⁵ Around the world, similar expressions

* From *L'Eglise de Montreal*, the weekly bulletin of the Catholic Archdiocese of Montreal, Canada.

4. (a) What connection does faith have with conduct?
(b) What prompted the statement, "Your conduct is your best sermon"?

5. How has Matthew 7:16 applied to Jehovah's Witnesses in convention?

have been heard. The *Corriere della Sera* of Milan, Italy, even spoke of a contrast in its issue of August 7, 1978:

"They [are] supported by an organization so perfect, it is the envy of all other organizations. . . . What else can one say about these Jehovah's Witnesses? They have shown themselves to be a well-mannered civil people, to the point that their conduct seems almost a reproof to the incivility manifested at times by certain Catholic groups."

Did not Jesus say: "By their fruits you will recognize them"?—Matt. 7:16.

⁶ It has been due to the large attendances at these conventions that the Witnesses' fine conduct has been drawn impressively to the attention of the world. In the three countries mentioned above, a combined total of 140,590 assembled at Montreal, Winnipeg, Vancouver and Edmonton, 108,901 at Munich and Düsseldorf, and 111,320 at Milan and Rome. For all of 68 international conventions completed by September, 1978, the total attendance topped 1,700,000. The Christian personalities of these servants of Jehovah have been displayed around the earth in such a way as to make them an outstanding example of true Christianity.

A TIME TO "STAND FIRM"

⁷ Trials of our faith are certain to increase in the days just ahead. And why? It is because, since the birth of "the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ" in 1914 C.E., the Devil has been "hurled down to the earth." He knows he has only "a short period of time." Hence, his wrath increases toward those servants of Jehovah on earth "who observe the commandments of God and have the work of bearing witness to Jesus" as the mighty, enthroned King who now prepares forever to vindicate Jehovah's sovereignty.

6. In recent months, how have the Witnesses become an outstanding example of true Christianity?
7. Why are trials of faith certain to increase in the future?

(Rev. 12:9-12, 17) The great adversary stirs up troubles and tensions in the world, particularly to the end of slowing down, or even stopping this "work of bearing witness." As witnesses for God and Christ we have a real fight on our hands—against invisible foes that are bent on destroying our faith and work.

⁸ This is no time to be passive or indifferent. The apostle Paul admonishes: "Stand firm against the machinations of the Devil. . . . Take up the complete suit of armor from God, that you may be able . . . to stand firm. Stand firm, therefore. . . . Above all things, take up the large shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the wicked one's burning missiles." (Eph. 6:11-16) The Devil's attacks may come at any time, and from many different directions. What are some of his devices?

THE SCOURGE OF IMMORALITY

⁹ From the beginnings of human history, the Devil has used immorality as a means of corrupting humans. (Gen. 6:2-5; 18:20; Num. 25:1-3) Sexual degradation was rampant in early Christian times, even becoming a major threat to the purity of the congregation. Hence, Jesus' half brother Jude, though desirous of writing his Christian brothers an encouraging letter about their common salvation, was compelled, instead, to exhort them "to put up a hard fight for the faith that was once for all time delivered to the holy ones." Ungodly men, with their loose conduct, had slipped into the congregation. These ones were like the angels that sinned before the Flood, the filthy inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah and the Israelites that were corrupted by the immoral daughters of Moab and Midian. They were defiling the flesh

8. How may we now stand firm in our faith?

9. (a) What corrupting influence has the Devil used throughout history? (b) Hence, how does Jude counsel Christians?

and bringing animalistic influences in among God's people. So Jude counseled clean-minded Christians: "You, beloved ones, by building up yourselves on your most holy faith, and praying with holy spirit, keep yourselves in God's love, while you are waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ with everlasting life in view."

—Jude 3-7, 19-21.

¹⁰ It is only by putting up this "hard fight for the faith" that we can expect to remain free from contamination by worldly "uncleanness." (Eph. 5:3-5) In his message to the congregation in Thyatira, Jesus "the Son of God" says: "I know your deeds, and your love and faith and ministry and endurance, and that your deeds of late are more than those formerly. Nevertheless, I do hold this against you, that you tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, and she teaches and misleads my slaves to commit fornication and to eat things sacrificed to idols. And I gave her time to repent, but she is not willing to repent of her fornication."

—Rev. 2:19-21.

¹¹ The pre-Christian idolatrous Jezebel, wife of King Ahab of Israel, was notorious for her immorality. When her son Jehoram asked the anointed King Jehu whether it was peace with the house of Ahab, he responded: "What peace could there be as long as there are the fornications of Jezebel your mother and her many sorceries?" And after disposing of Kings Jehoram and Ahaziah (of Judah), Jehu proceeded to execute Jezebel, 70 sons of Ahab and all others who remained of his house, as well as all practitioners of the immoral Baal religion. (2 Ki 9:22-10:28) May we heed this warning example today, so that we do not step out of the way of righteousness to probe into the "deep things of Satan."—Rev. 2:24.

10, 11. (a) Why is the admonition of Ephesians 5:3-5 so important to Christians? (b) What warning should we heed concerning "that woman Jezebel," and why?

FLEE FROM 'PURSUING RICHES'

¹² There are other pressures that the Devil brings on Jehovah's faithful servants, all of which are aimed at turning us away from God's kingdom and his righteousness. (Matt. 6:33) The apostle Paul warned about the subtle influence that "the love of money" can have in leading a person astray from the faith. This "love" can cover a wide range of things, not only money itself, but all the material riches, pleasures and entanglements that money can buy. This "love of money" can become time-consuming and make everyday life complicated and destructive of Christian faith. As a result, a person can get stabbed "all over with many pains."—1 Tim. 6:10.

¹³ The apostle Paul counseled young Timothy that, rather than pursue riches, he should 'set his sights' on a spiritually rewarding goal in life: "You, O man of God, flee from these things. But pursue righteousness, godly devotion, faith, love, endurance, mildness of temper. Fight the fine fight of the faith, get a firm hold on the everlasting life for which you were called and you offered the fine public declaration in front of many witnesses." (1 Tim. 6:11, 12) In reliance on Jehovah, you young people today can succeed likewise in 'fighting that fine fight of the faith.' And so can you older ones!

¹⁴ It is of note that the Scriptures counsel us to put up this fight for the faith in connection both with immorality and with the love of money. In each case, it is strong faith, and holding firmly to our faith, that will mean success in resisting the temptations of the Devil. Paul counsels in like vein at Hebrews 13:4-6: "Let marriage be honorable among all, and the marriage bed be without defilement, for God will

judge fornicators and adulterers. Let your manner of life be free of the love of money, while you are content with the present things. For he has said: 'I will by no means leave you nor by any means forsake you.' So that we may be of good courage and say: 'Jehovah is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?' " Confident of Jehovah's help, let us be determined to fight the fight of faith down to the end of this wicked system!

MEETING A CHALLENGE

¹⁵ The "Victorious Faith" International Conventions of Jehovah's Witnesses have been a milestone in the forward movement of God's people on earth. They have provided a needed stimulus. The past few years have been a time of readjustment. Many of us had hoped that before now we might see the windup of this wicked system of things. True, we have seen the biggest-ever readjustment in the administrative organization of Jehovah's Witnesses, but the "wicked system of things" has not ended. Obviously, Jehovah still has a work for us to do. "So let us not give up in doing what is fine, for in due season we shall reap if we do not tire out. Really, then, as long as we have time favorable for it, let us work what is good toward all, but especially toward those related to us in the faith."—Gal. 6:9, 10.

¹⁶ Congregation elders, family heads and others are continuing to exert themselves most commendably in 'working what is good toward those related to them in the faith,' and the fine fruitage of this is to be seen in the bond of love and affection that so strongly unites Jehovah's people throughout the earth. By this they are identified as Jesus' disciples. (John 13:34, 35) This grand unity in the faith is

12. What is "the love of money," and why is it to be avoided?

13. How can young people, as well as older ones, succeed in 'fighting the fine fight of the faith'?

14. (a) What are two ways that we must 'fight for the faith'? (b) How does Hebrews 13:4-6 bear this out?

15, 16. (a) What stimulus have the conventions provided? (b) What encouragement should we derive from Galatians 6:9, 10, and especially in view of last year's Memorial attendance?

DISCO CLUB

**Immorality and
"the love of money"
are two main devices
the Devil uses to
break Christian faith
in these last days**



something that cannot be measured by figures in a report. But the outstanding attendance of 5,095,831 at the March 23, 1978, celebration of the Lord's Evening Meal world wide indicates that there are millions of persons, as yet not dedicated to Jehovah, who are very much interested in associating with God's people. May all of these, too, be helped to become conquerors by faith!

¹⁷ That these new ones, "the desirable things of all the nations," are continuing to come in is indicated in that 18,754 per-

sons have been baptized at the "Victorious Faith" conventions held to date. (Hag. 2:7) Also, the chart on pages 18 to 21 shows that 95,052 new Witnesses were baptized throughout the earth during the 12-month period concluding August, 1978. We rejoice that these precious ones "out of all the languages of the nations" are joining with the anointed remnant in Jehovah's service, and "saying, 'We will go with you people, for we have heard that God is with you people.'"—Zech. 8:23.

¹⁸ However, this chart shows something

17. How do Haggai 2:7 and Zechariah 8:23 continue to find fulfillment today?

18. (a) How do the great majority continue to show forth faith? (b) As indicated by the chart, what Scriptural warnings are urgent?

else: That there has been a slackening off on the part of some baptized servants of God. The vast majority continue to show forth victorious faith. A number of countries are increasing enrollments in the full-time pioneer work, and again there are more than two million persons engaging in field service as a peak. But it appears that a considerable percentage have succumbed to the pressures brought

on them by the Devil and his system. Worldly immorality, the pursuit of pleasure and of deceptive riches, and a failure to keep awake to the urgency of the times —these have taken their toll despite the clear Scriptural warnings against such pitfalls. (Luke 17:26-30; 1 John 2:15-17) Truly, this is the time of all times for us to "stay awake, stand firm in the faith." —1 Cor. 16:13.

COMPLETELY VICTORIOUS THROUGH FAITH

"In all these things we are coming off completely victorious through him that loved us." —Rom. 8:37.

JESUS told his disciples: "If you were part of the world, the world would be fond of what is its own. Now because you are no part of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, on this account the world hates you. Bear in mind the word I said to you, A slave is not greater than his master. If they have persecuted me, they will persecute you also." (John 15:19, 20) We can expect trouble on that account, and particularly at this time of "the conclusion of the system of things." —Matt. 24:3, 9.

² We may be tested by persecutions, but, as needed, God will provide us "the power beyond what is normal" to endure. Yes, "we are persecuted, but not left in the lurch; we are thrown down, but not destroyed." (2 Cor. 4:7-9) How often has that been the experience of Jehovah's Witnesses in modern times! And persecutions, when endured, can have a most

beneficial result. They add to the Christian's faith a resilience, a power, a confidence, a poise that shine through that one's entire personality, declaring as it were, 'Here is a tried, proved and faithful servant of Almighty God, Jehovah.' Jesus tells us to rejoice over persecutions. "Happy are those who have been persecuted for righteousness' sake, since the kingdom of the heavens belongs to them." —Matt. 5:10-12.

³ The apostle Peter looked at it that way, writing as follows to Christians who were "being safeguarded by God's power through faith": "In this fact you are greatly rejoicing, though for a little while at present, if it must be, you have been grieved by various trials, in order that the tested quality of your faith, of much greater value than gold that perishes despite its being proved by fire, may be found a cause for praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

1. Why can we expect trouble, particularly at this time?

2. (a) Why can we be confident when enduring persecutions? (b) What benefits result from thus enduring?

3. (a) With regard to persecutions, what encouragement does Peter give us? (See also 1 Peter 4:12-14.) (b) What trials have Jehovah's Witnesses endured in modern times, and with what result?

1978 SERVICE YEAR REPORT OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES WORLD WIDE

18

Country	Population	1978 Peak Pubs.	Ratio, One Publisher to:	1978 Av. Pubs.	% Inc. over 1977	1977 Av. Pubs.	1978 No. Bptzd.	Av. Plo. Pubs.	No. of Congs.	Total Hours	Av. Bible Studies	Memorial Attendance
AFRICA												
Algeria	17,800,000	26	684,615	17		17	3	1	3	1,434	16	52
Benin	2,700,000	1,304	2,071	1,106	13	975	13	10	71	92,365	390	2,627
Botswana	720,000	295	2,441	268	8	249	16	23	12	58,418	268	726
Burundi	4,000,000	161	24,845	128	-12*	146	26	16	5	29,641	155	187
Cameroun	6,700,000	12,056	556	11,025	-4*	11,449	396	18	426	738,979	6,425	18,382
Central Afr. Emp.	2,200,000	939	2,343	797	-10*	887	36	47	47	118,535	519	2,227
Chad	4,117,000	154	26,734	127	-3*	131	17	28	11	51,004	200	546
Congo	1,400,000	1,071	1,307	892	-32*	1,305	12	22	43	59,420	383	1,602
Djibouti	101,000	3	33,667	2	-50*	4			1	85	1	4
Equatorial Guinea	300,000	16	18,750	14	-13*	16			1	925	23	
Ethiopia	27,500,000	1,593	17,263	1,466	-19*	1,811	84	101	50	258,154	1,545	4,316
Gabon	520,000	364	1,429	330	8	306	12	14	17	40,266	299	786
Gambia	493,000	14	35,214	13	30	10		4	1	5,525	19	34
Ghana	10,304,683	22,167	465	20,924	-3*	21,531	1,021	1,209	442	3,514,973	19,019	59,443
Guinea	5,143,284	259	19,858	205	-2*	210	10	62	15	102,748	454	782
Guinea-Bissau	517,000	1	517,000	1	-67*	3			1	441	9	4
Ivory Coast	6,670,000	1,216	5,485	1,173		1,168	62	93	43	247,891	1,604	4,140
Kenya	14,400,000	1,989	7,240	1,948	1	1,929	181	275	88	587,383	2,091	5,061
Lesotho	1,181,900	630	1,876	571	1	568	29	49	30	113,356	424	2,089
Liberia	1,400,000	1,119	1,251	1,000	2	979	41	104	30	245,786	1,256	3,014
Libya	2,440,000	14	174,286	6	100	3				378	2	8
Mali	5,000,000	36	138,889	34	10	31	3	11	1	19,907	117	52
Mauritania	1,500,000	1	1,500,000	1		1				177	3	
Morocco	18,884,000	168	112,405	146	-10*	162	9	8	3	23,092	87	288
Niger	2,870,000	58	49,483	47	-11*	53	3	21	6	34,705	76	119
Nigeria	79,758,969	97,056	822	91,656	-8*	99,163	3,182	4,447	2,107	13,767,805	61,970	240,814
Rhodesia	6,856,300	12,077	568	11,357	-2*	11,592	332	612	521	1,798,806	7,350	27,591
Rwanda	4,650,000	118	39,407	103	66	62	33	28	7	56,476	215	502
Senegal	5,000,000	347	14,409	328	2	322	20	53	8	103,154	418	810
Sierra Leone	3,002,426	1,041	2,884	895	-18*	1,095	28	218	40	362,236	1,690	3,564
South Africa	26,228,000	28,105	933	26,196	-4*	27,149	1,290	1,549	855	4,370,450	16,649	67,017
South-West Africa	850,000	295	2,881	263	-9*	288	25	16	11	47,063	231	676
Sudan	18,000,000	89	202,247	80	-10*	89	3	9	2	19,913	96	202
Swaziland	493,728	740	667	612	2	601	39	31	28	118,553	472	1,388
Tanzania	16,000,000	1,469	10,892	1,401	3	1,358	57	137	76	303,581	1,145	3,681
Togo	2,371,100	2,660	891	2,145	-11*	2,418	6	190	71	422,670	2,221	9,544
Tunisia	6,000,000	52	115,385	48	7	45	3	1	1	4,320	26	73
Uganda	11,750,000	148	79,392	127	-9*	139	3	12	9	31,710	153	375
Upper Volta	5,258,141	100	52,581	87	26	69	25	26	5	45,564	228	396
Zaire	25,000,000	19,512	1,281	18,114		18,153	1,600	2,307	679	4,948,915	27,328	79,726
Zambia	5,700,000	56,517	101	52,617		52,629	1,608	1,934	1,198	7,161,452	49,394	191,591

AMERICAS

THE WATCHTOWER — JANUARY 1, 1979

Alaska	404,615	1,146	353	1,087	-7*	1,164	55	99	22	185,571	542	2,785
Argentina	25,050,000	32,977	760	31,713	9	29,111	858	846	615	3,376,755	21,907	59,268

Belize	142,000	568	250	530	-2*	542	13	44	14	100,685	442	1,952
Bolivia	4,687,718	2,395	1,957	2,278	2	2,240	275	366	64	658,581	2,644	9,495
Brazil	117,250,000	106,197	1,104	101,929	-1*	102,503	6,643	4,185	2,012	12,997,190	66,433	292,565
Canada	23,388,100	61,836	378	60,540	-1*	60,940	2,501	3,076	1,035	8,523,719	24,839	120,060
Chile	10,857,128	15,501	700	14,703	-4*	15,339	945	868	280	2,211,154	13,678	44,444
Colombia	25,894,289	15,200	1,704	14,856	-5*	15,696	540	878	273	2,531,462	14,980	65,012
Costa Rica	2,070,560	5,090	407	4,842		4,832	258	205	110	683,755	3,502	13,247
Ecuador	6,797,299	5,417	1,255	5,043	-7*	5,400	327	406	105	984,986	5,288	22,708
El Salvador	4,440,188	6,017	738	5,693	-1*	5,768	472	333	133	1,000,331	5,883	21,285
French Guiana	45,000	250	180	233	7	218	16	13	3	45,133	296	598
Guatemala	6,000,000	5,176	1,159	4,974	-2*	5,079	305	287	90	827,232	4,257	15,568
Guyana	800,000	1,260	635	1,214	-9*	1,327	54	144	32	258,267	1,110	3,358
Honduras	3,438,388	3,166	1,086	2,978	-5*	3,149	180	270	64	657,529	3,833	15,446
Mexico	66,943,976	95,374	702	92,649	3	89,606	4,785	6,738	3,717	15,422,261	82,034	380,164
Nicaragua	2,295,046	3,338	688	3,246	-1*	3,282	292	272	68	644,829	3,822	12,080
Panama	1,742,500	2,963	588	2,879	-2*	2,927	121	221	68	574,168	3,389	11,454
Paraguay	2,646,000	1,555	1,702	1,464	2	1,439	169	133	47	282,725	1,047	3,829
Peru	16,000,000	12,925	1,238	11,992		12,011	1,200	1,382	276	2,697,143	13,033	45,647
Surinam	375,000	879	427	854	-4*	886	36	79	12	167,316	663	2,126
U.S. of America	216,030,000	535,737	403	513,673	-3*	530,374	20,471	28,192	7,445	72,065,793	263,156	1,264,420
Uruguay	2,763,964	4,503	614	4,149	-5*	4,377	317	310	90	744,104	3,774	11,767
Venezuela	13,565,000	13,815	982	13,332		13,310	746	765	176	2,252,248	12,527	48,013

ASIA

Afghanistan	17,000,000	3	5,666,667	3	-40*	5			1	423	1	10
Bangladesh	85,000,000	4	21,250,000	3	200	1			1	762	3	
Brunei	170,000	5	34,000	4	New					690	10	14
Burma	31,170,000	914	34,103	884	8	816	50	169	59	283,871	752	2,174
Hong Kong	4,600,000	760	6,053	723	13	640	98	136	9	242,394	943	1,579
India	625,000,000	4,750	131,579	4,506	-1*	4,535	338	568	270	1,077,680	3,174	11,418
Iran	32,000,000	69	463,768	58	18	49	4	16	1	24,322	113	176
Iraq	9,498,362	20	474,918	19	19	16	3	1	1	1,129	6	47
Israel	4,825,000	244	19,775	236	-6*	250	13	12	5	34,428	105	409
Jordan	2,560,000	71	36,056	47	-13*	54	2	2	1	6,447	32	118
Korea	37,091,000	26,286	1,411	25,264	-9*	27,655	1,162	2,018	499	3,903,225	13,889	49,545
Kuwait	990,000	28	35,357	25	47	17	3	1		1,925	14	91
Lebanon	3,213,000	1,768	1,817	1,699	2	1,663	43	81	45	258,558	981	3,381
Macao	375,000	11	34,091	9	13	8	5	1	1	6,713	19	27
Malaysia	13,341,000	471	28,325	454	5	433	42	54	18	124,380	674	1,010
Nepal	13,000,000	17	764,706	16	14	14			1	1,317	7	
Pakistan	72,850,000	197	369,797	184	2	181	11	30	6	53,543	186	441
Saudi Arabia	7,200,000	28	257,143	20	300	5				1,183	6	53
Syria	6,895,000	169	40,799	153	-10*	170	2	7	6	21,202	73	335
Thailand	44,272,693	736	60,153	720		723	33	114	26	193,149	581	1,621
United Arab Emirates	210,000	33	6,364	12	-43*	21				517	2	10

EUROPE

Andorra	28,737	81	355	66	-6*	70	3	1	6,220	29	129	
Austria	7,511,000	12,730	590	12,504	1	12,349	530	562	215	1,888,866	6,000	22,612
Belgium	9,772,413	18,588	526	17,706	-3*	18,180	813	663	280	2,509,062	6,394	37,328
Denmark	5,105,423	13,689	373	13,081	-3*	13,426	262	588	234	1,599,269	3,752	22,148
Finland	4,743,100	12,728	373	12,480	-1*	12,592	438	737	251	1,714,560	5,146	20,986

Country	Population	1978 Peak Pubs.	Ratio, One Publisher to:	1978 Av. Pubs.	% Inc. over 1977	1977 Av. Pubs.	1978 No. Bptzd.	Avg. Pbs.	No. of Congs.	Total Hours	Avg. Bible Studies	Memorial Attendance
France	53,223,000	66,778	797	64,167	-1*	64,546	3,474	2,158	1,188	8,961,433	32,398	131,053
Germany, F. R.	59,660,000	99,632	599	96,738	-1*	97,760	2,748	2,898	1,412	12,057,576	31,338	163,114
Gibraltar	29,278	87	337	82	1	81	2	5	1	11,424	24	123
Greece	9,000,000	18,738	480	18,620		18,712	382	744	450	2,585,537	6,141	31,815
Italy	56,324,727	71,796	785	69,252	8	63,896	5,429	3,995	1,270	12,272,071	45,628	151,413
Liechtenstein	24,715	28	883	23	21	19	2	1		3,385	14	57
Luxembourg	423,500	861	492	838	5	799	50	56	19	146,351	527	1,868
Netherlands	13,935,964	27,332	510	26,545	-4*	27,776	686	1,488	290	3,964,594	8,410	45,801
Norway	4,064,000	7,014	579	6,808	-2*	6,982	106	183	198	703,649	1,841	12,206
Portugal	9,137,000	19,976	457	19,281	3	18,708	1,735	750	368	2,586,827	14,943	49,135
San Marino	19,621	69	284	64	12	57	1	4	1	10,761	34	119
Spain	35,588,939	38,983	913	37,380	3	36,242	2,657	2,589	704	6,922,694	25,665	80,555
Sweden	8,277,665	16,568	500	16,277		16,212	515	1,013	305	2,339,370	7,240	27,307
Switzerland	6,292,000	10,118	622	9,858		9,873	338	288	224	1,295,854	5,729	19,326
Turkey	42,000,000	839	50,060	822	-1*	832	19	37	11	137,386	464	1,407
West Berlin	1,985,000	5,174	384	5,095	-2*	5,196	76	150	63	626,857	1,622	7,565
ISLANDS OF THE SEA												
American Samoa	30,000	73	411	64	3	62	4	8	1	13,967	60	170
Anguilla	6,524	13	502	11	-8*	12	2	1		2,951	10	16
Antigua	70,794	187	379	171	-10*	189	38	12	4	29,074	128	458
Aruba	62,577	311	201	292	-12*	332	12	6	5	37,137	184	875
Australia	14,212,900	28,635	496	27,864	-1*	28,078	1,365	1,551	530	4,441,012	11,082	57,960
Azores	264,400	294	899	275	8	254	15	26	12	55,426	260	745
Bahamas	215,000	473	455	428	-8*	463	30	17	9	61,591	379	1,368
Bahrain	216,000	6	36,000	3	50	2				125	1	
Barbados	254,000	1,238	205	1,141	-6*	1,220	66	35	16	128,535	593	2,667
Bermuda	60,000	210	286	202	-4*	210	1	11	4	34,291	150	432
Bonaire	8,460	30	282	26	-10*	29	1	4	1	7,637	35	110
British Isles	54,504,300	76,242	715	73,859	-2*	75,136	2,944	3,526	1,125	10,184,446	31,734	150,715
Canary Islands	1,519,794	1,258	1,208	1,174	1	1,163	44	90	31	217,118	756	2,945
Cape Verde Rep.	350,000	96	3,646	90	32	68	30	16	4	33,757	220	237
Cayman Islands	15,600	29	538	24	41	17	2	1		4,208	29	102
Cook Islands	18,068	54	335	49	-4*	51	4	5	2	9,057	37	171
Curaçao	158,882	755	210	717	4	691	40	49	8	142,215	902	1,857
Cyprus	500,000	905	552	864	4	830	14	44	13	116,024	288	1,462
Dominica	70,302	191	368	176	-6*	188	1	19	8	38,509	101	467
Dominican Rep.	4,977,701	6,444	772	6,129	-3*	6,324	291	475	112	1,181,239	7,268	19,912
Faroe Islands	41,806	71	589	64	-4*	67	14	4		15,217	32	109
Fiji	588,068	634	928	610	3	590	24	73	24	135,805	618	2,124
Gilbert Islands	54,500	5	10,900	2		2			1		5	50
Greenland	49,148	76	647	64	-16*	76	1	17	8	16,018	36	114
Grenada	109,000	305	357	282	-8*	305	12	24	7	51,748	225	832
Guadeloupe	324,000	2,619	124	2,537		2,535	133	55	36	322,628	1,827	5,805
Guam	98,580	146	675	115	13	102	6	20	1	27,524	96	355
Haiti	5,000,000	3,368	1,485	3,199	-6*	3,407	212	218	73	605,036	3,867	10,777
Hawaii	851,824	4,613	185	4,458	-4*	4,653	185	602	59	989,978	3,917	11,191
Iceland	222,470	133	1,673	125	-13*	144	4	10	3	21,276	75	317
Ireland	4,580,000	1,784	2,567	1,738		1,745	77	285	67	489,282	764	3,296
Jamaica	2,109,400	6,520	324	6,240	-1*	6,277	191	226	165	844,957	4,437	15,024
Japan	113,361,230	45,314	2,502	43,776	9	40,176	4,715	10,666	1,018	15,910,201	59,363	101,941
Kosrae	3,989	22	181	19	6	18	4	1		5,059	35	89
Madagascar	9,000,000	878	10,251	829	2	811	77	45	29	141,321	1,055	3,441
Madeira	262,800	326	806	313	8	289	15	19	8	53,803	272	747
Malta	320,000	86	3,721	79	5	75	5	6	1	13,261	55	285

Malvinas Islands	2,089	6	348	4	33	3	2	1	336	8	15	
Marquesas Islands	5,419	4	1,355	3	50	2	3	1	2,081	1	8	
Marshall Islands	25,044	168	149	148	-14*	173	3	3	35,163	197	596	
Martinique	330,000	1,073	308	1,049	4	1,048	59	23	145,728	796	2,644	
Mauritius	894,100	380	2,353	367	4	353	11	19	59,315	280	929	
Mayotte	32,607	1	32,607	1	-50*	2	1	1	66	1	1	
Montserrat	12,335	23	536	21	11	19	1	2	3,512	26	87	
Nevis	11,230	52	216	31	-30*	44	1	2	5,764	13	86	
New Caledonia	138,000	402	343	372	1	370	17	12	48,562	279	958	
Newfoundland	530,000	1,098	483	1,052	-3*	1,086	15	92	182,186	413	1,980	
New Hebrides	103,954	49	2,122	45	-6*	48	2	5	9,232	61	114	
New Zealand	3,107,000	6,844	454	6,520	-1*	6,606	252	349	945,050	3,010	14,315	
Niue	3,881	14	277	11	-21*	14	1	1	1,061	12	101	
Okinawa	1,229,950	885	1,390	859	859	34	147	21	263,948	984	1,952	
Palau	12,674	30	422	29	-3*	30	3	10	16,677	116	118	
Papua New Guinea	2,811,537	1,404	2,003	1,365	-2*	1,396	73	113	82	257,645	1,165	
Philippines	45,000,000	64,986	692	60,676	-7*	65,381	2,279	5,815	2,008	9,716,980	24,461	
Ponape	19,262	73	264	67	-13*	77	2	9	16,306	46	213	
Puerto Rico	3,319,200	16,381	203	15,853	-3*	16,402	817	501	229	2,344,499	10,114	
Réunion	488,300	532	918	510	1	503	35	21	10	80,184	348	
Rodrigues	27,600	11	2,509	10	-23*	13	1	1	804	3	42	
St. Eustatius	1,335	6	223	5	67	3	1	2	4,746	15	27	
St. Helena	5,058	94	54	89	-3*	92	3	1	8,356	33	178	
St. Kitts	35,135	144	244	115	-14*	133	2	8	19,384	100	309	
St. Lucia	107,000	267	401	240	-11*	271	6	14	34,884	209	679	
St. Martin	10,423	59	177	48	-6*	51	3	3	7,157	44	144	
St. Pierre & Miquelon	6,200	5	1,240	5	67	3	1	2	2,110	4	12	
St. Vincent	105,000	153	686	136	-11*	152	6	13	27,392	80	320	
Saipan	14,335	17	843	16	-20*	20	5	1	7,779	30	34	
São Tomé	72,480	5	14,496	4	100	2	1	1	316	5	18	
Seychelles	63,000	49	1,286	39	-15*	46	2	3	7,154	34	118	
Solomon Islands	210,000	547	384	487	-7*	524	9	73	118,175	443	2,092	
Sri Lanka	14,200,000	564	25,177	547	2	535	57	89	160,494	562	1,622	
Tahiti	131,963	460	287	437	8	404	19	35	73,114	372	1,084	
Taiwan	16,800,000	1,044	16,092	962	-3*	987	42	127	48	212,391	671	2,442
Tokelau Isls.	1,600	6	267	4	-20*	5	3	1	269	12	19	
Tonga	90,128	23	3,919	20	-5*	21	3	1	4,155	18	49	
Trinidad	1,098,200	3,020	364	2,875	-1*	2,915	148	203	481,979	2,426	7,278	
Truk	31,600	39	810	36	6	34	1	8	14,978	60	188	
Turks & Caicos Isls.	6,000	19	316	17	6	16	2	1	5,126	32	86	
Tuvalu Isls.	10,000	3	3,333	2	-33*	3	1	1	450	5	21	
Virgin Is. (Brit.)	11,000	80	138	75	6	71	1	2	7,934	50	235	
Virgin Is. (U.S.)	80,000	467	171	450	-1*	453	20	14	56,475	304	1,316	
Western Samoa	151,983	139	1,093	127	-3*	131	4	20	36,757	148	404	
Yap	7,869	43	183	40	8	37	2	10	17,088	94	203	
189 Countries	1,963,671		1,881,625	-1.5*	1,910,129	88,361	111,902	38,281	290,208,128	1,161,941	4,765,033	

OTHER COUNTRIES

† 16 Other Countries	218,670	205,073	-1.0*	207,065	6,691	3,487	3,974	17,064,134	95,143	330,798
GRAND TOTAL (205 countries)	2,182,341	2,086,698	-1.4*	2,117,194	95,052	115,389	42,255	307,272,262	1,257,084	5,095,831

* Percentage of decrease

† Work banned and reports are incomplete

MEMORIAL PARTAKERS WORLD WIDE: 9,762

(1 Pet. 1:5-7) Jehovah's Witnesses of modern times continue to be "grieved by various trials." These tests come due to issues involving neutrality, nationalism, idolatrous ceremonies, or through opposition of unbelieving family members, fellow workers or students, and others. How wonderfully have many endured these tests! They have been "safeguarded by God's power" as they press on in the assurance of a happy outcome and reward.

⁴ The Lord Jesus Christ assured anointed Christians at Smyrna: "Do not be afraid of the things you are about to suffer. Look! The Devil will keep on throwing some of you into prison that you may be fully put to the test, and that you may have tribulation ten days. Prove yourself faithful even to death, and I will give you the crown of life." (Rev. 2:10) Likewise, integrity-keepers among the "great crowd" may look forward to a "crown" of everlasting life in a paradise earth.—Jas. 1:12.

⁵ Though the Devil, in his opposition to God's kingdom, may take on the frightful likeness of "a roaring lion," we need not fear him, if we keep our senses and are watchful. We are not alone in our fight with persecutions. We are invited to throw all our anxiety on Jehovah—"because he cares for us." "Take your stand against [the Devil], solid in the faith, knowing that the same things in the way of sufferings are being accomplished in the entire association of your brothers in the world."—1 Pet. 5:7-9.

"SOLID IN THE FAITH"

⁶ How well do these words describe our integrity-keeping brothers around the earth! The 'tested quality of their faith'

4. What encouragement do we have 'not to be afraid'?
5. What assurance may we have in taking our stand against the Devil?

6, 7. (a) How does the course of our brothers in southern Africa show that they are following the fine advice of 1 Thessalonians 5:8, 11? (b) How has Jeremiah's prophecy been fulfilled toward our brothers?

has taken on a brilliant luster as they fight back with their weapons of spiritual warfare against the trials and sufferings with which the Devil assaults them. Reports from around the earth indicate that the Devil is intensifying his opposition. Flames of persecution and violence continue to spread in Africa, from the south of which continent one country reports:

"Many were the problems our brothers had to face. Some were beaten, with at least five killed during the year. Kingdom Halls were burned down and publishers scattered, resulting in the closing down of some congregations. A few had their literature burned, while others had to flee for their lives. House-to-house work is no longer possible in some areas, although the brothers are faithfully sharing the 'good news' with others in any way they can. In spite of these conditions Jehovah's people remain steadfast in their faith and continue to give comfort to others who are distressed by world conditions. Faithful Witnesses have found ways and means of meeting together and sharing the 'good news' with others. One special pioneer wrote, 'Although the people are using the slogan, "Down with churches and forward with the war," our brothers are showing good faith in Jehovah.'"

⁷ As a new government was preparing to take over this country, efforts were already being made to force the brothers to buy political party cards. But the report concluded on this confident note: "The faith and endurance of our brothers proves beyond a shadow of doubt the truthfulness of our text for the year [1978], 'They will not prevail against you, for 'I am with you,' is the utterance of Jehovah, 'to deliver you.'" —Jer. 1:19."

⁸ From Mozambique comes the report that about 12,000 of our brothers from Malawi are confined in camps at the town of Milange, near the eastern border of Malawi, and that from 3,000 to 5,000 of our Mozambican brothers are also restrict-

8. (a) What situation exists near the border of Malawi, but what have loving "shepherds" done about it?
(b) How have these been like the apostles in 'bearing up' when persecuted? (1 Cor. 4:9, 11-13)

ed in camps in that area. As loving shepherds, traveling overseers have maintained their upbuilding visits to the congregations. (1 Pet. 5:2, 3) But some of these have been arrested, due in part to traitorous action by disfellowshiped apostates and rebellious children of Witnesses, who have been only too willing to reveal responsible brothers to the Frelimo. Says the report:

"Two circuit overseers were arrested and sent to 're-education centres' in an effort to brainwash them with Communist doctrine. One of these has recently been released but the other, who has been in detention for a much longer time, managed to send the following report about his experiences:

"We were tied with our arms extended horizontally on a stake so that we looked like a cross. Nylon rope or cord was used to tie our arms tightly from the tips of our fingers of one hand to the tips of the fingers of the other, passing also around our bodies. All of this to try to force us to violate the laws of Jehovah. The result was that I and two brothers were left with our arms almost paralyzed, swelling up to the tips of our fingers. When they untied me, my arms were swollen so much that I could hold nothing. It is only now, after 15 days, that I am able to hold a pen."

⁹ After reporting on the brothers' increasing difficulties, the circuit overseer concludes his report with the words: "Please, you must not forget us in your prayers." So let us remember these faithful brothers, '*exerting ourselves* in prayers to God' on their behalf, fully confident that the great "Hearer of prayer" will keep them in his love and relieve their burden in his own good time and way.—Rom. 15:30-32; Ps. 65:2.

¹⁰ A country in the heart of Africa sends this report:

"Despite the ban, Jehovah has richly blessed us during the past year. In one

small town, a group of 41 brothers, sisters and little ones were arrested while meeting in a private home. The sisters and little ones were soon released, but the 25 brothers were sentenced to prison terms of from two to six months, for practicing a banned religion. The exemplary conduct of the brothers while out on prison work crews gave all the local people a fine witness on how Bible truths should affect daily lives. The brothers often received special privileges, due to their trustworthy behavior; and different authorities, including the town mayor, commented favorably on their conduct.

"For most of these two months, the brothers in prison had absolutely no Bible literature, but still they continued giving 'mutual encouragement.' In each of the three different cells where they were located, a different brother would be assigned to think up a Bible text for each day. Then, led by the elder or ministerial servant in the group, every brother would give a comment on that day's text. Also, while out on work crews, the brothers had many opportunities to sing Kingdom songs, because prison work crews in this country often sing while working. The district overseer, the only one of the 25 brothers sentenced to six months' imprisonment, later explained how very helpful it is to know many different Bible verses and Kingdom songs in advance of such a test of one's faith."

¹¹ This country under ban reports that there was a decrease in the number of Kingdom publishers reporting but an increase in the quality of their service. The report continues:

"One thing has become very evident: Those with good spiritual habits and a deep appreciation of the truth have no problem in holding firm when tests arrive, but those who in 'favorable season' miss meetings, are irregular in field service and compromise on small issues often fall under a 'fiery' test. Since the ban the quality of studies being conducted has greatly improved and many are making rapid progress.

"Six young members of one family

9. How may we support our persecuted brothers, and with what assurance? (1 Pet. 5:10, 11)
10. (a) How have our brothers in the heart of Africa provided a living demonstration of Philippians 1:27-29?
(b) Why is it important to look ahead in following such advice as found at Joshua 1:8?

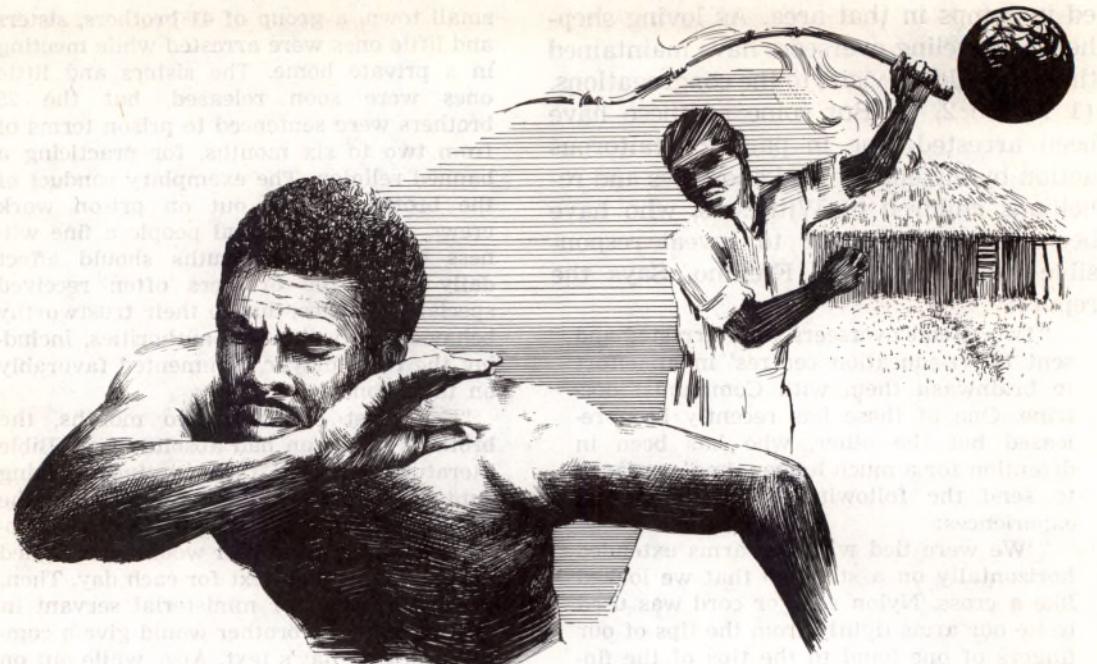
11, 12. (a) How has practical application of Hebrews 10:24, 25 been of great benefit in meeting trials of faith?
(b) How does Psalm 1 apply with regard to our persecuted brothers?

several months ago to quote a few items gotten from our brothers now who still have their families and are serving a life sentence because they never failed to return nothing of the wages they received to publishers and authors who start out to publish writings and show how big the job is. They don't expect to get paid for it. They do it for the pleasure of helping others and getting the word out. They do it for the pleasure of helping others and getting the word out.

started to study after the ban and showed no fear, standing firm despite strong family opposition. From the beginning they attended all meetings and this resulted in rapid progress. Three are now baptized and another is preparing for baptism. Two others are arranging their marriages with baptism in view as well. Their confidence in Jehovah and diligence in personal study have been an example to others in the congregation."

¹² These faithful ones under ban continue to be richly blessed as they make the "law of Jehovah" their delight. This is borne out by a letter from imprisoned Witnesses in still another African country where Jehovah's work is banned:

"The torture here is constant. Nine brothers were removed from our group, being placed in another cell for five days of continual punishment. Some are awakened at night and beaten; and day after day it is as if the punishment is intensified. We receive one meal a day, if they remember to bring it. Many difficulties are encountered; but they are also overcome. We



manage to have our meetings. . . . Great care is used. . . . This is all today from the 75 brothers that greet you."

No matter how hard the persecutions, these precious ones can draw comfort from the psalmist's words: "Jehovah is taking knowledge of the way of righteous ones, but the very way of wicked ones will perish."—Ps. 1:1-6.

¹³ From northeast Africa come reports of arrests in three different countries. In one of these, 5 percent of the brothers and sisters spent time in prison, and some are still there. A number have been tortured and three were killed; two others were reported as under sentence of death. Watch Tower missionaries were asked to leave the Seychelles Islands. In all this wide area, the vast majority of the brothers and sisters have remained faithful and are determined to make Jehovah their refuge as tests continue. (Ps. 34:7, 8; 84:

13. In line with others of the Psalms, what determination have our brothers shown in northeast Africa?

11, 12; 94:17-23) Some are able to continue their activity in full-time preaching work, and all of them say that they appreciate the prayers offered on their behalf by the worldwide association of brothers.

¹⁴ Let us turn our attention now to a country in another continent where the brothers are displaying marvelous loyalty under ban. A recent report states:

"That our brothers will not stop telling the good news of the Kingdom can be appreciated by the increase this year. We have reached almost the all-time peak of before the ban. Many are the new ones coming into the organization, 1,788 new people being baptized [in just two years] since the ban. There are congregations that have reported more than a 100% increase in this time. The brothers are not deterred because of arrest.

"When the ban came on the work [one] congregation had 17 publishers, now they are reporting 48. Ten people were baptized this year; there were 11 publishers who took up the auxiliary pioneer work, including the only two elders in the congregation. Four of the brothers were arrested and held in separate cells for 14 days, but this has not affected their fine activity and zeal for Jehovah's service. The spirit of these brothers and many others in the country reminds us of Paul's zeal for the 'good news.'—2 Cor. 4:7, 16-18."

And does it not remind us, also, of the activity and zeal of the newly established Christian congregation, as described at Acts chapters 4 through 8?

¹⁵ Similar reports come from many other lands around the earth where Jehovah's Witnesses are bearing up under restrictions and proscriptions. How should we react to such reports? For one thing, they are a clear evidence that "the final part of the days" is now on us, that we are living in the most urgent of times and must gird ourselves to "stand firm" under

14. (a) What marvelous report comes from another country under ban? (b) Of what Scriptural examples does the faith of these brothers remind us? (Acts 4:18, 19; 5:28, 29; 8:1b, 4)

15. (a) How should we react to these reports? (b) What part does prayer play in this?

trials of faith. (Isa. 2:2; Eph. 6:14) And just as we pray fervently that Jehovah will watch over our brothers who are even now undergoing persecutions, we should pray that our heavenly Father will deliver us ourselves, our families and our congregations—yes, and all the new ones who are even now coming to a knowledge of the truth—from every device of "the wicked one."—1 Thess. 1:2; Matt. 6:13.

¹⁶ Jehovah, the great Hearer of prayer, has strengthened our brothers in eastern Europe, in the Orient, in Africa and in Latin America to gain the conquest over the tide of bitter persecution that continues to advance in so many parts of the world. The 'tested quality of their faith has worked out endurance' in them, and as integrity-keepers they have proved the Devil to be a liar. (Compare Job 1:9-12; 2:9, 10; 27:5; James 5:10, 11.) But there is a different kind of tide—a more subtle one—creeping through other parts of the earth, and especially in the more prosperous lands. It is a worldly tide, with its emphasis on material gain, on pleasure and recreation, on immorality and on 'doing your own thing.' Sad to say, this Satanic tide appears to have engulfed more of God's people than has outright persecution!

¹⁷ We must keep awake to the urgency of these "critical times," to the fact that we are indeed living through the "last days" of this wicked system. (2 Tim. 3: 1-5, 13) As you read these very words, hundreds of your Christian brothers around the earth are suffering imprisonment. Their only recreation, if any, is a walk in a bleak prison yard, with perhaps a brief opportunity to speak a word about God's kingdom. What an incentive to us who have greater freedom to use much of our

16. (a) How has integrity been involved in gaining victory by faith? (b) What other tide threatens to engulf God's people? (Compare Luke 8:14.)

17. (a) To what urgency must we keep awake, and why? (Compare Matthew 24:36-39.) (b) How may we follow the example of our imprisoned brothers as to the wise use of recreation time? (Eph. 5:15, 16)

recreation time in doing what they would love to be doing—freely proclaiming “this good news of the kingdom” to others! Surely those of us who live in affluent countries would never want to let the world “soften” us to the point of habitually spending weekends on pleasures, away from our congregation and God’s service! Not without point does the account of Jesus’ great prophecy on the end of the system of things conclude with a warning against—not the dangers from persecutions, but—the dangers to those whose hearts become “weighed down” through worldly indulgences.—Luke 21:34-36.

¹⁸ Remember, “Jehovah’s day is coming exactly as a thief in the night. Whenever it is that they are saying: ‘Peace and security!’ then sudden destruction is to be instantly upon them.” (1 Thess. 5:2, 3) Obviously, the worldly nations are rapidly approaching that situation. Also, as persecutions envelop more and more of Jehovah’s people throughout the earth, we are compelled to ask the question that the Master once asked: “Shall not God cause

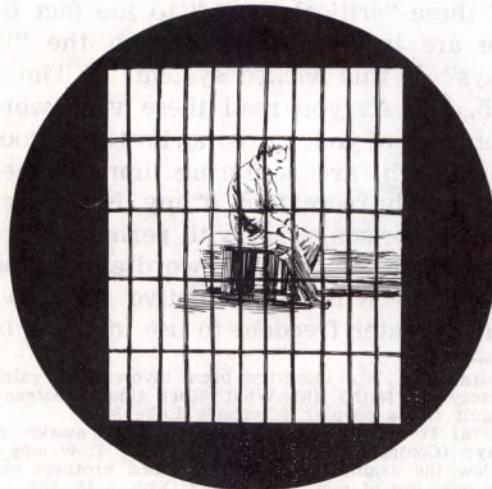
justice to be done for his chosen ones who cry out to him day and night?” Jesus gave the answer: “I tell you, He will cause justice to be done to them speedily.” Do you have faith that this will be so? You should, for it is in this context that Jesus says: “When the Son of man arrives, will he really find the faith on the earth?” —Luke 18:7, 8.

¹⁹ Let us then be determined to stand firm in this faith, yes, resolved to keep “standing firm in one spirit, with one soul striving side by side for the faith of the good news, and in no respect being frightened” by our opponents. (Phil. 1:27, 28) Knowing that we have Jehovah on our side, backing us up, we can say with the apostle Paul: “If God is for us, who will be against us?” We can be determined that nothing—be it a tide of persecution or a tide of materialism—will be able “to separate us from God’s love that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Because of such unflinching faith, and activity based on that faith, may we all come off “completely victorious through him that loved us.”—Rom. 8:31-39.

18. (a) What situation do we appear to be rapidly approaching? (2 Thess. 1:6-8) (b) With what assurance may we answer Jesus’ question at Luke 18:8?

19. (a) What should be our determination in face of opposition? (b) Our showing unflinching faith will bring what result?

Neither persecutions nor a materialistic world can engulf the victorious faith of God’s witnesses



INSIGHT ON THE NEWS

- In recent years, many psychiatrists have taught that the best way to handle a disagreeable situation is to vent your anger. Some recommended shouting, screaming or even throwing things.

Mild Answer Best

ings. As a Denver "Post" article by Barbara Varro stated: "We were always told that venting hostility, instead of repressing it, is a way to prevent bad things like ulcers and heart attacks."

However, the Creator, Jehovah God, who made humans and knows best how they should act for the greatest benefit to themselves and others, long ago stated: "An answer, when mild, turns away rage, but a word causing pain makes anger to come up." (Prov. 15:1) Thus, God's Word recommended "self-control," noting that "a calm heart is the life of the fleshly organism."—Gal. 5:23; Prov. 14:30.

Now Dr. Milton Layden of Johns Hopkins University Medical School acknowledges that expressing hostile feelings is counter-productive, because "hostility is contagious and it comes back to us." It only 'puts fuel on the fire,' making matters worse. He states: "Remember that hostility gets you nowhere. Humility can get you anywhere." Thus, the "Post" article concludes: "Don't scream. Don't shout. Don't punch someone, or something, to vent your hostility. . . . You have to relax and not react with anger."

- The practice of psychiatry has come under sharp criticism in recent times. Regarding its effectiveness, "U.S. News & World Report" states:

Psychiatry Challenged

"Results are sometimes questionable. Many patients report emerging from months of treatment no better, and sometimes worse, than before. Others claim some psychiatrists offer little more than ordinary advice and comfort available free from friends."

The magazine adds: "Society as a whole may have suffered from some psychiatric practices. There is a widespread feeling, rightly

or wrongly, that the anxieties of modern America have been increased by psychiatric advice that often encourages an individual to 'do his own thing' even if it breaks up families and causes other disruptions."

A basic problem with psychiatry is that there is no standard of truth or treatment. Opinions vary from psychiatrist to psychiatrist, so that one may give advice that is just the opposite from that given by another.

Where can the best mental health counsel be found, counsel that is truthful, that has stood the test of time, and is consistent with the way in which we are created mentally and physically? In the Bible, God's inspired guide for mankind. "Your word is a lamp to my foot, and a light to my roadway," said the psalmist. (Ps. 119:105) Yes, "the fear of Jehovah is the start of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Most Holy One is what understanding is."—Prov. 9:10.

Hence, "the one listening to me," says God, "will reside in security and be undisturbed from dread of calamity."—Prov. 1:33.

- Scripps-Howard religious writer George R. Plagenz states that the clergy in mainline churches are leading their flocks astray. He observes:

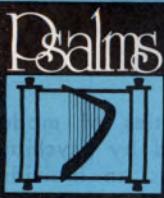
'Dishonesty Gap'

"Churchgoers are being victimized by many mainline churches in what could be called the biggest confidence [fraudulent] game in the country. Poor sermons and dull worship services are only part of the swindle. Much more serious is the honesty gap."

As an example, Plagenz states: "The pastor who doesn't believe in the [Bible's] miracles may still preach about them. . . . he says to himself, why borrow trouble by announcing he doesn't take them literally?"

Why such clergy disbelief in the Word of God? He states: "Because most ministers learn theology from disbelieving scholars."

In his day, Jesus said of such religious teachers: "Blind guides is what they are. If, then, a blind man guides a blind man, both will fall into a pit." (Matt. 15:14) He showed that they originated, not with God, but with "the father of the lie," Satan the Devil. —John 8:44.



To Be Happy, Watch Your Associations



A PERSON'S companions can influence him either for good or for bad. Often people admit that, because of friends, they started using drugs and tobacco or became involved in an immoral way of life. By making a determined effort to break off unwholesome associations and, instead, seeking companionship with principled persons, others have succeeded in conquering harmful habits.

Truly, then, if you desire genuine happiness and security, you have to avoid associating with persons who have no love for what is right. This point is forcefully made in the Bible. In the book of Psalms, for example, we read: "Happy is the man that has not walked in the counsel of the wicked ones, and in the way of sinners has not stood, and in the seat of ridiculers has not sat."—Ps. 1:1.

Happiness simply cannot be obtained by those who ignore God's ways. As a loving Father, the Most High has given only such laws as promote the welfare of his intelligent creatures. Hence, the happy person is the one who refuses to adopt the advice or "counsel" of the ungodly as a guide for living. Since he firmly rejects their thinking, he is certainly not going to be 'standing in the way of sinners.' This means that he is not going to be found where they are; he does not want their companionship. Therefore, he does not step down to the level of being in their circle, sitting with them and ridiculing godliness.

Of course, the happiness of the righteous man is not to be found just in a life of negatives. No, he finds real pleasure in upbuilding things, filling his mind and heart with what is wholesome. The first psalm continues: "His

delight is in the law of Jehovah, and in his law he reads in an undertone day and night." (Ps. 1:2) The real pleasure of the righteous person results from his fulfilling a genuine desire to know the law of Jehovah and in applying it. (Compare James 1:25.) Not a day passes without his giving consideration to spiritual matters.

Like all other humans, righteous persons experience trials, but they are able to endure these successfully just as a sound tree withstands comparatively strong winds. The psalmist appropriately compared the godly man to a strong tree in a well-watered location, saying: "He will certainly become like a tree planted by streams of water, that gives its own fruit in its season and the foliage of which does not wither, and everything he does will succeed." (Ps. 1:3) A tree planted by an unfailing source of water will not dry up during a time of drought or in the summer heat, but it will bear fruit. Likewise, the strength of righteous persons comes from an unfailing source, namely, Jehovah God. With the help of God's spirit, they are able to bear up under the pressure of trials and difficulties. In the end, they succeed in everything, because their main objective is to remain approved servants of the Almighty. The heat of opposition does not move them away from their resolve. They come off victorious as persons approved by Jehovah God.

How different it is with the wicked ones! They may appear to prosper for a time, but they have no abiding security. The psalmist continues: "The wicked are not like that, but are like the chaff that the wind drives away. That is why the wicked ones will not stand up in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of

righteous ones. For Jehovah is taking knowledge of the way of righteous ones, but the very way of wicked ones will perish."—Ps. 1:4-6.

Accordingly, the wicked ones have no more security than does chaff during the winnowing process. The chaff is blown away while the heavier kernels of grain drop to the ground. Similarly, the righteous remain but the wicked are blown away like worthless chaff. When coming under judgment, the wicked will simply not stand as approved but will be condemned. They will have no place among the righteous. Reputed sinners will not succeed in any pretense of being in the assembly of righteous ones.

The reason that the wicked will not stand as

approved before Jehovah God and will not be numbered with upright persons is that the Almighty knows the "way of righteous ones." Yes, he gives recognition to their course of life as being approved and rewards them accordingly. The way of righteous persons, therefore, remains for all time but that of the wicked ones perishes. Since the wicked perish, their way or course of life ends with them.

Truly, the first psalm provides warm encouragement for us to find delight in the law of God while we avoid intimacy with those who have no real love for the Most High. This course will result in our being happy, not for just a few years, but everlasting as loyal servants of Jehovah God.

An Approved Standing Before Jehovah

The fact that at one time a person may have been a recipient of divine favor does not in itself guarantee his continuing to be an approved servant of Jehovah. The Israelites, for example, were delivered from bondage in Egypt and brought into the land of Canaan. Nevertheless, their becoming God's chosen people did not secure for them an unchangeable relationship with the Most High. When they turned to idolatry and in other ways disregarded Jehovah's law, their having been chosen by Jehovah for the sake of their faithful forefathers lost its significance. Through his prophet Amos, the Almighty declared: "'Are you not like the sons of the Cushites to me, O sons of Israel?' is the utterance of Jehovah. 'Did I not bring Israel itself up out of the land of Egypt, and the Philistines out of Crete, and Syria out of Kir?'"—Amos 9:7.

The Israelites may have prided themselves in having been chosen by God. But because of their unfaithfulness, they had no better standing with Jehovah than did the Cushites. Their circumcision really had no value. Centuries later the apostle Paul highlighted the same point, saying: "Circumcision is, in fact, of benefit only if you practice law; but if you are a transgressor of law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision."—Rom. 2:25.

Similarly, Israel's having been brought out of Egypt did not in itself assure their continuing to have a fine standing before Jehovah God. In the case of the unfaithful Israelites, the marvelous deliverance of their forefathers from Egypt was no more a guarantee of continued divine favor than was the fact that the Philistines and Syrians were living in areas other than their earlier dwelling places.

This forcefully emphasizes that an approved standing before God does not depend on national, tribal or family background. A mere profession of being a servant of the Most High means little. The individual must be one who does the will of Jehovah God.

QUESTIONS from READERS

- Is it true that for religious reasons Jehovah's Witnesses may not become members of the YMCA (Young Men's Christian Association)?

Yes, that is so. We have long recognized that the YMCA, though not being a church as such, is definitely aligned with the religious organizations of Christendom in efforts to promote interfaith.

In September 1885 the *Watch Tower* took this position:

"Alas for the Bible-rearing practiced in the Y. M. C. Associations! They are completely under the control of the sectarians, by whom they are supported. Though professedly non-sectarian, professedly controlled by no creed but the Bible, they are more creed-bound than others, since they are bound by *all the popular creeds*."—P. 6.

Later the underlying religious purpose and interfaith efforts of the YMCA were mentioned in the September 1964 issue of *Kingdom Ministry*, used by Jehovah's Witnesses in one of their meetings.

Many persons think of the "Y" simply as a social organization that offers various services, such as a swimming pool, facilities for athletic training and a place for clubs to meet. Commendable as some of these provisions may be, it is important to bear in mind that the YMCA was founded with a distinctly religious basis. This was set out at a World Alliance in Paris in 1855. The main part of that official statement (called the Paris Basis) reads:

"The Young Men's Christian Associations seek to unite those young men, who, *regarding Jesus Christ as their God and Saviour*, according to the Holy Scriptures, desire to be His disciples in their faith and in their life, and to associate their efforts for the extension of His Kingdom amongst young men." (Italics added)

While in some countries churches may not be the YMCA's main source of revenue and while membership is open to persons of all races, nationalities and religions, the fundamental religious objectives of the "Y" cannot be ignored.

'But,' some may sincerely wonder, 'is religion or interfaith *really* an aspect of the YMCA?' The answer must be "Yes." Though religious features may be de-emphasized in some branches of the YMCA, all local "Ys" are still expected to comply with the Paris Basis. Further, note comments from the 1975 YMCA publication *Christian and Open*:

Anza A. Lema, associate of the executive committee of the World Alliance of YMCAs, wrote:

"From its very foundation, it has always looked to the Bible for inspiration and guidance. In many ways its role in the world has tended to complement that of the church without claiming to be a congregation itself. . . .

"But it is more than just an instrument through which Christians put their moral ideals and teachings into practice as they serve society. Most supporters of the YMCA look at it as a place where real fellowship with one another through Jesus Christ is experienced. . . .

"In humbling itself and trying to relate its structures and services more directly to the community, it will be carrying out more effectively its role of service and priesthood for its neighbours. . . ."

Matthias Dannenmann, general secretary, National Council of YMCAs of Germany, said:

"From its very beginning the YMCA was no doubt meant to have only Christians as members and on the other hand there was the missionary obligation towards those members who could not yet profess Jesus Christ. . . .

"The YMCA is a big offer, but only in as far as Jesus Christ is working in it as Living Saviour. We should do our very best not to drive out this Lord but as we carry him in our name we should personally use every chance of meeting him in the YMCA and of continuously extending this possibility to other people."

Officials of the organization have pointed out that they feel that more attention needs to be given to the religious orientation of the YMCA. Dr. Paul M. Limbert, from 1952-1962 secretary-general of the YMCA's World Alliance in Geneva, Switzerland, wrote:

"It may readily be granted that too few Y.M.C.A.s take full advantage of the opportunity for ecumenical education inherent in these informal contacts among Christians. . . .

"When questions about different forms and beliefs arise among young people and adults, the wise leader takes advantage of the occasion to guide discussion from superficial argument to deeper dialogue. . . .

Leaders in both churches and Y.M.C.A.s need to recognize more clearly the essential nature of a lay ecumenical Christian movement. A Young Men's Christian Association is not a church nor

a substitute for a church. . . . Yet the Faith and Order commission of the British Council of Churches declared in a carefully worded statement in 1959 that the Christian Associations are 'valuable auxiliaries' of the churches, organs of their own missionary activity."—*The Christian Century*, June 10, 1964.

And *The Christian Century* of August 29, 1969, in its article "Happy Birthday, Y.M.C.A.!", stated:

"Realizing that the *Christian* identity of the 'Y' has often been drowned in swimming pools, its leaders are engaged in recovery of theological awareness and ecumenical vigor. . . . It may be that the greatest challenge to the Y.M.C.A. is to reclaim its religious heritage for the robust assertion of a new ecumenism among laymen in local communities. The Y.M.C.A. just might be able to do things for the Christian churches which, in their parochial rigidities, they seem unable to do for themselves."

Consequently, there is ample evidence that the YMCA originated with religious objectives and continues to have such to this day.

In joining the YMCA as a member a person accepts or endorses the general objectives and principles of the organization. He is not simply paying for something he receives, such as when buying things being sold to the public at a store. (Compare 1 Corinthians 8:10; 10:25.) Nor is his membership merely an entry pass, as when a person buys a theater ticket. Membership means that one has become an integral part of this organization founded with definite religious objectives, including the promotion of interfaith. Hence, for one of Jehovah's Witnesses to become a member of such a so-called "Christian" association would amount to apostasy.

Some individuals have on occasion not become members but have paid a onetime admission fee, viewing this as simply paying for a commercial service available. Even in this regard it is wise to consider whether this course will adversely affect the consciences of others.—1 Cor. 8:11-13.

Jehovah's Witnesses, of course, appreciate a balanced amount of healthful exercise. The Bible says that "bodily training is beneficial for a little." Yet it adds that "godly devotion is beneficial for all things." (1 Tim. 4:8) That does not mean devotion to a triune God. The Bible does not teach that Jesus is "God" in a trinity, as is taught in many of Christendom's

churches and as is still included in the "Paris Basis" of the YMCA.—1 Cor. 11:3; John 17:3.

While interfaith efforts and ecumenism are popular today, they are not upheld by the true God, who told his servants: "Do not become unevenly yoked with unbelievers. . . . 'Therefore get out from among them, and separate yourselves.' " (2 Cor. 6:14-17) Thus, it is because of their understanding of what God expects of true worshipers, and of what the purposes and direction of the YMCA are, that Jehovah's Witnesses may not become members of that organization.

Further, it is well to give thought to the fact that in virtually all the years of the YMCA's existence, it has not acted in harmony with the spirit of Isaiah 2:2-4, as can be noted from the following historical facts:

"YMCA services to the armed forces began, in the United States, with the Civil War, and it continued giving service through all wars thereafter."—*Encyclopædia Britannica*, Micropædia, Vol. X, p. 835, 1976 ed.

"In the Civil War, only ten years after its beginning in Boston, and before there were buildings or secretaries or financial resources, a total of 4,859 'delegates' were recruited and deployed and over six millions of donated funds used for the temporal and spiritual needs of soldiers. . . . In World War I, the American Y.M.C.A. assumed an enormous responsibility for service at home and abroad for which a staff of 25,926 was required with expenditures of more than 167 million dollars. In World War II, the Y.M.C.A. became one of the organizations that founded the United Service Organizations [USO], joining as a group of private religious organizations from Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish faiths in an agreement with the Federal government to provide civilian recreational, welfare, and religious services to men in uniform and to war-production workers in communities adjacent to military establishments."—*The New Funk & Wagnalls Encyclopedia*, Vol. 36, pp. 13,467, 13,468, 1952 ed.

"YMCA activities for members of the armed forces began during the Civil War (1861-1865). These services increased with each later war and reached their fullest development during World War II (1939-1945). The YMCA maintained more than 450 clubs for the Allied armed forces."—*The World Book Encyclopedia*, Vol. 21, p. 477, 1978 ed.

This kind of service under the name "Christian" was certainly not in fulfillment of Micah 4:3.

From Seminary to 'Pioneering'

"I came from a very Catholic family and was sent to study for the priesthood. In the seminary we took certain oaths of chastity, poverty and humility but I noticed that these did not mean much and that many were homosexuals. When one man tried to abuse me, I left the seminary. Then I began to live a very dissolute life. I was in a Latin-American country and became a smuggler of drugs, liquor, tobacco and arms. I was in prison various times. Finally, in Puerto Rico I set up a business and tried to change my life, but due to drunkenness I went bankrupt. Finally, in a very decrepit state I called on God for help. I asked a Pentecostal man to help, but he just told me to come to his church and receive the holy spirit.

"Then I opened up another business and found a man who would work with me. I asked his religion and he said he was one of Jehovah's Witnesses. Right away I asked him to help me to read the Bible. He came to my home and we studied from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. one Sunday. I told him not to ask me to attend his church, as I was not interested in churches. He promised to respect my

wishes. That afternoon I began reading the book that we had studied and at 12:00 midnight I had finished it. Next day when the Witness came to work I asked him to take me to his church. He was surprised, of course, but then I told him that I had read the book and wanted to attend a meeting to see if this was really the truth. I went to a meeting and was very impressed. Upon coming home I told my wife to prepare some nice clean, neat clothes because I wanted to go again to the meeting but wanted to be dressed like the rest. . . . Now my business is doing fine, I have paid my debts, am an auxiliary pioneer, daily telling others about God's kingdom, and making plans for the regular pioneer work."—Contributed.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

February 4: Continue to "Stand Firm in the Faith." Page 12. Songs to Be Used: 91, 9.

February 11: Completely Victorious Through Faith, Page 17. Songs to Be Used: 105, 116.

February 18: Stand Firm in the Faith, Page 17. Songs to Be Used: 105, 116. February 25: Stand Firm in the Faith, Page 17. Songs to Be Used: 105, 116. March 4: Stand Firm in the Faith, Page 17. Songs to Be Used: 105, 116. March 11: Stand Firm in the Faith, Page 17. Songs to Be Used: 105, 116. March 18: Stand Firm in the Faith, Page 17. Songs to Be Used: 105, 116. March 25: Stand Firm in the Faith, Page 17. Songs to Be Used: 105, 116. April 1: Stand Firm in the Faith, Page 17. Songs to Be Used: 105, 116. April 8: Stand Firm in the Faith, Page 17. Songs to Be Used: 105, 116. April 15: Stand Firm in the Faith, Page 17. Songs to Be Used: 105, 116. April 22: Stand Firm in the Faith, Page 17. Songs to Be Used: 105, 116. April 29: Stand Firm in the Faith, Page 17. Songs to Be Used: 105, 116.

March 4: Stand Firm in the Faith, Page 17. Songs to Be Used: 105, 116. March 11: Stand Firm in the Faith, Page 17. Songs to Be Used: 105, 116. March 18: Stand Firm in the Faith, Page 17. Songs to Be Used: 105, 116. March 25: Stand Firm in the Faith, Page 17. Songs to Be Used: 105, 116. April 1: Stand Firm in the Faith, Page 17. Songs to Be Used: 105, 116. April 8: Stand Firm in the Faith, Page 17. Songs to Be Used: 105, 116. April 15: Stand Firm in the Faith, Page 17. Songs to Be Used: 105, 116. April 22: Stand Firm in the Faith, Page 17. Songs to Be Used: 105, 116. April 29: Stand Firm in the Faith, Page 17. Songs to Be Used: 105, 116.

April 5: Stand Firm in the Faith, Page 17. Songs to Be Used: 105, 116. April 12: Stand Firm in the Faith, Page 17. Songs to Be Used: 105, 116. April 19: Stand Firm in the Faith, Page 17. Songs to Be Used: 105, 116. April 26: Stand Firm in the Faith, Page 17. Songs to Be Used: 105, 116. May 3: Stand Firm in the Faith, Page 17. Songs to Be Used: 105, 116. May 10: Stand Firm in the Faith, Page 17. Songs to Be Used: 105, 116. May 17: Stand Firm in the Faith, Page 17. Songs to Be Used: 105, 116. May 24: Stand Firm in the Faith, Page 17. Songs to Be Used: 105, 116. May 31: Stand Firm in the Faith, Page 17. Songs to Be Used: 105, 116.