

# The WATCHTOWER

*Do You Really Want*  
**GOOD HEALTH?**

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

*We Thought*  
**THE SYSTEM  
COULD BE CHANGED**

FEBRUARY 15, 1976

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

# The **WATCHTOWER**

February 15, 1976  
Vol. 97, Number 4

A watchtower enables a person to see far into the distance and announce to others what is coming. Can a magazine serve similarly in our day? Yes, from its first issue (July 1879) onward, *The Watchtower*, published by Jehovah's witnesses, has done just that.

How can it benefit you? Consider: Do you long for a better world, one of true justice and free from sorrow, hatred and war? Do you want to live at a time when genuine peace and love prevail among people of all races? Then this magazine can aid you. Using God's Word, the Bible, as its authority, it points out the clear evidence that the present wicked system of things will soon end, destroyed by God. But it also announces the coming in of a righteous new order. There, under the rule of God's kingdom, his heavenly government, people will enjoy life forever in true peace, health and happiness on a paradise earth.

Faithfulness to the Word of God lifts *The Watchtower* above the contradicting religious teachings and philosophies of men. It stays strictly neutral as regards political affairs. It wholeheartedly upholds the highest moral standard—that of man's Maker, Jehovah God. From this source, it shows solutions to the problems of daily life.

We know that many sincere persons would appreciate a discussion of these things in their own home with a qualified person. One of Jehovah's witnesses will be glad to call on you free of charge. To arrange for this, simply write the publishers of this magazine or contact Jehovah's witnesses locally.

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# Do You Really Want

# GOOD HEALTH?

"WHO wouldn't want good health?" you may ask. Yes, it is normal for people to want to continue in good health or to recover from sickness. Physical well-being contributes so much toward the enjoyment of life.

Many people, however, overlook the most important health factor. And what is that? It is the role that man's Creator, Jehovah God, can play in our enjoyment of health. The words of Proverbs 4:22 especially apply to the wise sayings found in his Word, the Bible. It tells us that these are "life to those finding them and health to all their flesh."

Good health is definitely tied in with our having due regard for the Creator's commands. The ancient Israelites, for example, were told that paying attention to God's commandments would lead to their avoiding the maladies that came upon the Egyptians. This assurance was followed up with the words: "I am Jehovah who is healing you." (Ex. 15:26) Does this mean that the Israelites were to expect miraculous healing? No, health benefits resulted naturally from *obedience* to God's commands.

The Law that God gave the Israelites set forth a high standard of cleanliness that promoted the preservation of the people's health. For example, the requirement that human excrement be buried deterred the spread of such diseases as dysentery and typhoid fever. (Deut. 23:12, 13) Also, the regulations concerning contamination by contact with dead humans or animals safeguarded against transmitting serious infections.—Lev. 11:32-38; Num. 19:11-22.

Similarly today, if we respect the prin-



ciples of the Law given to the Israelites by adhering to a sound standard of personal cleanliness, we can protect our health. But this is not the only way in which our having regard for the Creator can benefit us from the health standpoint. Conforming to God's commands in matters of conduct can also safeguard our physical well-being. The Bible commands: "Do not come to be among heavy drinkers of wine, among those who are gluttonous eaters of flesh." (Prov. 23:20) "Flee from fornication." (1 Cor. 6:18) "Let marriage be honorable among all, and the marriage bed be without defilement." (Heb. 13:4) Think of the terrible ailments, including loathsome venereal diseases, cirrhosis of the liver and delirium tremens, that many persons could have avoided had they obeyed God's Word.

Our having regard for the Creator and his commands can also shield us from emotional stresses. The Bible counsels:

"Let all malicious bitterness and anger and wrath and screaming and abusive speech be taken away from you along with all badness." (Eph. 4:31) "Let us not become egotistical, stirring up competition with one another, envying one another." (Gal. 5:26) When a person is often subjected to the stresses of envy, hate and selfish ambition, he may find himself suffering physically, perhaps from skin, respiratory or digestive problems. On the other hand, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, mildness and self-control—qualities that the Bible encourages us to cultivate—have a wholesome effect on us, mentally, physically and emotionally.—Gal. 5:22, 23.

So, then, even now a person can safeguard his health by seeking to live in the way the Creator purposed that mankind live. That course can add years to one's life. But what if a person is sick?

Encouraging words appear in the Bible at Psalm 41:3: "Jehovah himself will sustain him upon a divan of illness; all his bed you will certainly change during his sickness." The person who has an understanding of God's Word can take comfort in the fact that his sickness is not a punishment for some sin. He recognizes that his sickness is due to human weaknesses and imperfections. Despite pain, he is able to maintain a comparatively cheerful outlook, being strengthened by God's spirit to endure.

Furthermore, the servant of God has confidence that the time is fast approaching when all sickness and pain will be things of the forgotten past. He has unshakable faith in the Bible's promise:

**"God himself will be with them. And he will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore."**—Rev. 21:3, 4.

"[God] will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away." (Rev. 21:4; see also Isaiah 65:17.) This marvelous promise furnishes the basis for hope—a vital factor in maintaining a happy disposition in the face of unpleasant circumstances.

To many, though, the promise of life free from sickness and pain may seem just too good to be true. But we should not allow the disbelief of others to rob us of a precious hope. Hope is a powerful force. Writes Dr. Karl Menninger in *The Vital Balance*: "Our present scientific knowledge is not sufficient to recognize or identify or properly credit all the forces working for recovery any more than we know in any case all the forces against which we are working. And this we know: Sometimes hope fails, and death ensues, while sometimes hope endures, and the impossible happens."—Page 386.

It is noteworthy that the Creator knew full well that imperfect humans would regard as unbelievable his promise to abolish sickness and pain. Evidently for this reason he added: "These words are faithful and true."—Rev. 21:5.

Nothing, not even death, can prevent the servant of God from the realization of his Bible-based hope. Why not? Because, through a resurrection from the dead, he will have the opportunity to enjoy life free from all sickness and pain. Jesus Christ gave this assurance: "The hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come forth."—John 5:28, 29, *Common Bible*.

If you are among those who really want good health, make sure that your life is in harmony with God's purpose for mankind. Study the Bible and apply its admonition to your life. This can benefit your health now and assure you of a future without sickness and pain.

# We Thought THE SYSTEM *Could Be Changed*



AS MORE than 10,000 of us gathered in Chicago's Grant Park Wednesday afternoon, we could hardly believe our eyes. Guns on the tops of nearby buildings were trained on us. National Guardsmen with fixed bayonets lined the sidewalks. And helmeted police were all around. Why? What was taking place?

It was August 1968. And four miles away at the Amphitheatre, the Democratic National Convention was in progress. It was this that had drawn us to Chicago. We hoped that our presence *en masse* might have an effect on the decisions made at that convention. Particularly we wanted an end to the Vietnam war.

But why the machine guns, fixed bayonets and helmeted police?

Remember, it was *August 1968*. American involvement in the war was still growing; North Vietnam was still being bombed. Many political leaders favored escalation of the war. They wanted a military triumph, and some even considered outspoken advocates of peace as being guilty of treason.

Yet this tremendous display of force seemed to us totally uncalled for. We in Grant Park were unarmed. Most of us simply felt that America's leaders were heeding bad advice. And now we planned to demonstrate peacefully by marching to the Amphitheatre. But what was done to my girl friend Jeanne and me that day jolted our whole way of thinking, deeply affecting our course of life.

I know that some persons may say: "You had no business demonstrating in Chicago. You deserved whatever you got."

Millions of young people have felt that a change is needed. You may or may not agree with them, but you will find it enlightening to get an insight into why they view matters the way they do. This is an account of how one young couple sought to bring about a change, and how they discovered the only way it can be achieved.

At the time, though, Jeanne and I thought that what we were doing was right. However, we can see now that it was not the right way to achieve change, and we regret things that we did. But why did thousands—yes, tens of thousands—of young people push so hard for change in those years? I believe that my own experience will help you to understand.

## AN APPARENTLY BRIGHT FUTURE

I was born to white, middle-class parents in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in 1947. In 1952,

we moved to Hawaii, where my father became a successful contractor. Living in a beautiful ocean-front home, we had everything we needed in a material way. America seemed to be the land where dreams could be fulfilled; the future looked bright.

My life was filled with things that brought me pleasure—playing halfback on our championship football team, running track, swimming in the blue Pacific in our backyard, involvement in school government. And soon I was planning to enter college on the mainland.

## FACING GRIM REALITIES

In September 1965, I enrolled at Williams College in Massachusetts. Here, with more time to read and meditate, something began to bother me. In Hawaii I was used to racial groups being treated equally, but on the mainland things were different.

During spring vacation in 1966 I flew to Chicago to visit my older brother, who was a director of the University of Chicago Hospitals. As we rode through the ghettos of South Chicago, I could hardly believe what I saw. "How can people live like this?" I wondered. But the fact that they did, and that these persons were generally blacks, deeply affected me.

I wanted to know how blacks felt, so I began to read books written by them, including a number of autobiographies. As I read about the injustices they suffered—the slave trade, their being treated as though they were inferior, their being banned from public rest rooms, their being lynched for fabricated or minor offenses—my eyes often filled with tears. I was angered, and I began to wonder what I could do to bring a change for the better.

I began to look at other things, too, from a racial point of view, such as the Vietnam war. I read in the press how

Americans referred to the Vietnamese as "gooks," and I wondered if we would be dropping those bombs so freely if they were white people. I also heard reports about huge profits that the so-called "military industrial complex" was reaping on the production of war matériel. This made me wonder: Was it possible that profit-minded men, who were willing to sacrifice the lives of people with slanted eyes, were behind the expansion of the war? I began to think so when I heard it said that presidential candidates often depend upon money from such industrialists to finance their campaigns.

President Johnson campaigned in 1964, promising to bring peace in Vietnam. Yet later, month by month, the war was expanding in direct contradiction of what he had told the people. Public media were saying much about efforts of the administration to deceive the public. The "credibility gap" was widening. So, can you see why many of us young folks no longer felt we could trust our leaders?

But now, with the expansion of the war, college students began to be drafted. This forced me to make a difficult decision.

### WHAT TO DO ABOUT THE DRAFT?

For months I wrestled with the questions: Can I support the war effort? Can I take up arms and kill Vietnamese?

I finally came to the conclusion that I could not. To me, it was wrong. Some persons, I know, may argue: "Why, you were nothing but a cowardly draft dodger. When your country tells you to do something, the only lawful, upright thing to do is obey."

At the time I analyzed this matter very

***"As I read about the injustices . . . my eyes often filled with tears."***

carefully. I realized that Germans at the Nuremberg trials, as well as Adolf Eichmann in more recent times, tried to excuse the crimes they committed by arguing that they simply were obeying official orders. But, nevertheless, they were found guilty and executed! They were held responsible for their acts, even though their country had ordered them to commit these vile deeds.

To my way of thinking the people of the United States were in a similar situation. The tragic stories appearing in the American press about the napalming of men, women and children—burning them to a horrible death—seemed to me to be similar to the mass exterminations of people in the ovens of German concentration camps. This idea was reinforced when the Vietnamese leader Premier Ky, whom U.S. troops appeared to be keeping in power, declared that his only hero was Adolf Hitler.

## EFFORTS TO CHANGE THE SYSTEM

My decision to refuse induction into the military was not a 'cop-out.' Rather, I had a deep love for my country, and so I began to think about what I could do to change it for the better. I felt that as a sociologist I might help to solve America's grievous racial problems, and even international problems. So in 1967 I transferred to the University of Hawaii for my junior year to take the necessary courses to prepare me for that field.

At school a notice on the information board caught my eye. It invited those opposed to the war in Vietnam to come to a meeting of the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). About this time I got to know Jeanne, a fellow student, who joined me in antiwar activities.

By now even regular news reports were

**"Even regular news reports were exposing misleading official statements about the war."**

exposing misleading official statements about the war. So, by early 1968, according to public opinion polls, the minority dissenting against the war had become a majority, and we began to see a real possibility of success in our efforts to change the system. This possibility seemed to be confirmed when President Johnson, on March 31, 1968, announced that he would not seek reelection. It appeared that public opinion was driving him from office.

A few days later our SDS president made an emotional speech, and burned his draft card before TV cameras in protest against the war. I joined other students in doing the same—something I would never do now. That evening this was feature TV news, and it was in the newspapers the next morning.

In April, antiwar students in New York city seized Columbia University buildings and closed the school. At the University of Hawaii, students were holding massive rallies against the war almost daily. And then in May, when Professor Oliver Lee, an outspoken opponent of the war, was ousted by the University, students took over campus facilities for several days.

Jeanne and I were among the hundreds of students who occupied Bachman Hall, demanding that Lee be reinstated. The police eventually removed us under the glaring lights of TV cameras. We were arrested, but released on bond the next morning.

A few days later students dispersed for summer vacations. What could we do now? In this election year the eyes of America

would be on the Democratic Convention in Chicago. Could we perhaps bring about a change where it really counted, influencing leaders in power to stop the war? At the time we thought so, and decided to try.

#### "MASSACRE OF MICHIGAN AVENUE"

What occurred on Wednesday of the Democratic Convention has since been called "the Massacre of Michigan Avenue." Millions saw it on TV. A federal study referred to it as "police riots." The study noted that police violence "was often inflicted upon persons who had broken no law, disobeyed no order, made no threat." And we can vouch for this, although some demonstrators did provoke police by calling them names.

When we attempted to begin our march after listening to speeches in Grant Park, the police attacked. Tear gas sent us fleeing in every direction. Soldiers with fixed bayonets were everywhere, blocking the bridges into the main part of the city. Finally we found a sparsely guarded bridge and broke through.

Our numbers swelled as more made it over the bridges to join us on Michigan Avenue. Just when it appeared that the march would be successful, police and soldiers blocked our advance, and they began attacking with tear gas, Mace and clubs. Those in their direct path were trampled to the ground, and blood spurted from their bludgeoned heads. Jeeps with barbed-wire fences fixed to their front began to push like plows into the crowd. Bodies were crushed together. I grabbed

**"Police and soldiers  
blocked our advance, and  
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tear gas, Mace and clubs."**

Jeanne's arm and tried desperately to pull her to safety.

Finally Jeanne, her sister and I broke through the barrier of police and ran a long distance away from the troubled area. It was about 9 p.m. and we were hungry, so we had dinner at a restaurant. The only way we knew to get back to where we were staying was to take a train near Michigan Avenue.

#### WHY WE GAVE UP

We were nearing the station when a band of police came flying around the corner. "We want to catch a train," I said. They cursed us, and without provocation grabbed us, and started clubbing Jeanne's sister when she resisted. We were thrown into a paddy wagon. At the police station, over a hundred of us were held all night in a room called "the tank."

The next morning I appeared before the judge. But he never gave me opportunity to say a word in explanation; he didn't even raise his eyes to look at me! I couldn't, in good conscience, plead guilty, so I decided to prove the charges false.

Meanwhile Jeanne returned to school in Hawaii, and I went back to Massachusetts for my senior year. In the months that followed I made repeated airplane trips to Chicago for court appearances. Each time, however, the policeman who was supposed to press charges failed to appear, so the judge would set the case for the following month. After spending several hundred dollars in expenses, my lawyer said it was useless—they would just keep doing this indefinitely until I failed to show up and then they would declare me guilty.

These experiences made me feel that the system could not be reformed. I gave up trying to change it—"eat, drink and be merry" became my philosophy. I at-

tended school only enough to graduate. Jeanne came from Hawaii, and we lived together and became deeply involved with drugs. Yet this living only for personal pleasure wasn't satisfying either.

#### COULD THERE BE HOPE ANYWHERE?

By our dress, appearance and behavior we felt that we were showing our rebellion against the hypocrisy and injustices of the so-called "establishment." But were drugs, open promiscuity and other features of our life-style any better? I began to wonder. Many young people considered marriage old-fashioned, yet I could see that changing from one sex partner to another was not bringing them real happiness. I didn't want this for Jeanne and me, so in the summer of 1969 we were married.

While I felt that efforts to change the system were futile, I still wanted to help people, so I decided to become a school-teacher. Since I wanted to go where children especially needed help, I began teaching third grade in a black ghetto in North Philadelphia.

As I pored over the medical records of students, I found that most were undernourished and underweight. Many lived in unbelievably unhealthful, crowded facilities. Some, I came to learn, were already immorally involved with the opposite sex. A few were drug runners for their parents. Most couldn't add 2 + 3, or recognize the letters of the alphabet. I never believed that conditions could be so bad; it seemed hopeless! It was frustrating to think that after spending all one's efforts one could do so little lasting good. Where could we find a rewarding, satisfying pursuit?

We had delved deeply into astrology, occultism and Eastern religions and found nothing satisfying there. Then I happened to read *The Population Bomb* by Stanford University Professor Paul Ehrlich. When Ehrlich visited Philadelphia, we also went to his lecture. He said that

it was already too late, that ultimate calamities of unprecedented dimensions faced mankind because of their abuse of the environment and mishandling of earth's affairs. But perhaps, I thought, there was hope in the growing ecology movement.

Remembering the frustrations to which our involvement in the antiwar movement had led, we accepted, but with hesitation, an invitation to an ecology organizational meeting at Temple University.

**"Many young people considered marriage old-fashioned."**

When we entered a room filled with cigarette smoke and heard a discussion on air pollution, we knew that this movement would come to nothing. Nevertheless, I began reading many books on ecology and enrolled in a master's degree program in environmental education. I felt convinced that the industrialized society would soon collapse, and I started preparing for life after that occurred.

My father owned a hundred acres of virgin fern forest on the island of Hawaii. We began to lay plans for a completely self-sufficient community there that would be in ecological balance with the surrounding area. We were seriously searching for alternative life-styles, since we were convinced that the system was doomed. However, answers for which we had been searching began coming from an altogether unexpected source.

#### REAL HOPE FOR BENEFICIAL CHANGE

School let out for summer vacation, my younger brother David came from Hawaii

and the three of us went on a short camping trip. David, who was considering the ministry as a career, brought a Bible along, and each night, as we sat around the campfire, he read selected chapters to us. Listening to accounts about Joseph and his brothers and David and Goliath, we were surprised to find out how interesting the Bible can be. And as we read the book of Ecclesiastes, the conclusions there regarding the vanities of life in this system of things seemed so up-to-date.

That summer Jeanne and I had a lot of time on our hands. Our only project was an attempt to grow sufficient food on our 13-by-13-foot plot in Philadelphia to sustain us. So we got an Authorized Version of the Bible and started reading it out loud to each other. First, we read the Gospels and Acts of the Apostles. As we listened to Jesus' scathing denunciations of the religious leaders of his day (Matthew chapter 23), we couldn't help but think of present-day clergymen. We had been 'turned off' by their hypocrisy. An example was their active support of the Vietnam war when public opinion favored the war, and their protest against it only after public opinion had shifted against the war.

Also, we read the prophecies of Isaiah, which particularly impressed us. Coming across the words, "they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more," I remarked to Jeanne, "Hey, this Isaiah was an antiwar protester. In fact, he was into ecology; he wanted to put war funds into agriculture."—Isa. 2:4, AV.

Then we noted the words just before, "it shall come to pass in the last days," and we wondered if somehow these words were meant for our day. As we read on, we could see that Isaiah was speaking of ancient Judah and Jerusalem, but we just couldn't get over the remarkable similarity.

**'The clergy registered protest only after public opinion shifted against the war.'**

to twentieth-century conditions. The more we read the more convinced we became that these prophecies must apply in some way to our present world system.

If this was true, then it would mean that today's corrupt system is to be destroyed, as one prophecy went on to foretell: "The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left."—Isa. 24:5, 6, AV.

Could we believe these prophecies? We believed in an Almighty God. And we marveled at his creation of life and the natural cycles on earth. It amazed us how tiny seeds that we put into the soil soon yielded such a variety of foods. Could the Creator responsible for such miracles be the God who gave Isaiah this message that seemed to fit our day so well?

We began to think so. But if, as the Bible indicated, this system was to be destroyed, would anything good replace it? We wanted to know. To help us in our investigation we obtained a modern-English version, *The Jerusalem Bible*, and would sometimes spend the whole day reading it together.

#### A PERSONAL GOD OF PURPOSE

On one page after another of this *Jerusalem Bible* the name "Yahweh" appeared instead of the titles "Lord" and "God." I remembered from a college religion course

that *Yahweh* (or the more popular form *Jehovah*) is the English equivalent of the name of God that appears in original-language Bible manuscripts. Reading God's name over and over again began to influence us. We began to view God as a real person, someone we could communicate with and someone who had a purpose. But we wondered, What kind of person is this *Yahweh*?

Our appreciation for *Yahweh* grew as we read of his purposes. We had paid special attention to places where the Bible foretells the destruction of this corrupt system, since this corroborated what we believed. But now we began taking note that it also spoke of a new system. Reading prophecies such as the one found in the latter part of Isaiah chapter 65 caused us to feel that perhaps there is a hope for a better future. It says:

"I create new heavens and a new earth . . . They will build houses and inhabit them, plant vineyards and eat their fruit. . . . They will not toil in vain or beget children to their own ruin, for they will be a race blessed by *Yahweh*, and their children with them. Long before they call I shall answer; before they stop speaking I shall have heard. The wolf and the young lamb will feed together, the lion eat straw like the ox . . . They will do no hurt, no harm on all my holy mountain, says *Yahweh*."—Isa. 65:17-25, JB.

Could this *Yahweh* really create a new system in which such an appealing way

***"The more we read the Bible, the more the churches appeared to be condemned by the very book they professed to follow."***

of life would be realized? If he was the same One who created this marvelous universe, then we felt that perhaps he could fulfill these promises. But we wondered: Is *Yahweh* going to preserve any people through the coming world destruction into a new system? If so, who are these people?

None of the churches we knew seemed to fit the picture. As far as we could see, the corrupt men who were manipulating politics and business were, for the most part, respected members of these churches. And it was members of these churches who were fighting the war in southeast Asia. The more we read the Bible, the more the churches appeared to be condemned by the very book they professed to follow.

In a few days I would be teaching again and would start working on my master's degree at the university. Also, we were getting discouraged in our Bible reading, since we had so many unanswered questions. In a moment of despair we did something we had never done before. Jeanne and I bowed our heads and I prayed out loud to *Yahweh*, asking him for guidance as to where to turn and what to do.

#### **LEARNING HOW THE CHANGE WILL COME**

Having prayed, we lit up marijuana cigarettes. But almost immediately the doorbell rang. Could it be the police? As Jeanne ran madly around the house hiding drugs and spraying the air with aerosol deodorizer, I stepped outside the door, locking it behind me.

Standing there was a young black woman who identified herself as one of *Jehovah's witnesses*. She began to speak to me about the very things we had just prayed about. She offered me the book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life*, which I accepted. I also asked: "Where

can I observe Jehovah's witnesses first-hand?" She invited us to their meeting at the local Kingdom Hall, and also gave us copies of the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines.

It was Saturday noon, and Jeanne sat down in one room to read *The Watchtower* and *Awake!*, and I began reading the book in another room. It wasn't long before we were shouting back and forth: "Hey, listen to this!" "This is amazing!" By late that night I had finished the book. During the previous two months I had read the entire Bible, and now understanding of its related parts began to take shape in my mind.

From youth on I had prayed in the way Jesus taught his disciples: "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." (Matt. 6:9, 10, *Authorized Version*) I had thought that God's kingdom was a peaceful state of the mind and heart. But no! Of course! Now I could see that God's kingdom is a *real government!* It is the instrument that God will use to wipe out this corrupt system!

This became clear as I looked again at Daniel 2:44, which reads: "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed . . . It shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." (AV) Thus, I came to realize that my earlier efforts to change the system by engaging in public demonstrations were not only futile, but contrary to what the Bible says at Romans 13:1-7. I could now see that true Christians remain neutral regarding political

affairs, and wait upon God himself to change the system by destroying it.

I also began to understand that after God's government destroys this world system, He will see to it that his original purpose to have the earth a paradise will be fulfilled, even as indicated by those prophecies we had read. But now I learned something wonderful that I had overlooked —*God will grant people to live forever in that earthly paradise!* Such scriptures as this really impressed me: "The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever."—Ps. 37:29, AV.

But the key, I began to see, is GOD'S KINGDOM. Yes, *God cares*, and he has a real government by means of which he will fulfill his purposes. The chapter in the *Truth* book, "Why Has God Permitted Wickedness Until Our Day?" helped me



Jeanne and I were finding answers for which we had been searching

## **"Here were a people who truly loved one another."**

to understand his apparent slowness in taking action. It made clear how vital issues, affecting even the spirit realm, required settling before he destroys this corrupt system.

Yet was all of this just theory? Was there any tangible proof that God's government really exists? I wanted to know.

### **WHAT WE HAD SEARCHED FOR**

The next day, September 6, 1970, Jeanne and I went to the Kingdom Hall, arriving after the meeting had started. We noticed that everyone was clean-cut, and looked so happy. Even little children participated, reading passages fluently from the Bible. Knowing the situation in the school system, I realized that their parents must take a real interest in them. I was impressed, too, by the Bible knowledge displayed by the people. But what impressed us most occurred when the meeting ended.

Over a hundred people, from little child to old man, came up and gave us the most friendly greeting we had ever received. We were especially surprised since I had long hair and a beard, and Jeanne was dressed in a way identified with hippies. Also, almost everyone was black, this being a black community. At school where I taught it took quite a while before blacks accepted me. They seemed suspicious of whites, but this wasn't the case at all at the Kingdom Hall.

We were invited to come back on Thursday for the Theocratic School. When we arrived, everyone treated us like old friends. What impressed us was that the purpose of these meetings was clearly to

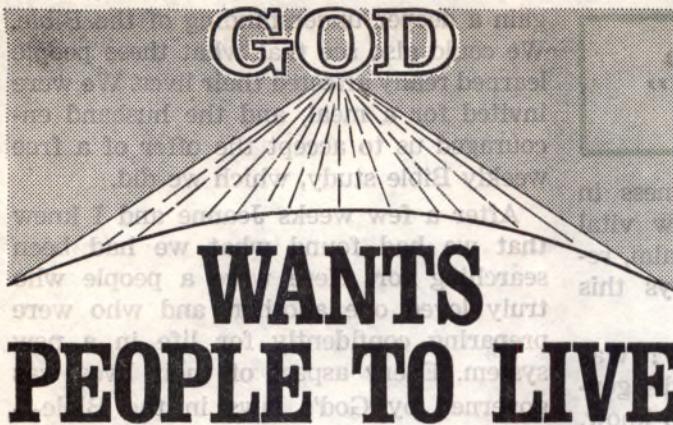
gain a deeper understanding of the Bible. We could also see that what these people learned really affected their lives. We were invited for a meal, and the husband encouraged us to accept the offer of a free weekly Bible study, which we did.

After a few weeks Jeanne and I knew that we had found what we had been searching for. Here were a people who truly loved one another, and who were preparing confidently for life in a new system. Every aspect of their lives was governed by God's laws in the Bible—hence, they were surely subjects of God's government. And as we continued to study, the fulfillment of Bible prophecy convinced us that we are living near the final part of the generation that will see God's government crush the entire wicked system of things.—Matt. 24:3-14.

We could immediately see the urgency of all people hearing this vital information about God's kingdom, so we asked to share with the Witnesses in telling others about it. We had quit using drugs, and shortly afterward had changed our appearance and manner of dress. In January 1971, we were baptized by Jehovah's witnesses in symbol of our dedication to serve Jehovah God. I quit my teaching job, obtained other employment, and Jeanne and I entered the full-time preaching work. This has led from one rewarding experience to another.

Having received missionary training at the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead in New York city, we are going to Africa to preach the good news of God's kingdom. How fine it will be to be able to show them from God's Word the Bible that the poverty, wars, prejudices and injustices of this system are soon to end, to be replaced by righteous conditions under the rule of God's Kingdom government! (2 Pet. 3:13)

—Contributed.



# GOD WANTS PEOPLE TO LIVE

JEHOVAH GOD views human life as something precious. The fact that he has not yet executed judgment against ungodly mankind proves this. Wrote the inspired apostle Peter: "He is patient with you because he does not desire any to be destroyed but desires all to attain to repentance."—2 Pet. 3:9.

Jehovah's high regard for human life is not limited to his wanting mankind to survive the expression of his righteous judgment. It is his desire that people enjoy as long a life as possible despite their weaknesses and imperfections. His Word, the Bible, provides guidelines that, when followed, prevent one from pursuing a course of life leading to a premature death. For example, the person who strives to live in harmony with the Bible's counsel is shielded from the sad consequences of drug addiction, alcoholism, venereal disease and the like. The words of Proverbs 3:1, 2 show that the above would certainly apply: "My son, my law do not forget, and my commandments may your heart observe, because length of days and years of life and peace will be added to you."

The fact that knowing and applying God's Word can mean life to people both now and in the future makes it urgent that no effort be spared in getting this information to them. Surely we servants of Jehovah God should be even more con-

cerned, for example, than were those persons who devoted their lives in the fight against disease. Upon making a discovery that could contribute to the lengthening of life, dedicated men and women did not keep this knowledge to themselves. Many wrote down their findings and argued their case in the face of stiff opposition. Convinced supporters provided moral and financial backing. In certain cases the opposition was so unreasonable

that sound conclusions were rejected for years. But, through perseverance, the truth finally won out. The findings were in time widely publicized, and since then many people have been saved from a premature death. The discoverer of a particular treatment and his supporters may have made great sacrifices and yet may not even have had the joy of seeing truth triumph in their lifetime. But was not what they did worth the effort, considering the added years of life that many thousands have gained as a result? How much more valuable, then, is the work of aiding persons to gain spiritual health with the prospect of having everlasting life?

#### A WORK OF TRUE VALUE

True, there have been indifference and opposition on the part of many whom Jehovah's witnesses have called on at their homes. But are we not happy that from September 1, 1974, to August 31, 1975, over 295,000 persons were helped to repentance and became baptized disciples of Jesus Christ? These thousands may be among those who will survive the execution of God's judgment and gain, not just a few more years of life, but unending life in God's righteous new order. (2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 7:14-17) Meanwhile, their con-

forming to God's Word is enabling them to avoid the snares that could lead to a premature death.

Surely the person who begins living in harmony with the Bible today is better off than the one who starts doing so tomorrow or next week or next month. Without an accurate knowledge of God's Word, a person could make a serious mistake that might leave a permanent scar. This is evident from the fact that at times just one Biblical conversation has been enough to save a person from suicide. The work of spreading Bible truth is indeed urgent. We do not know how long any individual may live or just exactly when God's judgment against the ungodly will be executed. However, one thing is certain: Each day that passes brings billions of people closer to death. Can they be helped before it is too late or before they make some tragic mistake?

Jehovah God has given his servants the opportunity to demonstrate their genuine concern for people, proving that they feel just as he does about helping as many as possible to attain to repentance. (Acts 3:19) Certainly we do not want to find some excuse for not taking our responsibility toward the world of mankind very seriously. (Matt. 28:19, 20) No one should think: 'The work of preaching and teaching Bible truth is not so important. In the final analysis, God is going to see to it that all the sheep are located.' Such reasoning betrays a lack of personal concern for those in grave danger because of their not knowing God. (2 Thess. 1:6-10) It is really an evidence of lack of love and reveals that there is something defective about one's own relationship with the Most High.—1 John 5:2, 3.

If you are a servant of Jehovah God, do you feel that no sacrifice is too great to get life-preserving information into the

hands of people? Are you alert to use every opportunity to speak about God's Word to relatives, friends, acquaintances and others whom you meet in your daily activities? Do your words and deeds show that you firmly believe that God wants people to live?

Many, besides persons whom you know or with whom you might have contact, urgently need Bible knowledge. Experience has shown that in these modern times one of the best ways to reach people is to call on them at their homes. Are you setting aside time for this? In the book of Revelation, God's provision for life is spoken of symbolically as a river with tree-lined banks. The trees are described as "producing twelve crops of fruit, yielding their fruits each month." (Rev. 22:1, 2) In harmony therewith, would it not be most appropriate to share every month in acquainting people with the Bible's life-giving message?

#### ORGANIZED FOR PUBLIC PREACHING

The congregations of Jehovah's witnesses, therefore, are acting in accord with God's will when they divide certain areas into "territories" and make specific arrangements to call at all the homes in these territories, doing so progressively and periodically during the course of the year.—Compare 1 Corinthians 14:33.

So that the public proclamation of Bible truth might proceed well, good and orderly arrangements are required. At their periodic meetings, congregational elders do well to consider whether they are giving needed attention to these arrangements. Are they themselves setting a zealous example in sharing Bible truth with others? Do their words and actions show that they firmly believe that Jehovah God wants people to live? Have they worked things out in such a way that they are actively

sharing with groups, according to their opportunities, in public preaching and teaching?

Elders, of course, must be balanced about their congregational and family responsibilities. (1 Tim. 3:2, 4) Some of them may be able to support nearly every arrangement for groups to meet and share in public preaching and teaching. But others may be prevented by circumstances from doing this. Recognizing the importance of the Bible's message, elders would surely want to make the best use of their available time to join with fellow believers in imparting Bible truths to others. (Eph. 4:11, 12) They know that failure on their part to provide good leadership could be very discouraging to the congregation.

Furthermore, members of the congregation need to be taught how they can help others to appreciate the value of the Bible and the importance of serving God as loyal disciples of Jesus Christ. When elders take their responsibility as shepherds and teachers seriously, they gladly provide aid by word and example. (Heb. 13:7) They also invite other qualified persons to give assistance.

All devoted servants of Jehovah God should remind themselves of the importance of sharing in preaching and teaching what the Bible says. Ask yourself: Where would I be today if Jesus Christ had given up because of the unresponsiveness of many of his fellow countrymen or for some other reason? None of us would then have had the opportunity of gaining endless life. How glad we are that Jesus Christ remained faithful to his commission!—John 17:6-8; Heb. 3:6.

Is it not a fine thing for us to think about our wanting people whom we meet to be with us in God's new order? Regardless of how they might act, we should not lose sight of the fact that Christ died for them and that Jehovah God wants them to "come to an accurate knowledge of truth" and live. (1 Tim. 2:3, 4) Developments in world affairs or in their own lives may awaken them to 'sigh and groan' because of what is taking place. (Ezek. 9:4) They may come to yearn for something better. Will we be there to help them? If we really appreciate that Jehovah God wants people to live, we most certainly will go to their aid.

## *The Bible Awakens a Spiritual Need*

- At times a person's reading just a few verses of the Holy Scriptures can awaken an awareness to spiritual need.

A woman in the Philippines, for example, had never read the Bible. When she was young her father had obtained a Bible, which was given to her upon her marriage. Later, while working in her husband's jewel-cutting shop, she ran out of wrapping paper and so started using pages from her Bible for that purpose. She continued doing this until one day she was startled to see on one page the name "Jehovah" in all capital letters. She read further and was impressed by the reference to the wicked being destroyed because of not knowing Jehovah.

Thereafter the woman preserved what was left of the Bible and began reading it regularly. On one occasion, while selling jewels from house to house, she came upon a group of people studying the Bible with one of Jehovah's witnesses. She invited the Witness to come to her home to study the Bible with her. Now she and her four children are all serving Jehovah. Truly the Bible had awakened a spiritual need, with good results.

# Jehovah's Friend

or

## THE WORLD'S FRIEND

—Which?

MOST people are particular about whom they choose as friends. A friend is defined as "one attached to another by affection or esteem," "an intimate associate." Would you choose for an intimate friend one whose habits you detest, whose thinking and viewpoints are always opposed to yours, and who would associate or take sides with your enemies? Since we are particular in our choice of friends, we can expect nothing less of the Supreme God of the universe. Therefore, it is vital that we learn how to become friends with God, Jehovah, and how to maintain friendship with him.

<sup>2</sup> Jehovah has not barred the human race from being friends with him. In fact, his love for mankind prompted him to give his most precious "only-begotten Son, in order that everyone exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) But we cannot expect that Jehovah will befriend just anyone. At Psalm 5:4 we are informed of the attitude and conduct that Jehovah will not tolerate his friends to display: "For you are not a God taking delight in wicked-

"Do you not know that the friendship with the world is enmity with God?" —Jas. 4:4.

ness; no one bad may reside for any time with you."

<sup>3</sup> Jesus' followers recognize that they must keep separate from the world and its corruption. (2 Pet. 1:4) As Jesus acknowledged at John 17:16: "They are no part of the world, just as I am no part of the world." Jesus' half brother James pointed out the dire consequences of not keeping that separateness when he stated: "Adulteresses, do you not know that the friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever, therefore, wants to be a

3. What do Jesus and James say about fraternizing with worldlings?

1. What is the definition of a friend, and what must be considered when choosing friends?

2. Has God barred mankind from becoming his friends? In what way is he selective in choosing his friends?

friend of the world is constituting himself an enemy of God."—Jas. 4:4.

#### NOT FRIENDS WITH THE WORLD

\* What does it mean to be a friend of the world? It simply means to be like the world, to think like the world, to share its desires, to harbor its ambitions, to display its prejudices and hatreds. A person who is a friend of the world assumes the dominant attitude that permeates its society. The apostle Paul spoke of it as "the spirit that now operates in the sons of disobedience." (Eph. 2:2) That spirit can lead one into engaging in the worldly practices that Paul enumerated in Galatians 5:19-21: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, and they are fornication, uncleanness, loose conduct, idolatry, practice of spiritism, enmities, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, contentions, divisions, sects, envies, drunken bouts, revelries, and things like these." What is the result of pursuing such worldly ways? We are warned that "those who practice such things will not inherit God's kingdom."

<sup>5</sup> It is clear, then, that by engaging in such practices, which Jehovah hates, we would be alienating ourselves from him. Therefore, we must take an opposite course by reflecting God's spirit and attitude. Paul tells us that "the fruitage of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, mildness, self-control . . . those who belong to Christ Jesus impaled the flesh together with its passions and desires." (Gal. 5:22-24) Thus, by displaying such fruitage we will be pleasing God and not the world.

<sup>6</sup> Keep in mind that the goals of the

4. (a) What does it mean to be a friend of the world? (b) What are the works of the flesh, and what results from pursuing such?

5. What course must a Christian follow, and what fruitage is pleasing to Jehovah?

6. (a) How do the goals of the world and of Christians differ? (b) What encouragement did Jesus give about getting the necessities of life?

world are different from those of a Christian. The world's goals are materialistic. It thinks nothing of sacrificing right principles to further selfish interests, even if close friends are hurt along the way. Its thinking is geared around the thought that everyone should be just a little more affluent. The world is anxious about its soul as to what it will eat, drink and wear. (Matt. 6:25-30) To avoid copying that same materialistic viewpoint we must believe that Jehovah will provide for his people. We must have faith that he can and will bless our efforts to get the necessities of life. Jesus, our Master, did not have a place to lay his head, yet his Father provided for him. (Luke 9:58) Likewise, Jesus encouraged his followers not to worry about getting the essentials of life. After relating the powerful lesson to prove his point, in Matthew, chapter 6, verses 25 through 30, Jesus assured his followers: "So never be anxious and say, 'What are we to eat?' or, 'What are we to drink?' or, 'What are we to put on?'" For all these are the things the nations are eagerly pursuing. For your heavenly Father knows you need all these things. Keep on, then, seeking first the kingdom and his righteousness, and all these other things will be added to you."—Matt. 6:31-33.

<sup>7</sup> It is essential that we avoid becoming ensnared by the "anxieties of life," desiring to gain what the world considers the 'comfortable life.' (Luke 21:34) Jesus, in his illustration of the sower, said that "the anxiety of this system of things and the deceptive power of riches choke the word." (Matt. 13:22) How true are his words, too, at Luke 12:15: "Even when a person has an abundance his life does not result from the things he possesses"! The folly of

7. What worldly viewpoint do we want to avoid, and what scriptures help us in this?

spending our time in accumulating material riches to gain a comfortable life is well illustrated by James. He observed: "The sun rises with its burning heat and withers the vegetation, and its flower drops off and the beauty of its outward appearance perishes. So, too, the rich man will fade away in his ways of life." (Jas. 1:11) Later, he shows the uncertainty of life by pointing out: "You are a mist appearing for a little while and then disappearing." So, instead of being confident in our plans, we ought to say: "If Jehovah wills, we shall live and also do this or that." (Jas. 4:13-15)

How apparent it is from these scriptures that cultivating friendship with God is much more important than striving for a comfortable life by stockpiling material things!

What is our attitude toward the celebrities and prominent ones of the world—those associated with entertainment, sports, science or any other field of endeavor? Such men and women are held in high esteem by the world. Due to their prominence, both adults and children idolize and copy their personalities and ways. However, a friend of Jehovah must be on guard lest he begin to follow this pattern of the world. Remember, the thoughts and ways of these men and women are not

8, 9. (a) How does the world view prominent ones, but what should youths and adults remember? (b) What examples of God's friends do we want to imitate, and with what goal?



in accord with the ways of Jehovah. They are intimate associates of the world. Therefore, to pattern our lives and conduct after their speech, dress, grooming and conduct would mean making ourselves friends with them instead of with God.

You youths, especially, must be careful about imitating these people since your natural inclination is to imitate older ones. But these prominent people are just imperfect human creatures who will die at Armageddon, if they do not change their course and conform to the standards of Jehovah. Would it be wise, then, to walk

(Ex. 17:14) with such persons by copying their ways? Would it not be better for you younger ones, as well as you adults,

to hold in esteem those that have proved themselves to be friends of God—individuals like Moses, Joshua, David, Barak, Jephthah and Jesus? Others, too, such as Ruth, Rahab, Deborah and many, many more, have kept friendship with Jehovah and are truly worthy of our admiration and esteem. (Heb. 11: 4-38)

What about the modern examples of those that have remained friends with God? Wouldn't you like to imitate the loyalty and endurance of your brothers who have withstood the brunt of dictatorships like Hitler's Nazi regime or the Communist types, because they would not renounce their friendship with Jehovah?

vah? These and countless others that have walked with God down through the stream of time will be alive after the "great tribulation," whereas the prominent friends of this world will be gone forever.—Ps. 37: 10, 34, 38; Matt. 24:21, 22.

#### OUR SPEECH AND CONDUCT

<sup>10</sup> Additionally, friends of God are admonished to be upbuilding in their speech. Paul writes: "Let a rotten saying not proceed out of your mouth, but whatever saying is good for building up as the need may be, that it may impart what is favorable to the hearers." (Eph. 4:29)

Can we say that the friends of the world heed these words? Are they upbuilding in their speech? Do they impart what is "favorable to the hearers"? James had much to say about the tongue, and he observed:

"Out of the same

<sup>10, 11. (a) Could association with the world affect our speech? Explain. (b) What does the Bible say about conduct and dress, and what could result if we failed to heed 1 Corinthians 15:33?</sup>



mouth come forth blessing and cursing. It is not proper, my brothers, for these things to go on occurring this way." (Jas. 3:2-12)

Would it be wise, then, to associate with worldlings, and perhaps acquire the kind of tongue described by James?

<sup>11</sup> Also, what about our conduct? Is it patterned after the world or is it "fine among the nations," as Peter recommends? (1 Pet. 2:12) What about our dress? Do we try to keep up with the latest fads? Could we do this and dress "with modesty and soundness of mind," as Paul encouraged us to do? (1 Tim. 2:9; Prov. 11:2; Mic. 6:8) We must not fool ourselves. Paul emphatically stated: "Bad associations spoil useful habits." (1 Cor. 15:33) Consequently, in the areas just considered, it is apparent that we cannot enjoy association with the world by our

thinking and actions and expect to remain on friendly terms with God.

<sup>12</sup> To remain God's friends, we must heed Peter's inspired words: "Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of persons ought you to be in holy acts of conduct and deeds of godly devotion?"

(2 Pet. 3:11-14) Some of these acts and deeds would be having a share in preaching the good news, attending the meetings of God's people and also "to keep oneself without spot from the world." (Matt. 24:14; Heb. 10:25; Jas. 1:27) By engaging in such "holy acts" and "deeds of godly devotion" we will keep ourselves so busy that there will be no time left to mingle with the world or to think about its ways. This is vital in being friends of God.

#### FRIENDSHIP AMONG BROTHERS

<sup>13</sup> There is also something else that must be considered. What is your attitude toward your brothers? Do you love them? Do you prove it by your association with them? Do you talk freely with all of them? Or have you failed to speak with a certain person for years because of some petty difference? Or do you avoid certain ones for one reason or another? You may spend much time in the preaching work. You may comment freely at all the meetings. You may be absorbed in all the activities in the congregation. But, even so, are you really a friend of God while treating your brother as someone to be shunned? What does God say? "If anyone makes the statement: 'I love God,' and yet is hating his brother, he is a liar. For he who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot be loving God, whom he has not seen." (1 John 4:20) Therefore, it is mandatory to "first make your

12. What does Peter say at 2 Peter 3:11-14, and what are some of the acts and deeds in which we can share?  
13. (a) How might we show a worldly attitude toward our brother, and what does 1 John 4:20 say about this? (b) Jesus encouraged us to do what with our brother, and why?

peace with your brother," as Jesus admonished, since an unloving attitude toward him reveals that we are not a friend of Jehovah.—Matt. 5:23, 24; 1 Pet. 1:22.

<sup>14</sup> Another characteristic of people of the world is to be merciless and unforgiving in their actions toward their friends. Do they not belittle, find fault with, complain about, and speak slightlyingly of others? The Bible speaks of them in this way: "A good-for-nothing man is digging up what is bad, and upon his lips there is, as it were, a scorching fire." (Prov. 16:27) However, such action should be foreign to Jehovah's friends. We are different because we overlook the weaknesses and minor transgressions of others. We are willing to forgive. Why? Does not Jehovah set the example? David reminds us at Psalm 103:9: "He will not for all time keep finding fault, neither will he to time indefinite keep resentful." And verse 14 says: "For he himself well knows the formation of us, remembering that we are dust." What a fine example to copy! So, when our brother falls short, what do we do? We do exactly what Jehovah would do. We forgive! To help us to do that, we might ask ourselves some questions. Was it due to his imperfection? Was it because of his not thinking? Can the grievance be minimized? Why not give him the benefit of the doubt? It would indeed be better to "have intense love for one another," for "love covers a multitude of sins." (1 Pet. 4:8; Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13; 1 Pet. 3:8, 9) In doing this we are showing that we are God's friends rather than the world's friends.

#### MAINTAINING FRIENDSHIP WITH GOD

<sup>15</sup> This hostile, unfriendly world exerts a tremendous pressure upon God's friends

14. (a) Are we to copy the world's attitude toward others, and why? (b) What will help us to overlook or forgive the imperfections of others?

15. The Devil is using what to break our friendship with God, and how do we avoid becoming enmeshed in its ways?

today. It is vital for the latter to put forth much effort and hard work to keep friendly with Him. The Devil is trying desperately to sever that friendship. He does this by making the world most attractive and alluring. Note what 1 John 2:16 says: "Everything in the world," and then John points out the three outstanding things that originate with the world and that Satan uses—"the desire of the flesh and the desire of the eyes and the showy display of one's means of life." How accurately he depicts the world that must be resisted if we do not want to become enmeshed in its ways and lose our identity as God's friends!

<sup>16</sup> A Christian must take positive steps in opposing the "ruler of this world," Satan, and his associates. (Eph. 6:10-18; Jas.

4:7) How? What did Jesus do when he was tempted on three different occasions in the wilderness? He answered: "It is written." (Matt. 4:1-11) This perfect man let the words of God direct his life course, and since Jesus set the example, we should copy him. The psalmist said: "Your word is a lamp to my foot." (Ps. 119:105) Thus, by letting God's Word govern our every action in opposing Satan, we can strengthen our relationship with our friend, Jehovah.

<sup>17</sup> Between now and the end of this system, it will not be possible to wage a winning war against the Devil in our own strength. We need help from God. We must appeal to Him for the wisdom and guidance to cope with the trials and temptations that must be faced. (Jas. 1:5) None of us are immune from the Devil's tactics. He is working overtime to cause us to capitulate to wrong desires and pressures from his world. However, our capitulating would mean losing our precious friendship with God, and that would lead to our eter-

16. How did Jesus oppose Satan, and how may we do the same?

17. What do we need to overcome the trials ahead, and what loss would we suffer if we capitulated?

nal death. (Jas. 1:14, 15) Is such a course worth that price?

<sup>18</sup> Also, to encourage and help His friends to resist catering to selfish desires, Jehovah has taken additional steps by appointing elders. It would be wise to respond to their counsel. Paul advises: "Be obedient to those who are taking the lead among you and be submissive, for they are keeping watch over your souls as those who will render an account." (Heb. 13:17; Gal. 6:1) Occasionally, we may not like what they tell us. It may be contrary to what we want to hear. But, to be a friend of God, we should listen to them and humbly apply their counsel. The psalmist says: "The way of the foolish one is right in his own eyes, but the one listening to counsel is wise."—Prov. 12:15.

<sup>19</sup> What if one becomes "foolish" and engages in wrongdoing of a serious nature? Is all hope gone? No, for James reminds us: "If he has committed sins, it will be forgiven him. Therefore openly confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may get healed." (Jas. 5:13-16) Therefore, enlist the aid of the elders and let them help you to recover from the sinful course. (Prov. 28:13) What a comfort to know that one might lose friendship with God momentarily, and yet be restored as a trusted friend by repenting and taking a course in harmony with his ways!—Isa. 55:7.

<sup>20</sup> Friendship with the world can result in certain advantages but it is only a temporary enjoyment of sin. It is short-lived. It is a life with no future. At the most it could last only for the little time that is left for this old world. Would it not be better to follow the fine example of Moses?

18. God has done what else to assist his friends, and what should be our response to these?

19. Is all hope gone for one who commits a serious wrong? Explain.

20. (a) Will advantages gained from the world be lasting? (b) Who set a good example for us, and why did he take such a course?

The Bible says of him: "By faith Moses, when grown up, refused to be called the son of the daughter of Pharaoh, choosing to be ill-treated with the people of God rather than to have the temporary enjoyment of sin, because he esteemed the reproach of the Christ as riches greater than the treasures of Egypt; for he looked intently toward the payment of the reward." (Heb. 11:24-26) Moses refused the offer to be a friend of that world, with its riches and attractions, because he desired a reward from Jehovah. What was that reward? He knew that by remaining a friend of God he would be remembered by God and have a resurrection to life in a righteous new order.

## You Must Be Holy

### BECAUSE

WHEN you hear someone mention the word "holy," what comes to your mind? Do you think that "holiness" is something beyond your reach, an unattainable quality? Or that you could never measure up to being a "holy" person? On the other hand, do you picture a "holy" person as one depicted by Christendom or heathendom—a person displaying a pious look, dressed in some special garb, with a sanctimonious attitude, a holier-than-thou individual? Well, if that is what you envision when the word "holy" is mentioned, then you have yet to understand what the Bible means by that term.

1. What thoughts may come to mind when you hear the word "holy"?

<sup>21</sup> May our faith and hope be as strong as that of Moses. May we, in all avenues of life, keep ourselves "unspotted" from the world and its friends. May our thinking and actions be centered around our close friend, Jehovah. May our heart's desire be to continue to attach ourselves affectionately to him as an intimate friend. Whether we are one of the "Lord's anointed" or one of the "great crowd," it will mean many blessings NOW, but, most rewarding of all, we will receive the prize of everlasting life in a righteous new order inhabited only by the friends of Jehovah.

—1 Tim. 4:8.

21. (a) What must we do to gain the reward reserved for God's friends? (b) What is the reward that we receive?

## Jehovah Is Holy

"DO YOU ALSO BECOME HOLY YOURSELVES IN ALL YOUR CONDUCT."—I PET. 1:15.

<sup>2</sup> The English words "holy" and "holiness" in the Bible are translated from Hebrew words that appear to have the root meaning "to be clean," "to be new or fresh, untarnished." This would apply in a physical sense, but, more importantly, in a spiritual or moral sense. Thus, the words mainly have to do with moral cleanliness, sacredness, purity. These Hebrew words also convey the idea of being separate, exclusive, or sanctified to God. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the

2. What meaning do the Hebrew and Greek words convey for "holy" and "holiness"?

two words also denote a separation to God, and refer to purity or perfection in the personal conduct of an individual.

<sup>3</sup> With an understanding of these words in mind, we can appreciate why the apostle Peter gave the counsel that is recorded at 1 Peter 1:14-16: "As obedient children, quit being fashioned according to the desires you formerly had in your ignorance, but, in accord with the Holy One who called you, do you also become holy yourselves in all your conduct, because it is written: 'You must be holy, because I am holy.'" Did you notice the twofold directive that was issued by Peter? First, he mentioned to "quit being fashioned according to the desires you formerly had," and, secondly, Peter goes on to state that we must "become holy." What is the incentive to respond to this dual command? The key reason for wanting to acquire "holiness" is because Jehovah is "holy." Just as Peter stated: "You must be holy, because I am holy."

#### ACQUIRING HOLINESS

<sup>4</sup> Since this is a quality of God, and we are imperfect, how is holiness acquired? First Peter 1:14, quoted above, explains that we must show childlike obedience and, later on, verse twenty-two states: "You have purified your souls by your obedience to the truth." It is clear, then, that to acquire holiness we must show 'childlike obedience' to the truth, which is found in God's Word. Jesus recognized the part that "truth" plays in gaining a holy standing with God for he states at John 17:17: "Sanctify them by means of the truth; your word is truth." Therefore, a person is made 'fresh, clean, untarnished' and is 'set apart' to God by obeying the

truth and letting the truth go to work in his life.

<sup>5</sup> We must appreciate the fact that to obey the truth means to obey our Creator. To disobey the truth, by returning to former unclean ways and desires, would mean to sin against Jehovah personally. David felt that way after reflecting upon his adulterous relationship with Bathsheba. After repenting, he uttered these forceful words: "Against you [Jehovah], you alone, I have sinned, and what is bad in your eyes I have done." (Ps. 51:4) The prodigal son reached the same conclusion after his recovery from the lapse into a debauched, licentious, unholy course. He put it this way: "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you." (Luke 15:18) Since sin is defined as a moral failure, a missing of the mark of perfection, it would make a Christian unholy, tarnished, unclean in a spiritual and moral sense. Therefore, in appreciation for all that Jehovah has done, a Christian must fight to keep loyal and obedient to the truth rather than disobey and sin against him.

<sup>6</sup> Down through the centuries, Jehovah has wanted his people to be holy, to become progressively more like himself. To understand this better, let us consider briefly God's dealings with his people under the Mosaic law. His words to this Jewish nation were as follows: "You should prove yourselves holy, because I Jehovah your God am holy." (Lev. 19:2) Now, what facets of human experience was Jehovah discussing here? Was he simply referring to the religious activities of life? No, that was not the case. The context, the remaining thirty-five verses in the chapter, reveals that God was talk-

3. What dual counsel did Peter give at 1 Peter 1:14-16, and what incentive is there to heed these words?

4. How is holiness acquired, and what part does truth play in the matter?

5. (a) We will be doing what if we disobey truth, and what two examples do we have of this? (b) Define sin, and explain how we can keep from sinning against God.

6. Since the Israelites were to become holy, was the holiness limited to their religious activity only? Why not?

ing about activities that marked every aspect of Jewish life. Things like stealing, impartiality in judgment, use of weights and measures, treatment of handicaps such as deafness and blindness, and even sexual matters are specifically mentioned. Therefore, holiness was to be displayed in all activities of life. By holding to God's standards for holiness at that time, the nation could be a people that was "holy," or clean, and set apart from the worldly nations as a people devoted exclusively to Jehovah. The dietary, sanitary and moral laws that God gave to them were a constant reminder of their separateness and holiness to Him.—Lev. 22:31, 32.

#### MEANING OF HOLINESS CLARIFIED

<sup>7</sup> However, the Israelites could be cleansed and set apart from the ancient world and made "holy" only up to a point. That is why it was necessary for God to send Jesus to the earth, to unveil to mankind additional information about his Father and His wonderful qualities of righteousness, purity and holiness. The teachings of Jesus Christ could make receptive people even holier than those under the Law. His instructions would reach the hearts of those who wanted to respond to the message of God. It could help them to fashion themselves more like Jehovah. They could get to know God on a more intimate basis than those who lived prior to Jesus' coming to the earth.—John 1:18.

<sup>8</sup> While performing his God-appointed service Jesus time and again quoted the Law and then probed deeper. How so? He got to the motives and reasons for doing things. Jesus was interested in finding out what was in a person's heart. He illustrated this once when he was discussing the Law and the matter of murder

7. (a) Since the Israelites could be made "holy" only up to a point, what was necessary on God's part? (b) How did Jesus' message help the people of his day?

8. How did Jesus, after quoting the Law, probe deeper, and what two examples illustrate this?

and adultery. He explained: "You heard that it was said to those of ancient times, 'You must not murder; but whoever commits a murder will be accountable to the court of justice.' However, I say to you that everyone who continues wrathful with his brother will be accountable to the court of justice; but whoever addresses his brother with an unspeakable word of contempt will be accountable to the Supreme Court; whereas whoever says, 'You despicable fool!' will be liable to the fiery Gehenna." (Matt. 5:21, 22) Later, when talking about adultery, Jesus had this to say: "You heard that it was said, 'You must not commit adultery.' But I say to you that everyone that keeps on looking at a woman so as to have a passion for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart."—Matt. 5:27, 28.

<sup>9</sup> In both cases, we can see the superiority of the teachings of Christ over those of the Law in making one holy. Under the Law the physical acts of murder and adultery would bring condemnation of death to an Israelite. But with the Christian, even his thoughts and motives could condemn him in Jehovah's eyes. He had to have a clean heart. (Mark 7:18-23) A Christian could not entertain improper thoughts and desires and expect to put on the "holiness" that would reflect the glory of Jehovah. (Phil. 4:8; 2 Cor. 3:18) So Jesus highlighted the principles behind the Law. He stressed the spirit of the Law, which had been largely ignored by those that taught the Law.

<sup>10</sup> The apostles and other followers of Jesus took to heart that counsel by endeavoring to apply the principles and spirit of the Law in their lives. This was helpful to them in acquiring the "holiness" that was expected of them. They received that "holiness" by faith in the sin-atonning value

9. (a) Show the contrast between the Law and Christianity. (b) What did Jesus highlight in his teaching? 10. How did the followers of Jesus benefit, and what did Peter say about these separated Christians?

of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Peter, in describing the Christian congregation, was moved to speak of it as "a holy nation," one that was completely separated from the world and set aside for service to its God. (1 Pet. 2:9) These ones, even though imperfect, were "holy" or clean and bright in Jehovah's eyes.

<sup>11</sup> Before Jesus came to the earth, Malachi, a man of God, had prophesied that Jehovah would also do a cleansing work during the end of this system of things. He described it in this manner: "But who will be putting up with the day of his coming, and who will be the one standing when he appears? For he will be like the fire of a refiner and like the lye of laundry-men. And he must sit as a refiner and cleanser." (Mal. 3:2, 3) Chronology and physical facts in fulfillment of Bible prophecy show that this cleansing work has been performed since shortly after the establishment of God's kingdom in 1914. Just as Jehovah had cleansed his people in the past, it was necessary progressively to cleanse the modern people that carry his name, in order to make them a holy people.

#### A PROGRESSIVE CLEANSING

<sup>12</sup> What are some of the changes and gradual transformations that have had to be made by the modern Christian congregation world wide and the individuals who make it up? What was this cleansing work that Malachi had predicted? Let us begin to get our answer by going back to the days of C. T. Russell and J. F. Rutherford, who served successively as presidents of the Watch Tower Society from the 1880's through to the 1940's. Wrong doctrines such as hellfire (Eccl. 9:5, 10) and the Trinity (John 14:28; 1 Cor. 11:3) had

11. What did Malachi say about a cleansing work, and when did that work begin?

12-16. As the cleansing work took place, what resulted with regard to (a) wrong doctrines, (b) moral uncleanness, and (c) drug and tobacco habits?

to be cleaned out. Later, true Christians were increasingly purified by the removal of the birthday celebration. (Eccl. 7:1) Then came the time for true Christians to be shown the necessity of keeping separate from the world and its conflicts, and that was made clear.—John 15:19; 17:16.

<sup>13</sup> During the years following World War II the moral corruption of the world began to reach frightful proportions. The possibility existed that God's clean organization could become contaminated by such corruptive influences. But Jehovah was interested in his people, just as in times past, so through his channel of communication he lovingly brought forward information to counteract the filth that could tarnish or cause his people to become unholy. (Matt. 24:45-47) Particularly from 1946, personal moral cleanliness became a matter of much greater concern to the Lord's people. (2 Cor. 7:1) Starting in 1952, the more formal Scriptural arrangement of disfellowshipping wrongdoers was instituted. Those who committed gross sins such as adultery and fornication were expelled from the congregation, if they did not repent. (1 Cor. 5:11-13) God's organization would not tolerate persons who refused to keep unspotted, clean and pure in the sight of Jehovah.

<sup>14</sup> In the 1960's "dating" between sexes was prominent and popular in the world. Heavy "petting" and "necking" were in vogue. Was there a danger of our youths becoming sullied and besmirched by "loose conduct" and unclean practices? (Eph. 4:19) Yes, there was! So, Jehovah again, through his organization, pointed out that such practices were not fitting for a "holy" people. Courtship was shown to be for marriage-minded adults. "Dating" was not a game, it was a serious matter. For Christians it should lead to honorable marriage.—Heb. 13:4.

<sup>15</sup> In recent years, homosexuality has swept the world. These homosexuals claim

that they are 'bringing it out of the closet' and they brag by saying, 'We are proud to be such.' It was apparent that this erosion of moral standards could pose a danger or threat for God's holy people, so the congregations were alerted and wrong-doers were cleaned out. Likewise, unclean practices, such as masturbation, which can be a steppingstone to homosexuality, have been dealt with in a serious, yet understanding, way, to help individuals keep clean and pure in Jehovah's eyes. Later, another issue needed attention. Unnatural practices in connection with sex in marriage, such as oral and anal copulation, have caused some of God's people to become impure in his eyes. But *The Watchtower* kept above this morass of filth by alerting married couples to God's thinking on the matter. Also, fornication (*por-nei'a*, Greek), which is so detestable in God's sight, was shown to include all forms of immoral sex relations. (1 Cor. 6:9, 10) The information was appreciated, and those who quit such unclean practices were in complete agreement with David, who wisely asked of his heavenly Father, "From concealed sins pronounce me innocent."—Ps. 19:12.

<sup>16</sup> More recently, Jehovah has brought to the attention of his "holy" people the need to disfellowship those dedicated, baptized Christians who refuse to break and give up the drug and tobacco habits. The idea that tobacco was a defilement of the "flesh and spirit" was not new. Down through the years in hundreds of different references in the Watch Tower Society's publications it has been brought to the attention of God's people how contrary to the teachings of the Sacred Scriptures smoking is. It was therefore time for God to remove those who refused to see the need of cleansing themselves of every defilement of the flesh and spirit. As of May 1974, in the United States alone, more than 2,000 had been disfellowshipped for

not quitting this unclean practice. They were not "perfecting holiness in God's fear," as Paul had encouraged.—2 Cor. 7:1.

<sup>17</sup> It is obvious from these as well as other examples of cleansing that Jehovah is striving to "perfect" his people in holiness. Just as a father, while walking in a forest, will take his small child's hand to assist in overcoming any pitfalls and obstacles, so our heavenly Father has guided his people down through the years. Each step that he has brought us through has been necessary. As things cropped up that could tarnish or spot, they were taken care of by Jehovah. The congregations were notified and God's people were prepared for the changes right on time. Therefore we are being "refined" and "purified" so that we can be in a better position to represent God in a holier way. However, the sobering question is, What are we doing as *individuals*? Have we kept pace with all these major progressive changes? Each of us needs to search his heart to find the answer.

#### CONTINUING TO BE MADE HOLY

<sup>18</sup> We must recognize that God's standards for holiness do not change. They have always been in the Bible. As he brings these things to our attention, he merely wants us to see more clearly the principles and laws of his Word. He wants us to learn more about his ways so that we can pattern ourselves more after his holiness. When we err and fall down, he is patient with us. He has empathy, "remembering that we are dust." (Ps. 103:14) He does not threaten us with removal from the congregation for each and every transgression, but he gives us the opportunity to grow in appreciation of his ways and qualities.

17. How has God protected his people as a group, and what sobering question should an individual ask himself?

18. Why does Jehovah bring his holy standards to our attention, and how does he react when we err?

<sup>19</sup> But we do not want to accept the undeserved kindness of God and miss the purpose or reason for being brought into God's clean organization. (2 Cor. 6:1) We must not be indifferent. It is not wise to take things for granted. We cannot afford to remain stationary. We must take seriously what his Word says and what his organization reveals to us. As new information comes out we must take it to heart and sincerely endeavor to apply it in our lives. We are in God's clean organization to bring honor and praise to Him. If we fail to do this, then we are missing the purpose for becoming clean and "holy." Really, could we then expect the blessings and support of God?

<sup>20</sup> God's way of ruling is by love. (1 John 4:16) He wants us to do things because they are right. Sometime in the future a test may be imposed upon us to comply with certain information that God brings to our attention. It may hit something that we love very dearly. What will we do? Will we hesitate in applying counsel, perhaps pondering in our mind as to what we want to do about it? If that would be the case, wouldn't we really be asking ourselves the question, 'Do we really want the rulership of God?' Would not a failure to respond to direction from God through his organization really indicate a rejection of divine rulership?

<sup>21</sup> As we receive each new publication through Jehovah's faithful "slave" class, whether we are of the "anointed" or of the "great crowd," we see fresh facets of Jehovah's holy standards being drawn to our attention. It is by this means that we are being cleansed, and not by an increased

19. How might we accept the undeserved kindness of God and yet miss its purpose?

20. (a) What is God's way of ruling? (b) A failure to respond to His direction would indicate what?

21. Today, by what means does God make his people holier?

list of reasons for disfellowshipping persons in the days to come. We are purified by our obedience to the truth just as Peter said: "You have purified your souls by your obedience to the truth." (1 Pet. 1:22) It is apparent that Jehovah's people as a group are doing this, but it is vital that individually we respond to what Jehovah is doing for us at this time. He is making us "holy" just as He is "holy."

<sup>22</sup> What we want to do is image our heavenly Father. Therefore, we must work to stay clean, especially as this world becomes progressively more and more dirty and unclean. This is no time to be making excuses because of our weaknesses and imperfections. We must strive to improve. We must struggle steadily to become more like Jehovah. If the burden at times seems to be too great for us to carry, then why not accept God's invitation: "Throw your burden upon Jehovah himself, and he himself will sustain you."—Ps. 55:22; 68:19.

<sup>23</sup> Important, too, is the need to keep our minds centered on the holy New Order that will be filled with holy people. Constantly reflect on the time when *you* will be clean and holy forever, physically, mentally, morally and spiritually. However, to experience those blessings it is essential NOW to associate with the clean people that make up the congregations of God. It will stimulate you to want to imitate their fine example as they strive to be holy. (Heb. 10:24, 25) Let us continue to cleanse ourselves now by obeying God's Word of truth. We want to follow the leadings of the Christian congregation and respond to the direction of the holy spirit that Jehovah is pouring out to help us to gain his holiness. Let us display our genuine holiness by our unhypocritical love

22. Instead of making excuses for weaknesses, what should we do?

23. What are the things we must do now to realize life in a holy new system?

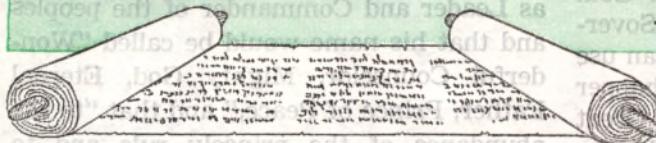
for other people and by responding with an ever-deepening love for our holy God, Jehovah.—Matt. 22:37-40.

<sup>24</sup> What a grand prospect all of us have before us today! That “holiness” that many thought could never be reached can be ours. How wonderful it will be as truly

24. What grand prospect can be realized by us, resulting in all credit going to whom?

“holy” persons to reflect on the many superlative qualities of God throughout all eternity! All praise and honor go to Him! How eternally grateful we will be to Jehovah for the opportunity that was given to us to respond to his command: “You must be holy, because I am holy”—1 Pet. 1:16.

# ISAIAH—*A Book Overflowing with Good News!*



WELL has it been said that the writer of the book of Isaiah was an “evangelical prophet.” “Evangelical” has to do with good news, and his book is indeed overflowing with good news. Good news about what? Good news primarily about the restoration of God’s people to their homeland, made certain by the greatness and goodness of their God Jehovah. The book also contains much good news about the coming Messiah and his kingdom.

This grand message that Jehovah God had for his people was one of comfort and hope, one that called for gladness and rejoicing. And so we find that Isaiah abounds with such expressions as “Cry out in gladness,” “Cry out in joy,” “Joyfully cry out,” “Become cheerful.” In fact, we find more references to joy, joyfulness and rejoicing in Isaiah than in any other Bible book aside from the Psalms.—Isa. 35:6; 42:11; 44:23; 52:9.

Whom would Jehovah God choose for giving this exalted and jubilant message to his people? One who was preeminently qualified to put this message in the best possible language, namely, Isaiah. He it was who volunteered when, in a vision, he saw Jehovah in His holy temple and heard Him asking: “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” Appreciating this grand privilege, Isaiah called out: “Here I am! Send me.” (Isa. 6:8) And Jehovah did indeed use him. As a result of Jehovah’s holy spirit quickening Isaiah’s natural abilities, the book is a literary masterpiece, a fact acknowledged by all Bible scholars. Basically, it is in poetic style, some translations even putting 90 percent of it in poetic form.

When did Isaiah write his book? He prophesied during the eighth century, at least as early as 777 B.C.E. and down to 732 B.C.E., if not also later. (Isa. 6:1; 36:1) He prophesied, therefore, during at least some forty-five years, which was during the reigns of the Judean kings Uzziah,

Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah. (1:1) Some of his prophecies had immediate fulfillment, such as the one telling of Sennacherib's defeat; others waited two hundred years until the time that the Jews returned to their homeland. Then again, some were fulfilled nearly eight centuries later with the coming of Christ, and still others have waited some twenty-six centuries, until our time. Isaiah is the prophet most frequently quoted in the Christian Greek Scriptures.

#### WHY THE GOOD NEWS IS SO CERTAIN

On what does Isaiah base his good news? Why can we have such confidence in it? Because of the sovereignty, the greatness, the goodness and the Creatorship of the Author of the good news, Jehovah God! (Isa. 40:26; 42:8; 45:18) As the "Sovereign Lord, Jehovah of armies," he can use a mighty world power as a woodchopper uses an ax. (3:15; 10:15) He is the Great Potter, and we are but as clay in his hands. Appreciating this fact should make us willing to submit to him.—Isa. 29:16; 64:8.

Jehovah is so great that nations are but as the fine dust of the balance and as a drop of water that might still fall from an emptied bucket. From Jehovah's vantage point high above earth's sphere puny men seem as grasshoppers. (Chapter 40) Because Jehovah is such a God, we can draw comfort from his assurances: 'Whatever he has spoken he will bring to pass; his word will have sure success.' This he affirms for us time and again.—Isa. 14:24, 27; 46:10, 11; 55:10, 11.

Having these qualities, Jehovah is able to foretell the future, something no false gods can do. They have no witnesses, but He does: "You are my witnesses . . . in order that you may know and have faith in me . . . I—I am Jehovah, and besides me there is no savior. . . . So you are my witnesses . . . and I am God."—Isa. 43:9-12.

#### GOOD NEWS ABOUT THE MESSIAH

Jehovah God is the Author of the good news, and it comes through his Son, the Messiah. (1 Cor. 8:6) Most appropriately, Isaiah has much to say about the Messiah. He foretold many details about Jesus' life. (Isa. 7:14; 9:1, 2; 11:1; 42:1-4; Matt. 1:1, 6, 16-23; 4:14-16; 12:14-21) He foretold how John the Baptist would prepare the way before the Messiah (Isa. 40:3; John 1:23); that Jesus would be anointed with God's holy spirit to declare a comforting message (Isa. 61:1, 2; Luke 4:17, 18), and that Jesus would be rejected as a stone of stumbling to the Jews, and yet become the "corner" foundation stone for spiritual Israel.—Isa. 8:14, 15; 28:16; 1 Pet. 2:6-8.

Isaiah also foretold Jesus' future role as Leader and Commander of the peoples and that his name would be called "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace," and that "to the abundance of the princely rule and to peace there will be no end." (Isa. 55:4; 9:6, 7) Particularly striking is Isaiah chapter 53. The Christian Greek Scriptures record the fulfillment of every verse of this chapter and, though dealing mostly with Jesus' suffering, it ends on a confident note: "He will be satisfied," for God shall "deal him a portion among the many, and it will be with the mighty ones that he will apportion the spoil." (53:11, 12) Yes, the good news will triumph through the offices of the Son of God, the Messiah.

#### GLOWING RESTORATION PROPHECIES

Many indeed are Isaiah's glowing restoration prophecies. These, by and large, had their initial fulfillment when the Jews returned to their homeland after their seventy-year Babylonian exile. Some of these prophecies had a secondary fulfillment in the time of Christ. (Isa. 40:3;

Matt. 3:1-3) And all have their major fulfillment in modern times.\*

Isaiah says of God's own people: "They will have to beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning shears. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, neither will they learn war anymore." (Isa. 2:2-4) In Jehovah's spiritual paradise today persons who formerly had dispositions like a wolf, a leopard, a lion or a bear have become docile. As Isaiah says of them: "They will not do any harm or cause any ruin in all my holy mountain; because the earth will certainly be filled with the knowledge of Jehovah as the waters are covering the very sea." (11:6-9) Jehovah will provide a sumptuous banquet for all peoples. "He will actually swallow up death forever," and "no resident will say: 'I am sick.'" (25:6-8; 33:24) What good news that is!

Also, Isaiah says: "The desert plain will be joyful and blossom as the saffron. . . . 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." (Isa. 35:1-10) Jehovah will create "new heavens and a new earth," people will build houses and they themselves will occupy them, they will plant vineyards and they themselves will eat the fruit of them. (65:17-25) What Jehovah did for ancient Israel, and is doing for spiritual Israel today in fulfillment of these prophecies, we can rest assured that he will yet do in a literal way earth wide in fulfillment of the commission he originally gave to man in Genesis 1:28.

#### ADMONITION AND COMFORT

The book of Isaiah contains much encouraging admonition and counsel for us today. With such admonition there is al-

### IN THE NEXT ISSUE

■ An Earth Without Pain.

■ Paralyzed—but Living a Full Life.

■ God's Mercy to Mankind in Our Twentieth Century.

ways some good news—provided the counsel is heeded. Thus, in the very first chapter Jehovah tells his people that he has no delight in their formalistic worship and admonishes them: "Learn to do good; search for justice; . . . plead the cause of the widow." If such counsel is heeded, then 'though your sins be red like scarlet and crimson, they will become white as snow and wool.' (Isa. 1:17, 18) To give but one other example: "Search for Jehovah, you people, while he may be found. . . . Let the wicked man leave his way, and the harmful man his thoughts; and let him return to Jehovah, who will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will forgive in a large way." What comforting assurance that is—"forgive in a large way!"—55:6, 7.

Especially comforting are the principles that Jehovah enunciates by his prophet Isaiah, as can be seen by the following representative examples: "In the height and in the holy place is where I reside, also with the one crushed and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly ones and to revive the heart of the ones being crushed." (Isa. 57:15; compare 66:2.) Jesus when on earth quoted and applied the principle found at Isaiah 54:13: "All your sons will be persons taught by Jehovah, and the peace of your sons will be abundant." Those who let themselves be taught by Jesus did have this peace.

\* See *Man's Salvation out of World Distress at Hand!*, pages 90, 91.

(John 6:45; 14:27; 16:33) And throughout the centuries God's people could take comfort from the prophetic assurance given at Isaiah 54:17: "Any weapon whatever that will be formed against you will have no success, and any tongue at all that will rise up against you in the judgment you will condemn."

Truly, the book of Isaiah is an 'evangelical prophecy,' it is good news. It contains good news about Jehovah God and his purposes and assurance that all his purposes will be accomplished. It also contains good news about the Messiah and what he will accomplish, and the good news about the restoration of God's people in ancient and modern times. And seeing so many of his prophecies fulfilled, we can have confidence that the rest will also be fulfilled.

Moreover, the book of Isaiah helps all who will take its principles seriously to live successfully in this world. "The word of Jehovah is a sharp two-edged sword," (Heb. 4:12), and it is the best way to live successfully in this world. "The word of Jehovah is a sharp two-edged sword, indeed, which penetrates even to dividing asunder soul and spirit, and has the power to判斷 the thoughts and intents of the heart." (Heb. 4:12). Those who let themselves be taught by Jehovah's Word will have no difficulty in understanding the principles of life.

Those who let themselves be taught by Jehovah's Word will have no difficulty in understanding the principles of life. "All your sins will be taken away if you confess them to me and believe in me." (John 3:18). Those who let themselves be taught by Jehovah's Word will have no difficulty in understanding the principles of life. "If you confess your sins to me, I will forgive you; if you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love." (1 John 3:21).

servants of Jehovah to have a better appreciation of their relationship with Jehovah by its stressing his greatness and the puniness of man. It also warns us against being content with formalistic worship, but to concern ourselves with practicing righteousness, to be clean as bearers of Jehovah's "vessels," and at all times to look to him as our "Grand Instructor" and Teacher. (Isa. 30:20; 52:11; 54:13) And it is not amiss to note that since Jehovah's servants have such a fine message to bring to the people, they should, like Isaiah, be concerned with expressing it in the very best manner possible.—50:4.

#### "WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

March 28: Jehovah's Friend or the World's Friend—Which? Page 113. Songs to Be Used: 18, 38.

April 4: You Must Be Holy Because Jehovah Is Holy. Page 119. Songs to Be Used: 71, 75.

#### WOMANHOOD AND WOMEN

The book of Isaiah constitutes much of the Old Testament prophetic literature. With such womanhood there is something special. Women will get the first to know. (Gen. 3:15)