

The WATCHTOWER

DECEMBER 1, 1952

Semimonthly

Announcing
**JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM**

**SHARING IN THE PROSPERITY
OF GOD'S NATION**

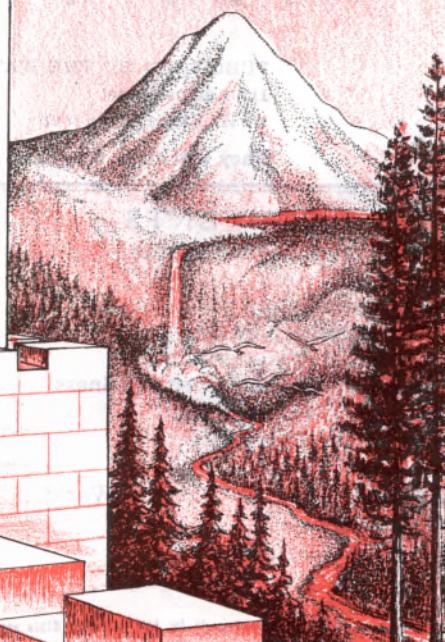
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THEOCRATIC SLAVES
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**WALKING BLAMELESSLY
THROUGH THE LAST DAYS**

—
MODERN IDOLATRY FORESHADOWED
—

**GROWING IN THE
UNDESERVED KINDNESS**

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

THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER"

Literal towers in Bible times were elevated vantage points from which watchmen could observe happenings, warn of danger, or announce good news. Our magazine figuratively occupies such a vantage point, for it is founded on the very pinnacle of wisdom, God's Word. That elevates it above racial, national and political propagandas and prejudices, frees it from selfish bias. It is not bound by any traditional creed, but its message advances as the light on God's purposes and works increases.—Habakkuk 2:1-3.

It sees things Scripturally. When it observes this generation afflicted with greed, delinquency, hypocrisy, atheism, war, famine, pestilence, perplexity and fear, and persecution of unpopular minorities, it does not parrot the old fable about history repeating itself. Informed by Bible prophecy, it sees in these things the sign of the world's time of the end. But with bright hope it also sees opening up for us just beyond these woes the portals of a new world.

Thus viewed, "The Watchtower" stands as a watchman atop a tower, alert to what is going on, awake to note signs of danger, faithful to point out the way of escape. It announces Jehovah's kingdom established by Christ's enthronement in heaven, feeds his kingdom joint-heirs with spiritual food, cheers men of good will with glorious prospects of eternal life in a paradise earth, comforts us with the resurrection promise for the dead.

It is not dogmatic, but has a confident ring in its voice, because it is based on God's Word. It does not privately interpret prophecy, but calls attention to physical facts, sets them alongside prophecy, and you see for yourself how well the two match, how accurately Jehovah interprets his own prophecy. In the interests of our salvation, it keeps sharp and faithful focus on Bible truth, and views religious news generally.

"Be watchful in these perilous times," God admonishes. So keep on the watch by regularly reading "The Watchtower".



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"They will all be taught by Jehovah."—John 6:45, NW; Isaiah 54:13

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AS — American Standard Version	LXX — The Septuagint Version
AT — An American Translation	Mo — James Moffatt's version
Da — J. N. Darby's version	NW — New World Trans. (2nd Ed.)
Dy — Catholic Douay version	Ro — J. B. Rotherham's version
ED — The Emphatic Diaglott	R2 — Revised Standard Version
Le — Isaac Leeser's version	Yg — Robert Young's version

Unless otherwise indicated, the Bible used is the King James Version

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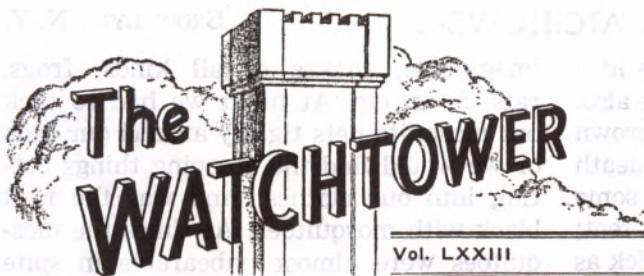
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Announcing
JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM

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RECOMMENDING THEMSELVES AS GOD'S MINISTERS

In the Australian Tropics

THE apostle Paul, that pioneer Christian missionary of the first century, in discussing his commission as an ambassador of God substituting for Christ Jesus, stated: "In every way we recommend ourselves as God's ministers, by the endurance of much, by tribulations, by cases of need, by difficulties," etc. (2 Cor. 6:4, NW) That Jehovah's witnesses in this twentieth century are recommending themselves as God's ambassadors or ministers in a like manner is apparent from the following experience had by a couple who are full-time ministers of Jehovah God.

"Our field for the ministry was a town in the tropics of Queensland, Australia. We brought a tent with us in case we should not be able to find any rooming accommodations; and after exhausting all possibilities—having found that there was not only an acute housing shortage but also great prejudice against Jehovah's witnesses—we resigned ourselves to continuing to live in our tent. All went as well as could be expected in our camp for about nine months, or until February, when the mid-winter rainy season reached its peak. And when it rains in the tropics it pours. It's only a matter of minutes before every crack in the ground, every gutter, drain and spout are flowing over and the town becomes just a lake of water.

"Our tent, after the hot sun had baked it for so many months, just could not take it, and so it was not long before water started pouring in everywhere, and we were forced to move into an old iron shed, after everything we had was soaked. As the rains continued, the rivers began to rise and flood warnings were broadcast.

"After staying in our 'home' for two days we decided that if we were going to meet our quota of 140 hours for the month as full-time ministers, we would have to get going. We started out, walked for half a mile and then came to water about a foot deep through which we plowed for some three miles before we reached the town in which we carried on our preaching work. Returning we found the water had risen half a foot higher. After several days of this we hit on the idea of walking along the railway; but as the waters kept rising it soon meant walking about half a mile through water three feet deep before we got to the railway and then pushing through water again at the end of the three-mile stretch along that way to get to our territory. It took two hours to make the trip each way.

"Walking along the railway line was not so bad for the first few days; but as the waters kept rising, inundating the countryside for miles around, the creeping things

looking for a dry spot got the same idea we had and made for the railway line also. There they came, by the hundreds—brown and black snakes, rattlesnakes and death adders; red bellies and yellow bellies; some were only six inches long, others six feet; some as thin as a worm, others as thick as your arm. They would slither through the water until they got their heads just over the rail. It being smooth, they couldn't pull the rest of their slimy bodies over it.

"For two weeks we kept on walking the half mile through the waters to get to the railway line, then three miles along it, killing snakes as we went, and then through water three feet deep for another half mile in order to get to our territory. By the end of two weeks there were so many dead snakes along the line it was hard to distinguish the dead from the living, so we had to be very careful. Just before the flood waters subsided our neighbor ran out of provisions and had to go to town. He had repaired his boat and yelled across the waters to ask whether we wanted a lift. We were only too glad to accept his offer, as by this time we were getting to be pretty tired.

"We rowed that day over farm fences, through streets and people's backyards, four miles to town, and the stench of the water was enough to reach to high heaven. As we rowed beneath the trees we would see their tops filled with snakes, hanging from the branches, seemingly looking menacingly at us. We'd shudder and hope that they would stay up there.

"Life in our camp also left much to be desired those days. All the time the waters kept closing in on us until there were but a few square yards of dry land between us and the water. As a result there too we had to contend with all the creeping things

imaginable, snakes of all kinds, frogs, rats, mice, etc. At night we had to tuck our mosquito nets tightly around our beds or we would find the creeping things getting into our clothes. And was the land black with mosquitoes! At times the mosquitoes were almost unbearable in spite of all the spray we used.

"Every cloud has its silver lining, so it is said, and so did ours. One day one of the folks with whom we were studying the Bible, after hearing of our experience, said, 'You mean you have put up with all that just so as to be able to tell people like us about God's kingdom? We have a nine-room house here; you can have a room and a veranda, and you can make it self-contained.' We moved in promptly. That was the first time in more than nine months that we had slept under a house roof. And did we appreciate it! As a result of our moving in, before a month was gone the young couple were going with us into the service, preaching the good news from house to house.

"On our four-mile trek to town we had to pass a settlement of houses whose occupants had shown extreme prejudice to our work when we first called. But having seen us walk to town daily in spite of the flood brought about a change in them and thereafter when they saw us pass by they showed such friendliness that many opportunities opened up to give them a witness concerning the Kingdom. Our sticking to it was richly rewarded, for we were able to start many interesting home Bible studies in the homes of the people of that tropical town in Queensland, people who manifested themselves as being of good will, as belonging to the 'other sheep' of the Right Shepherd, Christ Jesus.—John 10:16."



Walking Blamelessly Through the Last Days

A WORLD does not end every day! Not since the great flood of Noah's time has a "world" or system of things for governing the affairs of all mankind passed out of existence. But now, by occurrence of every detail of the great sign Jesus gave, we know that we face the imminent end of the present world system. (Matthew 24; Mark 13; Luke 21) We know too that we live now in most privileged times. There is an old worldly saying of some wit that states: "You will never get out of this world alive." Now, however, this is no longer necessarily true. God's people, his ministers, witnesses for his supremacy, today have their minds turned toward the new and righteous system of things looming just beyond this transition period. Their minds have been transformed. They find themselves now in the congregation of Jehovah God and they respond in grateful praise to their mighty Benefactor. They love life and want to be found in Jehovah's great congregation of survivors in the dawning new world as well. They wisely spurn the course of the dying old world, which travels the path of least resistance, boards the vehicles of self-gratification and will abruptly dead-end at the final Armageddon showdown. They engross themselves with God's commands and with how to keep them in a faultless way.

God's commands? What are they? "Who knows?" smiles the critic. "Who cares!" jeers the scoffer. But oh yes, God commands and directs his people today as always. All should recognize the special seriousness now with the judgment of an en-



tire world at hand, but only those with minds renewed

can grasp this. Only they see that "the time that has passed by is sufficient for you to have worked out the will of the nations when you proceeded in deeds of loose conduct, lusts, excesses with wine, revelries, drinking matches, and idolatries that are without legal restraint. Because you do not continue running with them in this course to the same low sink of debauchery, they are puzzled and go on speaking abusively of you. But these people will render an account to the one ready to judge those living and those dead". (1 Pet. 4:3-5, NW) It is pitiful to think of those continuing willfully to scorn God's righteous requirements because of their stupor from the wine-cup of drunkenness or dish of gluttony. They are like the proverbial sluggard too lazy to lift his hand again to his mouth.—Prov. 26:15.

Pitiful, yes. But our concern must be for those who show repentance from the old course and who then go so far as to dedicate their lives to Jehovah and his service. And our watching the great visible congregation of God grow in numbers must move us to see that the individual members ever go on growing in spiritual strength and maturity as well. We must show this

concern for each one of these sheeplike ones now flocking in, because God does.

OBSERVING "A NEW COMMANDMENT"

How tenderly and closely Jehovah regards his people is shown in his reference to them as "the apple of his eye". (Zech. 2:8) The place of honor he assigns them is described by Daniel: "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." (Dan. 12:3) Surely not what they are of themselves calls forth such glowing description, but what Jehovah's undeserved kindness has bestowed upon them for their faithfulness. What is that? Something more powerful than the atomic weapons with which this world has just so recently become acquainted; something beyond comparison in value with the greatest stores of material wealth ever accumulated on this earth. It is the word of truth Jehovah entrusts to his witnesses by which he makes them his message bearers. The apostle Paul did not underestimate the importance of such a charge, but urged young Timothy, one of God's first-century messengers: "Ponder over these things, be absorbed in them, that your advancement may be manifest to all persons. Pay constant attention to yourself and to your teaching. Stay by these things, for by doing this you will save both yourself and those who listen to you."—1 Tim. 4:15, 16, NW.

To no idle work or vain reward are those now called who enter God's great congregation. It is *life* they are working for, "the real life." (1 Tim. 6:19, NW) Are you one already gathered into this congregation and helping others in the way to life? Then are you not moved with the seriousness of keeping the congregation a unit functioning to God's praise, meeting his require-

ments, a fit place for the Lord Jesus to direct his "sheep"? Then is it not an individual responsibility to do so, something to which each Christian minister must "pay constant attention"?

Yes. But no more are we motivated as the pre-Messiah Jews once were, by a code of written laws and rules and regulations. Jesus left behind instead a new spirit of authority based on his own unselfish devotion: "I am giving you a new commandment, that you love one another; just as I have loved you, that you also love one another." And note what this would show: "By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love among yourselves." (John 13:34, 35, NW) This command cannot be fulfilled lackadaisically in the "easy come, easy go" attitude of many worldlings today. It must not be a groundless, empty affection or infatuation like that often displayed by Christendom's clergy who foolishly try to love everything in sight, including this wicked world, and fondly embrace it while professing to reform it. How far have they gotten? One dare practice no hypocrisy either in his love, for God and Christ can see what we do not, the heart motive of the individual. Christians are under orders from God through his organization to meet the divine requirements thoroughly and without fault. Said Paul: "I give you orders that you observe the commandment in a spotless and irreprehensible way until the manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Tim. 6:13, 14, NW) Now with that manifestation in evidence can we who are blessed with living today afford to relax? Certainly not. Judgment is searing this old world, piling up evidence warranting its early destruction. We hope for continued life; so let us make sure the life we live now is worthy of survival into the new world.

THE DISTINGUISHING SIGN

Christian growth is at stake, ours and that of our fellow Christians. Within worldly religious Christendom there is a flowery pretense of Christian love and good works. But this veneer is marred irreparably by hate, spite, idle gossip, slander, cheating, thievery and murder. God decries such practices: "There are six things which Jehovah hateth; yea, seven which are an abomination unto him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood; a heart that deviseth wicked purposes, feet that are swift in running to mischief, a false witness that uttereth lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren."—Prov. 6:16-19, AS.

It would be folly to dismiss these evil practices with a wave of the hand and a self-assured word that 'I would never be guilty of that!' Every time we open our mouths in the heat of anger we chance becoming guilty. So easy is it to sympathize with our own cause, imagine ourselves all right, our brother with whom we quarrel all wrong, appeal to others for sympathy, perhaps embellish the tale a bit as we go along, gradually begin what spreads into a vicious cycle of gossip. Nor must we steal our neighbor's ox to be guilty of theft or slay him with a carnal weapon to be guilty of murder. "Death and life are in the power of the tongue." (Prov. 18:21) "Every kind of wild beast as well as bird and creeping thing and sea creature is to be tamed and has been tamed by humankind. But the tongue, not one of mankind can get it tamed. An unruly injurious thing, it is full of death-dealing poison." (Jas. 3:7, 8, NW) Theft of a good name is also stealing. Destroying a good standing in the eyes of others is likewise "killing".

Beware that you are not overcome by such practices and even your joys of Kingdom service shrink away, because the two,

the bad and the good, cannot coexist indefinitely. James asks: "A fountain does not cause the sweet and the bitter to bubble out of the same opening, does it?" And he answers: "If you have bitter jealousy and contentiousness in your hearts, do not be bragging and lying against the truth. This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is the earthly, animal, demonic. For where jealousy and contentiousness are, there disorder and every vile thing are. But the wisdom from above is first of all chaste, then peaceable, reasonable, ready to obey, full of mercy and good fruits, not making partial distinctions, not hypocritical. Moreover, the fruit of righteousness has its seed sown under peaceful conditions for those who are making peace."—Jas. 3:11, 14-18, NW.

Our trouble might even blossom into complaint or rebellion against God's organization that had once brought us the truth and mothered and nurtured us, perhaps beginning with faultfinding with one or more "servants" in the local congregation, our fellow slaves appointed to assist us in our praise to God. Jude warns against the fates of any like Cain, Korah, Balaam, Judas and others who fell to become "stars with no set course, for which the blackness of darkness stands reserved forever": Blacked out, then, all the splendor that had gone with their truth-telling and had formerly won for them a likeness to the brilliant stars of the heavens.—Jude 13, NW.

Viewing the possible fearful consequences of hate and spite, would not greater tolerance and more concessions by us be the wiser course in the very beginning of possible trouble? "Love," you know, "is long-suffering and obliging. Love is not jealous, it does not brag, does not get puffed up, does not behave indecently, does not look for its own interests, does not become provoked. It does not keep ac-

count of the injury. It does not rejoice over unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things." Small wonder Jesus named this quality as the distinguishing sign of his disciples. Remember?—1 Cor. 13:4-7, NW.

OVERSEERS OF THE FLOCK

No, not all will continually remember this. So that is where those of us who are stronger and more mature in the faith should joyfully take up the slack caused. That is an important reason for having servants, overseers in the Christian congregation. That is why the overseer's requirements are so rigid, assuring that he will be fully mature. (1 Tim. 3:1-13) The servant's job is not an honorary, title-holding ornament like the "honorary degrees" conferred by universities upon world dignitaries. The work of the congregation must be their work. They are spiritual shepherds, so the problems of the flock respecting its Christian activity must be their problems. That the flock is nourished must be a matter of deepest concern to them. Concern? Is that strong enough? See how the burdens of his apostleship affected Paul: "Out of much tribulation and anguish of heart I write you with many tears, not that you may be saddened, but that you may know the love which I have more especially for you." —2 Cor. 2:4, NW.

Can we imagine a do-nothing, lackadaisical attitude by the stalwart men who worked prominently in behalf of God's purposes during Bible history? Can we visualize Noah saying to his household: 'Let me know when the ark is finished so that I may join you'? Did Moses say to the Israelites in Egypt: 'I will meet you at the Red sea—get there the best way you can'? Did Joshua say: 'Call me when the

walls of Jericho fall'? Or do you think Jesus ever said: 'Go ahead and save yourselves the best way you can; form your own religion, you can do as well at it as the sectarian Jewish scribes and Pharisees'?

Think of how many times the Israelites murmured against Moses during the wilderness sojourn. Yet time and again he overlooked this baseless faultfinding and bickering; he continued leading by Jehovah's direction. On the one occasion when he did let this harping drive away his better judgment, while bringing forth water from a rock at Meribah, he railed back at the congregation and his anger led him to exalt himself in their eyes in the place of God.—Num. 20:10-13.

Now that we stand on the very crest looking into the antitypical promised land of the new world, do not all personal difficulties seem far too insignificant to allow them to crop up and overshadow the great issues of Jehovah's name and our eternal life? Maturity is what we want, is it not? Maturity that will culminate in fully grown true worshipers enjoying everlasting life and praise to God. Then why not cleanse out anything that will stunt either our own or our brother's growth to that desired goal?

"The ground that drinks in the rain which often comes upon it and that then brings forth vegetation suitable to those for whom it is also cultivated, receives in return a blessing from God. But if it produces thorns and thistles, it is rejected and is near to being cursed, and it ends up with being burned." Jehovah's undeserved kindness toward us all has been as rich and refreshing as new rain. Do not negate personally the effect of your Christian good works by making this all a waste. Instead may we keep walking in tune with God's organization toward increase, peace and prosperity and receive "a blessing from God".—Heb. 6:7, 8, NW.



MODERN IDOLATRY FORESHADOWED

GOD'S Word, the Bible, is 'a lamp to our feet and a light on our path'. (Ps. 119:105, *AT*) As time goes on that light increases true to God's promise: "The path of the righteous is like the light of the dawn, that shines ever more brightly till the day is full." This is what we should expect, for, as the apostle Paul assures us, "All the things that were written aforetime were written for our instruction, that through our endurance and through the comfort from the Scriptures we might have hope."—Prov. 4:18, *AT*; Rom. 15:4, *NW*.

Among the things written aforetime for our benefit are the series of prophetic parallels between Bible times and our day. For example, Jesus stated that just as it was in the days of Noah and Lot so it would be at the time of his second presence. (Matt. 24:3, 37-39; Luke 17:26-30, *NW*) The destruction of ancient Babylon foreshadowed the destruction of a modern powerful oppressive organization also termed Babylon. (Jer. 51:6-10; Rev. 18:4) And so we also find a parallel between an apostate people of God, Israel, and Christendom, which likewise has apostatized.

Because of the unfaithfulness of the nation of Israel Jehovah God purposed to end its sovereignty and to desolate its land for seventy years. Before executing that judgment, however, Jehovah sent prophets who rebuked them for their wickedness and warned them of impending disaster, even

as he sent Noah to warn the antediluvians of the flood and Moses to warn Pharaoh of the plagues. One of the prophets thus sent to Israel with a message concerning her guilt and doom was Ezekiel. He was among the children of Israel that were taken captive together with King Jehoiachin in 618 B.C. (2 Ki. 24:10-16) In the fifth year of this captivity Jehovah commissioned Ezekiel to act as his spokesman:

"O mortal man, I appoint you a watchman to the house of Israel; and whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall warn them from me. If I say to the wicked, 'You shall surely die,' and you fail to warn him—if you say nothing to warn the wicked man from his wicked way, in order to save his life—he being wicked shall die for his iniquity, but his blood will I require at your hand. If, however, you warn the wicked man, and he turn not from his wicked conduct and his wicked way, he shall die for his iniquity, but you will have saved yourself."—Ezek. 3:17-19, *AT*.

One day, after Ezekiel had thus served as God's watchman for a year and two months, a glorious angelic messenger was sent to him: "And lo! there was a form of the appearance of a man, from his loins downward of the appearance of fire, and from his loins upward of the appearance of a luster like that of shining metal." This heavenly officer by means of visions brought Ezekiel to Jerusalem (he actually being in Babylon at the time) and there, on a tour of inspection, revealed to him the disgusting practices that were being carried on by his fellow Israelites, pro-

fessed worshipers of the one true God, Jehovah.—Ezek. 8:1-3, AT.

THE IMAGE OF RESENTMENT

The first thing Ezekiel saw was the “image of resentment” standing “north of the altar-gate, at the entrance” to the inner court and which was being worshiped instead of Jehovah God. Being man-made, and replacing Jehovah as the one to be worshiped, it would provoke him to resentment and jealousy even as he had forewarned, and therefore would be appropriately called the “image of resentment”. —Ex. 20:4-6; Ezek. 8:4-6, AT.

This image or idol of resentment that Ezekiel saw was inspired by Satan the Devil and stood for or represented him as the very personification of jealousy and envy. He was jealous and envious of the worship that the first human pair gave to Jehovah God, and so he set out to estrange them from their Maker by means of slander. (Gen. 3:1-5) His offering all the kingdoms of the world to Jesus if he would do but one act of worship before him shows how greedy he was to be worshiped. (Matt. 4:9, 10, NW) And if he cannot get other creatures to worship him, he conspires to at least draw them away from the worship of his rival, Jehovah God.

To be like the Most High, Satan the Devil schemed to bring low the typical theocracy, Israel, which had its headquarters in Jerusalem. When he succeeded in causing the downfall of that nation he felt he had realized the ambition he had nursed in his heart: ‘I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; and I will sit upon the mount of congregation, in the uttermost parts of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.’—Isa. 14:13, 14, AS.

In his ambition to rival Jehovah, Satan, in these last days, has raised up a substi-

tute for God’s kingdom, which substitute arouses Jehovah, the true God, to righteous resentment. Jesus identifies this image for us in his great prophecy regarding his second presence, which, according to Bible prophecy, began in 1914. Therein he speaks of this image as “the disgusting thing that causes desolation, as spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in a holy place”.—Matt. 24:15, 16, NW.

This substitute, the product of Satan’s jealousy, which is a disgusting thing in God’s sight, which arouses resentment in Jehovah God, which desolates the people’s faith in God’s kingdom and which will eventually cause their destruction, is none other than that scheme of modern man, a world association of nations, first making its appearance as the League of Nations and then as the United Nations organization. How disgusting it must have appeared to Jehovah, and how it must have filled him with resentment to note men pushing aside his kingdom and hailing these man-made instruments as “man’s only hope”, the “only light there is” and as “the political expression of the kingdom of God on earth”!

These claims by the clergy certainly have caused the people to look to human schemes and agencies and to lose sight of God’s remedy for mankind’s woes. By extolling, serving and giving their allegiance to these man-made things they have become guilty of idolatry, worshiping the work of their own hands. And those clergymen claim to follow Christ Jesus, who refused to have anything to do with the kingdoms of this world!—Isa. 2:8.

MODERNIST AND FUNDAMENTALIST

The angelic messenger next bade Ezekiel to dig a hole through the wall of the temple court, and doing so, Ezekiel came upon a door. Entering, he saw to his amaze-

ment "all sorts of loathsome forms of reptiles and beasts, together with all the idols of the house of Israel, depicted upon the wall all around. And there were seventy of the elders of the house of Israel, . . . standing in front of the pictures, each with his censer in his hand, from which rose the odor of a cloud of incense." (Ezek. 8:10, 11, AT) Here were men claiming to be worshipers of Jehovah God and at the same time desecrating the walls of his temple with pictures of unclean animals and idols to which they burned incense. What parallels this in our day?

The great majority of clergymen in Christendom, both Catholic and Protestant, while professing to preach the Word of God, and though ordained, titled and paid to do so, teach the theory of evolution, that man is a blood relative of the lower animals, which theory flatly contradicts the Word of God. They deny special creation, that God made all creatures after their kind, even though all the evidence of geology and the operation of the laws of heredity support the Bible's position in this matter.

So as to be considered wiser than the Bible and to gain the approval of this so-called modern, scientific, "brain-age" world, they speak disparagingly of the Bible accounts of creation, saying that Moses, in the first two chapters of Genesis, merely recorded the primitive, unscientific beliefs of his day, and that God had nothing to do with what he there wrote. These idolaters overlook that Jesus himself quoted from the first chapter of Genesis, which he would not have done had he not considered it inspired. (Matt. 19:4-6) Thus, in their temples of religion the modern elders paint for their parishioners pictures of man owing all he has to the lower animals by means of evolution instead of to the Creator, Jehovah God, thereby engaging in a form of idolatry.

Telling Ezekiel that he would see still greater abominations, his angelic guide brought him to "the door of the northward gate of the house of the LORD. And lo! there sat women weeping for Tammuz". (Ezek. 8:14, AT) Tammuz was a Phoenician god, one of the demon gods provided by the Devil in his efforts to turn all men away from the worship of the only true God, Jehovah.

Do we find a weeping class of women among those professing to be Christians, the modern counterpart of the Israelites of Ezekiel's day? Yes, we do. There are many zealous church workers, particularly fundamentalists, who, seeking to bring God into business and religion, lament the decline in the power that their religious organizations are able to exert. Some of these agitate for an amendment to the Constitution of the United States whereby Christ Jesus would be recognized as the spiritual king of the nation; others would be content if only the name of God appeared in that document; as though such measures would make the nation God's kingdom. While claiming to worship God, they put their religious organizations first.

These earnest church workers, while professing to believe the Bible, are not interested in any of its prophecies that show that God's kingdom is at hand. They ally themselves with the modernists and evolutionists in their support of the governments of this world as the "higher powers", mentioned at Romans 13:1-3, as though the beastly totalitarian governments and the corrupt democracies were ordained by God. In keeping with the picture, we find that the womenfolk are the strongest supporters of these religious organizations.

IDOLIZING INTELLECTUALITY

Continuing the inspection, the angelic messenger revealed to Ezekiel, and through him to us today, further idola-

trous practices. "So he brought me to the inner court of the house of the LORD. And lo! at the door of the temple of the LORD, between the vestibule and the altar, there were about twenty-five men, with their backs to the temple of the LORD, and their faces to the east, worshiping the sun in the east."—Ezek. 8:16, AT.

The sun is the source of light and energy for this planet. In Ezekiel's day those who worshiped it overlooked the fact that the sun was merely an inanimate body and that it was Jehovah God who deserved the worship and praise for the blessings the sun brought to man. Those sun worshipers back there find their parallel in the modern clergy of Christendom and their parishioners who worship the light of materialistic worldly knowledge, science, intellectuality, and who ascribe to such the credit for man's enlightenment and blessings. Thus we find clergymen preaching on "scientific" matters, psychology, philosophy, the arts, the UNESCO; all of which emphasizes worldly wisdom and is very flattering to man but is foolishness in the sight of God.—1 Cor. 1:18-31.

Commenting on this situation, a resolution adopted by Christian ministers at a convention held at Indianapolis, Indiana, on August 29, 1925, and entitled "Message of Hope", among other things, had the following to say: "World powers, science and philosophy, commerce and religion, . . . claim to be the sunlight of the world, holding forth all the light that shines to enlighten and guide the human race. Intrigue, duplicity, and trickery are freely resorted to by the political and commercial powers; science and philosophy are marked by vanity and self-sufficiency; while the religionists, both Catholic and Protestant, are conspicuous by their arrogance, self-conceit, impiety and ungodliness. Therefore, it is apparent that the remedies offered by any and all of these

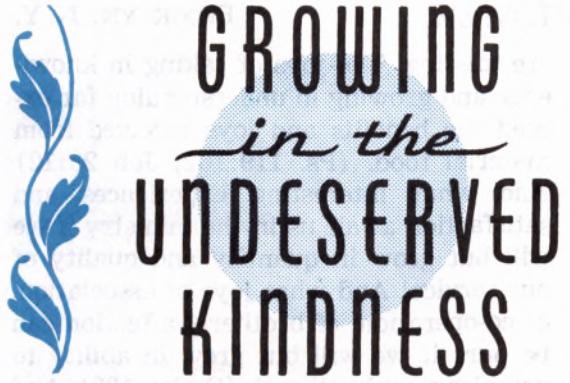
aforementioned elements are vain, impotent and powerless to satisfy man's desires."

FRUITS OF IDOLATRY, AND ITS REWARD

In recent years there has been a great increase in lawlessness. Who is responsible for this sorry state of affairs? According to Jehovah's Word the fault lies with the professed Christians who have turned to idolatry. "Is it too slight a thing for the house of Judah to do the abominations which they are doing here, that they must needs fill the land with lawlessness, and vex me still more?"—Ezek. 8:17, AT.

When the people note the lack of faith and conviction, the vanity, hypocrisy and greed for selfish gain on the part of their religious leaders, is it any wonder that they themselves are losing whatever regard for God's principles of truth and righteousness they may have had, and that they have no more any fear of God before their eyes? The idolatrous practices of substituting the United Nations for God's kingdom, and the theory of evolution for the inspired account of creation, of mourning for their man-made organizations and worshiping materialistic lights of the world, are no power of righteousness against the forces of evil visible and invisible nor against the tendencies toward sin in our mortal bodies.

Will Jehovah God always tolerate this state of affairs? Will he permit it to continue until it sinks from the weight of its own corruption, thus permitting "history to repeat itself"? No, he will not. Just as he called a halt to Israel's wicked course in the year 607 B.C., so he will call a halt to present-day idolatrous and corrupt practices, even as he warned: "Therefore will I on my part act in fury. My eye shall not spare, nor will I pity; even though they call aloud in my hearing, I will not listen to them."—Ezek. 8:18, AT.



GROWING *in the* UNDESERVED KINDNESS

VIEWED in its proper light, everything we enjoy, life, the sunshine, the rain and what not, are all expressions of Jehovah's undeserved kindness. In the beginning, when God created man, gave him a beautiful home, a lovely mate and a mandate to be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth and subdue it and exercise dominion over the lower animals, all of that was just so much unmerited favor, so much of undeserved kindness; even as was God's permitting our first parents to live for many years after they had rebelled.

It was an undeserved kindness that the human race, as represented by Noah and his family, was spared at the time of the great deluge. And God's promises and dealings with Abraham and his descendants, the nation of Israel, were further expressions of his undeserved kindness. The greatest expression of Jehovah's undeserved kindness, however, was the gift of his only-begotten Son to be our Savior and Redeemer. Greatest expression both in what it cost the Giver—yes, it did cost Jehovah something to have his Son come to earth, suffer and die, as he well illustrated in the prophetic drama he had Abraham make in offering up his son Isaac—and greatest also in the benefit to the receivers in that it will mean everlasting life for us.—Eph. 1:7, NW.

Next only to that gift is the expression of Jehovah's undeserved kindness that has come to us in the way of an understanding of his Word, the Bible; the knowledge regarding Jehovah, who he is and what his attributes and purposes are; and particularly the knowledge regarding the vindication of his great name and supremacy by means of his kingdom.

This truth has brought with it further expressions of Jehovah's undeserved kindness, such as the relative freedom of God's children, the hope of the new world of righteousness and the blessings that come from serving God by honoring his name and bringing comfort to men of good will.

NEED OF GROWING

Having received so much of Jehovah's undeserved kindness, shall we content ourselves therewith, ignoring or refusing to accept the further expressions of his undeserved kindness he keeps on extending to us? May we be satisfied with the measure of growth to which we have attained? Can we stand still?

No, we cannot afford to stand still. We dare not content ourselves with what measure of growth we have attained to, whether still babes, as were those to whom Paul addressed his words at Hebrews 5:11-14 (NW), or more advanced. We may not feel satisfied with such undeserved kindness as we have received, but must keep on growing therein even as the apostle Peter admonishes us: "Be on your guard that you may not be led away with them by the error of the law-defying people and fall from your own steadfastness. No, but go on growing in the undeserved kindness and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."—2 Pet. 3:17, 18, NW.

Since Jehovah continues to extend further expressions of his undeserved kindness to us, failure to accept these would show a lack of appreciation. Such lack of appreciation would soon result in our spurning all of his undeserved kindness. We owe it to our great Benefactor to keep on growing.

And we also owe it to our neighbor to keep on receiving ever more of Jehovah's undeserved kindness. How so? Because we have the obligation to help each one with whom we come in contact as opportunity affords to walk in the way of righteousness, and the more of undeserved kindness we have received ourselves the more we shall be able to help others. "In proportion as each one has received a gift, use it in ministering to one another as the right kind of stewards over God's undeserved kindness which is expressed in various ways."

—1 Pet. 4:10, NW.

Additionally, we owe it to ourselves to keep on growing in Jehovah's undeserved kindness. We are living in perilous times. Iniquity is abounding. The love of many has grown cold. Satan has ever gone about as a roaring lion seeking to devour someone, but now, since he has been cast out of heaven, his rage knows no bounds toward those who observe the commandments of God. Opposition and temptations are increasing. Anyone who thinks he has acquired a firm position will surely fall. Unless we keep on growing we shall not be able to stand. If we do not make progress we shall relapse back into blindness, inactivity and sin. There is no standing still.

—Matt. 24:12; 1 Cor. 10:12; 2 Tim. 3:1-7; 1 Pet. 5:8; Rev. 12:17, NW.

However, growing in Jehovah's undeserved kindness is not only a matter of safety but also one of joy. Jehovah's bounties are to bring us delight; if we ignore them by not growing in his undeserved kindness we simply do not know what we

are missing. The joys of taking in knowledge and growing in understanding far exceed the benefits and joys received from material food. (Ps. 119:162; Job 23:12) And what interesting experiences and satisfaction await us in the ministry if we will but grow in quantity and quality of our service! And what joys of association, of co-operation, of brotherly affection can be ours if we will but grow in ability to get along with others! (Psalm 133) And what returns by making progress in our love for righteousness and our hatred of wickedness can be ours in the way of victories in the exercise of self-control.

—Titus 1:15, NW.

GROWING IN FOUR WAYS

To grow in knowledge and understanding we must make use of all the helps that God has provided—his Word, his organization and his active force or holy spirit. We need to study privately, both the Bible and Bible aids, as well as assemble for congregational study. All such will make us grow in knowledge, but to grow in understanding we must acquire a heart appreciation of what we learn, causing us to act in harmony with our knowledge. Therefore we should continually ask ourselves, How does this apply to me?

Next we must grow in quantity and quality of our ministerial activity. How much of Jehovah's undeserved kindness can we expect to experience when we spend but an hour a week in his service? Surely that in itself would seem to indicate a lack of growth, when we can find only one hour out of 168 for preaching the good news of the Kingdom.

Nor is the amount of time the sole or even prime criterion as to how much we are growing in the undeserved kindness. The matter of improving the quality of our service is of even greater importance. By making use of the publications and

meetings and the opportunities provided we will be able to grow in the effectiveness with which we preach; in our ability to place literature, to refute arguments with tact, to establish Bible studies in the homes of the people.

And since we owe it to Jehovah God, to our neighbor and to ourselves to grow in the undeserved kindness of our God, let us not be afraid to accept additional privileges of service when such are extended to us. Rather, let us eagerly take hold of such and make the best of them. True, learning to do work in enlarged spheres of service may require training and involve the making of mistakes on our part; but what of that? Shall we weigh our pride against greater opportunities for doing good? Let us not say that we are not qualified. Let that responsibility rest upon the one delegating us added responsibilities and privileges. Keep in mind that the greater our privileges and the better we take care of them, the more of Jehovah's undeserved kindness we shall be able to enjoy.

To go on growing in the undeserved kindness of Jehovah also means to make progress in our ability to get along harmoniously with our brothers. Paul told the Corinthian brothers that jealousy and strife were evidences that they were still babes. (1 Cor. 3:1-3, NW) Yes, it is childish to magnify every slight or offense, to harbor grudges, to endeavor to retaliate. If we would enjoy ever more of Jehovah's goodness we must overlook all such trifles and try to help our brother who has erred, instead of trying to punish him.

And finally, to go on growing in the undeserved kindness of Jehovah we must make progress both in our ability to discern right from wrong and in our attitude toward these principles. We must grow in control of our spirit, expressing ever greater love for righteousness and ever greater hatred of wickedness.—Heb. 1:9, NW.

IMPETUS FOR GROWTH

While little can be done to stimulate natural growth, such is not the case regarding spiritual growth. The extent to which we grow in a spiritual sense depends upon our zeal, which is determined by our love, which in turn depends upon our appreciation. And the most fruitful way of expressing our appreciation, love and zeal is by helping another to grow.

In this regard note the servants in a congregation of Jehovah's witnesses. Are they not all appointed for the very purpose of helping others to grow? Assuredly. And does not their helping others to grow result in their growing themselves? No question about it. For example, does not the brother who conducts the study in *The Watchtower* profit greatly himself because of his thoroughly preparing his lesson so as to be able to help others? Unquestionably so, for to be able to explain a matter to others we must understand it ourselves.

The same applies to the other servants in the company. So as to be able to help others they have to prepare, they have to be on hand at all meetings and at assembly points for witnessing. By helping others to grow in knowledge and understanding, in quantity and in the quality of their service, in brotherly love and in self-control, they automatically help themselves.

Jehovah God has bestowed much undeserved kindness upon the human race and especially upon those who have dedicated themselves to his service. He has far more in store for us, and we owe it to him, to our neighbor and to ourselves to avail ourselves of it, to keep on growing in his undeserved kindness. To that end let us avail ourselves of every opportunity to expand in knowledge and understanding, in the quality and quantity of our ministerial activity, in ability to co-operate with our fellow ministers, and in our love of righteousness and hatred of wickedness.

Triumphant Clean Worship

TO DAY Communists, atheists and other materialistically-minded persons scoffingly hold that all gods are imaginary. Such scoffers, however, must admit that the worship of gods is a very real and potent factor in the lives of men and nations.* Christians know that there is but one true God, Jehovah, and one Lord, Christ Jesus, that there is a false (but not imaginary) 'god of this system of things', Satan the Devil, and that he has associated with him lesser gods, demons.—1 Cor. 8:4-7; 10:20; 2 Cor. 4:4, NW.

The true God Jehovah challenges all the gods of this world on the question, Whose worship will triumph? Satan boasted in the beginning that God could not keep his worship free from contamination. To make good his boast he has used his own false worship to bring reproach and pressure to bear upon the true worship, seeking to make it compromise for the sake of self-gain, thereby hoping to so corrupt it that God would have to wipe it out, thus making Satan and his worship to triumph.

To guard against this danger God throughout his Word warned his people Israel against having anything to do with false worship. Failing to heed these warnings Israel so corrupted its worship that God permitted it to be taken into captivity in 607 B.C., and finally broken up A.D. 70. In each instance, however, there was a remnant whom Satan and his devotees of false religion failed to corrupt.

Ever since the second century A.D. Christendom has compromised with paganism in doctrine and practice for the sake of gaining popularity and in the fourth century she bartered away her freedom and virtue for the sake of gaining temporal power. Such spiritual adultery

will gain for her an adulteress' death.—Mal. 3:5; Jas. 4:4, NW.

Judging from numbers it would seem that the Devil has won out in causing those who profess to worship God to corrupt their religion. But not so. He has not succeeded in wiping out true worship entirely. Just as a remnant of true worshipers survived the desolation of Jerusalem to return in 537 B.C.; and as a remnant of Christians survived Jerusalem's destruction A.D. 70, so again today Jehovah has a remnant whom the Devil has not been able to corrupt or to destroy.

It was in the final quarter of the last century that this remnant began to form. During World War I these servants of Jehovah were forcibly taken over by their religious and political enemies. Victory over them, however, was short-lived, for Jehovah released them from captivity to modern Babylon so that they could carry on the true worship.

Since the deliverance of Jehovah's people in 1919 Satan has tried to corrupt and destroy them by bringing against them the violent forces of fascism and nazism, the military pressures of World War II, and now the forces of international communism. But all of Satan's efforts down to this year of 1952 have failed and will continue to fail. Jehovah's clean worship has triumphed; his servants have been preserved, delivered, and their worship has been purified, and now the great crowd associating themselves with this remnant give further proof of that triumph. At Armageddon that triumph will be complete.

Let all who would enjoy the blessings of clean worship in Jehovah's new world now visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction and keep themselves unspotted from the world.—Jas. 1:27.

* For details see *The Watchtower*, November 1, 1951.

Sharing in the Prosperity of God's Nation

PROSPERITY has but one source—Jehovah God. Worldly politicians have hypocritically acknowledged this fact. When launching their own schemes for material abundance, they have quoted Psalm 127:1: "Except Jehovah build the house, they labor in vain that build it: except Jehovah keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." (AS) As everybody knows, the prosperity the politicians said was now "just around the corner" did not show up in a real, lasting way when we turned the corner.

² In 1933 Christendom's mightiest religious system celebrated a special Holy Year to commemorate the death of Jesus Christ nineteen centuries earlier. To make the people believe that that religious system was the bringer of better times, the papacy's Holy Year was announced with the glowing promise that now 'a tide of religion would sweep the nations into peace and prosperity'. But six years later, what? The nations were swept into the most ruinous war in all human history. The celebration of another Holy Year in 1950 did not improve the postwar period but marked the outbreak of the Korean conflict, the pistol shot for a terrific armaments race between East and West that

"Oh visit me with thy salvation, that I may see the prosperity of thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the gladness of thy nation."—Ps. 106:4, 5, AS

threatens a third world war soon, with nuclear bombs thrown from both directions.

³ Why this failure of prosperity to crown the efforts and prayers of politicians and religious leaders of Christendom? This: Jehovah failed to co-operate with them. Jehovah refused to join in building their postwar structure for world peace and welfare. They have rejected him. He has rejected them. To their chagrin they are obliged to quote the scripture: "We looked for peace, but no good came; and for a time of healing, and, behold, dismay!"—Jer. 14:19, AS.

⁴ In Christendom there is no stable, guaranteed prosperity. In so-called heathendom there is none either. Is there, then, no prosperity anywhere on earth to prove that Jehovah God is the source and creator of it? There indeed is. Where? There where it should reasonably be found—among the people who bear his name, Jehovah's witnesses. That explains the reason for their happiness, a happiness unequaled anywhere in this old world, a happiness that no turns for still worse or even the worst in this old world can dampen or wreck. Their happiness is not based on any material prosperity or any armed

1, 2. Whom have politicians acknowledged to be the source of prosperity, and how far have recent Holy Years aided prosperity?

3. Why has prosperity failed their efforts and prayers?
4. Where, then, is prosperity in proof of Jehovah as its source?

peace of this world. It is not dependent on having an abundance of the things of this world, such uncertain, vanishing things. It is a spiritual prosperity, a real, practical well-being that has transformed their lives and made them the happiest mortals on earth. It will never collapse. It is backed and guaranteed by the greatest and the only durable government in the universe, Jehovah's kingdom established in the heavens in the year 1914 and with his Son Jesus Christ at his side.

⁵ God answers prayer. In answering prayer he favors, not Christendom, but only his true name people. Their flourishing condition at this crucial time is an answer to their prayer. He has heard their prayer because it was offered with a right motive and was in harmony with his will expressed in the prophecies of his Word. Almost thirty years ago to the day, namely, Friday, September 8, 1922, at the international assembly of Jehovah's witnesses in Cedar Point, Ohio, the presence of Jehovah's Day was announced and the prophetic prayer as contained at Psalm 118:24, 25, was shown to be appropriate now: "This is the day which Jehovah hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. Save now, we beseech thee, O Jehovah: O Jehovah, we beseech thee, send now prosperity." (AS) Today, after three decades, we can measure the amount of prosperity he has sent in this his day. Back there we were getting started on the road to postwar prosperity. Today the prosperity bestowed upon us is unparalleled in Christian history.

⁶ The close of World War I in November of 1918 found the remnant of Jehovah's witnesses in poor condition. The vicious persecution by our religious enemies, using the military sword of the total state, had

rendered them so. Their own fears and lack of understanding had helped to make it so. Throughout the world they were quite disorganized. Practical theocratic government was not in force among them. A number of their main officials were in literal prison for the endeavors of these to be faithful to God's cause. Because of world opposition their public voice for the kingdom of God was quite muffled. They were quite uncertain as to what God's further will was for them on the earth in the postwar period. Only some of them were in literal prisons in the world, but all of them were in a spiritual prison in the Devil's world system, which the Bible calls "Babylon". Here they felt the restrictions placed upon their free conscientious worship of the living and true God and upon their service of his kingdom. Here they felt the expression of God's displeasure with them because of sins and worldly uncleanness of which they were not fully aware. Before God they were in a condition which Revelation 11:8, 9 likens to dead bodies of God's witnesses lying exposed in the unclean city three and a half days. What poverty!

⁷ A young generation has grown up since then. Little does it realize the state of mind and the state of the organization back there. Ah, but God is so merciful, so full of loving-kindness, toward those whose hearts are sincere toward him and striving to cling to him with an unbreakable affection! Though angry and displeased with them so as to let them be thrown down, Jehovah was not willing to destroy them, which would have suited our enemies very much. (2 Cor. 4:8, 9, NW) For his own name's sake and in the abundance of his mercy he had other purposes for the remnant of his anointed conse-

5. To whose prayers, and since when, is this an answer?

6. In what poverty did the close of World War I find the remnant?

7, 8. How did Jehovah show them his loving-kindness, and who has well expressed their yearning and gratitude, and in what words?

crated ones. So he opened their blind eyes to see that he had promised them deliverance in his Word and that they were to enter upon a great work to be blessed with astonishing prosperity. The loyal and zealous were willing to serve God on earth to the finish, and oh how their hearts responded to this wondrous outlook portayed in his prophetic Word! If only he would get them out of this restrained condition and open the way to liberty and free, fearless worship of him, how gladly they would share in his further work till its glorious climax! Every willing heart poured out gratitude to God for the fresh hope! How well the psalmist, under similar circumstances, expressed their thankfulness, their disposition to praise and their yearning in these touching words of Psalm 106:1-5:

⁸ "Praise ye Jehovah. Oh give thanks unto Jehovah; for he is good; for his lovingkindness endureth for ever. Who can utter the mighty acts of Jehovah, or show forth all his praise? Blessed are they that keep justice, and he that doeth righteousness at all times. Remember me, O Jehovah, with the favor that thou bearest unto thy people; oh visit me with thy salvation, that I may see the prosperity of thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the gladness of thy nation, that I may glory with thine inheritance."—AS.

⁹ Do you have the intensity of feeling toward the things of Jehovah God that the psalmist here expresses? Do you have a love and appreciation for Jehovah's people, his chosen ones, his nation, his inheritance, so that you want to be saved with them and to see their prosperity, to share God's favor to them, to be glad with them, and to feel glory in being associated with them as his inheritance?

9. 10. Do any have that intensity of feeling here expressed? And who are Jehovah's people, his chosen, his nation, his inheritance?

¹⁰ That is the way each sincere member of the anointed remnant felt back there while languishing in Babylonish captivity to the powers of this world. Do you yourself personally have that consuming desire today? Jehovah's people are his name people whom he has been taking out of all nations, Jewish and Gentile, for the past nineteen centuries to be a "people for his name", anointed with his spirit. They are chosen ones of his, chosen to be joined with his Son Christ Jesus in his heavenly kingdom, his elect ones for whose sake he cut short the days of tribulation in 1918 that some flesh might be saved. (Acts 15:14; Matt. 24:21, 22) They are the only nation on earth that he recognizes and deals with, a nation of spiritual Israelites, Jews inwardly, over whom the true Messiah, Jesus Christ, is King. They are Jehovah's inheritance, the little flock whom he makes his spiritual sons and to whom he lays special claim and whom he finally takes away from mankind on earth and raises to heaven to rule as kings with Jesus Christ for the blessing of all his other sheep on earth.—1 Pet. 2:9; Deut. 32:9; Ps. 33:12; Isa. 19:25; 63:17.

¹¹ Evidently because you do have such an appreciation you have chosen to associate yourself with God's nation of chosen ones. You have discerned who are Jehovah's name people, and you realize that his favor is better than that of the old world, because in his favor there is real life; it is the only thing that makes life worth living. You mark how good he has been to his people at this end of the world, how his loving-kindness has not failed toward them even though in his displeasure he did let them come into the power of the enemy during World War I, and this loving-kindness he has shown in doing

11. (a) Why have you associated yourself with his people now? (b) What does fulfillment of Psalm 68:6 move us to do in response?

mighty acts of liberation and of reorganization for them. They are no longer in solitary confinement, few in numbers and prevented by enemy power from expanding with more publishers of God's kingdom and praisers of his name. Their growth now in numbers excites amazement. Jehovah has multiplied them not only with newer members of the remnant who have taken the places of any rebellious ones who have gone over to the enemy, but also with a steadily growing crowd of persons of good will, like great droves of sheep, other sheep, all brought together into one flock under the one Right Shepherd of God's flock, Jesus Christ. In this you see the final and complete fulfillment of his promise, at Psalm 68:6: "God setteth the solitary in families: he bringeth out the prisoners into prosperity; but the rebellious dwell in a parched land." (AS) How, then, can we who longed to see and share the prosperity of his chosen nation, yes, how can we resist the call to praise Jehovah and to give thanks to him publicly for his goodness? Really, how can we utter his acts with full description of his might, how can we show forth all his praise—there is so much to praise?

¹² Think how poor off spiritually Christendom is! She has no evidence of divine favor. Her prayers and crusades for peace and prosperity in this world of which she is a part have no success. She is perplexed. She is in extreme fear for her further existence, despite all boasts of how old her institutions are. She has no timely message for the people, no spiritual food, no water of truth. She is not doing God's work foretold in the prophecies concerning the end of this world. On the other hand, think of the spiritual prosperity into which Almighty God has brought us—us who

were once prisoners inside this Babylonish world! Our prayers for the last thirty years for him to save us and send us prosperity have been answered beyond our expectations this side of Armageddon. How his holy Word has been made clearer to us, its mysteries, its sacred secrets, unraveled for us! There is no longer any uncertainty as to why we have been left on earth since the end of the "appointed times of the nations" in 1914, no doubt as to what our mission is. Once marked by the enemy for death by their persecutions, we know that God revived us from our deathly state and that our foes are the ones who will die at Armageddon, but we are now marked by God's power for life in the new world, even by surviving Armageddon's destructive warfare.

¹³ We have God's message for today. Because we adhere strictly to his Word rather than to worldly philosophies and man-made religious creeds and traditions, we have God's message for today. It is the good news of God's established kingdom by Jesus Christ. Unlike Christendom's steady decrease in number of her priests and preachers, the number of our ministers active in preaching the good news of the Kingdom is ever increasing. We have God's work to do and are taking courage to do it. We have his spirit activating us and backing us up, and God is doing his foretold work through us, not by might nor by armies but by his spirit. It is the spirit of theocratic organization. Our cup runs over, our spiritual table is loaded with solid food in the very presence of our enemies. Poor materially most of us may be, but we are making many rich spiritually. All this spiritual welfare was meant to make God's nation glad. How can we keep from rejoicing and glorying in Jehovah?

12, 13. How does Christendom's poverty compare with our prosperity?

CONFESSTION

¹⁴ But let us take warning! Our own individual, personal continuance in this rejoicing in the gladness of Jehovah's nation and in sharing in its prosperity is conditional. Why? Because it is to his organization that he gives the sure word, "And no more will there be any curse," since he will see to it that his organization as such keeps clean and free and faithful. It is to his organization as a whole that he says: "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue [whether nationalist, fascist, religionist or communist] that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of Jehovah, and their righteousness which is of me, saith Jehovah." It is to his restored organization that he gives this word: "Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: My cities shall yet overflow with prosperity; and Jehovah shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem." (Rev. 22:3, NW; Isa. 54:17; Zech. 1:17, AS) But will you as an individual keep on sharing in all this spiritual welfare, favor and protection? It all depends upon your holding fast to Jehovah's theocratic organization and keeping at one and in harmony with it. It all rests with your living up to its faithful principles and conducting yourself worthy of being retained in Jehovah's organization.

¹⁵ To that end you must shun the sins that easily entangle the careless and the self-reliant ones. We must not let spiritual prosperity go to our heads and make us conceited and feel sure of ourselves. Beware of saying yet as the psalmist did: "As for me, I said in my prosperity, I shall never be moved." (Ps. 30:6, AS) Do not forget your responsibilities and grow

14. But what warning do we need to take, and upon what does our personal continuance in this prosperity depend?

15. To that end, what must we do?

foolish by neglecting them, showing unfaithfulness in what is least. Remember the proverb: "The turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity [or, the careless ease] of fools shall destroy them." (Prov. 1:32; AS) Do not get like Christendom to whom Jehovah spoke prophetically: "I spake unto thee in thy prosperity; but thou saidst, I will not hear." (Jer. 22:21; Zech. 7:7) There is a danger that those self-conscious of their prosperity may disobey. Keep clearly in mind the sins that caused individuals inside Jehovah's ancient organization of Israel to be destroyed, yes, caused the entire nation to be turned over to its enemies for corrective punishment. Remember your own sins which once separated you from the true God and his nation. You can easily get to repeating them. Avoid doing so.

¹⁶ The psalmist prayed God to favor him once more and save him and let him see and join in the prosperity and gladness of God's nation, but he immediately followed up his prayer by making a confession of the sins of his nation and not excusing himself but sharing the blame. He said: "We have sinned with our fathers, we have committed iniquity, we have done wickedly." (Ps. 106:6) Yes, "we," I as well as the rest. It is something for a nation to confess its national sins against God. At the close of World War I Christendom, dripping with blood, seething with internal strife, guilty of persecuting Jehovah's people, proudly refused to confess her sins. A few religious ministers made a sort of confessing, but not getting at the real heart of Christendom's sin and ungodliness. Hence, as Proverbs 28:13 says: "He that covereth his transgressions shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall obtain mercy." (AS) The loyal-hearted remnant of Jehovah's

16. With what did the psalmist follow up his prayer, and who did likewise since the close of World War I?

anointed witnesses did make an organizational confession of their sins and failings toward God. They repented of them in a godly way which led to turning from them and correcting themselves in their teachings and practices. Their organization confessed such sins against the Most High God and the individual members owned up to having a part in those sins. So God reinstated them in his favor and service and prospered them.

¹⁷ As a reminder to himself and in warning to Jehovah's people down till today the psalmist detailed these sins for us. First was Israel's rebellion against Jehovah their Leader at the Red sea, where the Egyptian military pursuit forces threatened to overtake them. Second, in the wilderness they murmured at God's handling of the food situation for them, and put him to the test. Third, hundreds envied the theocratic positions of prominence of Moses and Aaron, only to be swallowed up with Dathan and Abiram in an earthquake and electrocuted with Korah and his Levite company. Fourth, during Moses' forty-day absence on Mount Sinai while in conference with Jehovah's angel, they molded a golden calf and worshiped it as their god of deliverance. Fifth, when the twelve spies returned from inspecting the Promised Land, they ignored Caleb's and Joshua's encouraging report and listened to the evil report of the ten faithless spies and refused to march into the land under Jehovah's leadership. Sixth, when on the plains of Moab thirty-nine years later and just across the river from the land, they yielded to the seductive wiles of idolatrous women and went worshiping the immoral false god Baalpeor. Seventh, at Meribah in the wilderness of Zin they rebelliously complained about the water shortage and provoked even Moses to lose his temper

and act dismally toward God. Eighth, on top of those sins they disregarded God's commands and warnings when settled in the Promised Land, compromised with the pagans there and took up spiritual harlotry with their detestable false gods.

¹⁸ For each and all of these sins they suffered disastrous consequences, finally going captive to enemy lands while Jerusalem lay desolate seventy years and also coming under a period of 2,520 years of Gentile domination of the earth, till A.D. 1914. For rescue from such captivity in enemy lands and for renewal of God's worship in their desolated homeland the psalmist prayed, yearning to see and experience it himself with unspeakable joy and gladness. It was only God's mercy and his living up to his covenant with his chosen nation that answered such a sincere prayer with God's glory in mind.—Ps. 106:6-46.

¹⁹ Now take note of this about all those sins of the psalmist's people: There was a rejoicing for merely a time over Jehovah's works in behalf of his people and then a gradual or quick forgetting of his works and Godship, particularly when they faced some hard problems and situations. What resulted? Rebellion against God and his arrangements and appointed servants, and a turning back to this world and its filthy gods. The apostle Paul himself mentions a number of these same sins of Israel and warns us Christians against repeating them, saying: "These things went on befalling them as examples and they were written for a warning to us upon whom the accomplished ends of the systems of things have arrived. Consequently, let him that thinks he has a firm position beware that he does not fall."—1 Cor. 10:1-12, NW.

18. So for what did the psalmist pray, and why was he answered?

19. 20. (a) What was it that marked all those sins of the psalmist's people? (b) So how are we warned and what do we need to do?

17. What eight national sins did the psalmist describe, and why?

²⁰ Now we want to keep on enjoying the prosperity and gladness with which Jehovah has favored his chosen people and nation, do we not? Well, then, we need to watch all the time against forgetting his mighty acts and loving-kindness toward his nation and at last becoming complainers, selfishly ambitious, immorally unclean, desirous of the things of this world, fearful of world powers, idolizing our own wills and opinions, rebellious, neglectful of our responsibilities inside or under the theocratic organization. Having been delivered from this Babylonish world, we can never return to its sins and at the same time share the further prosperity of God's instructed people. For us to remember it was written, at Job 36:10, 11 (AS): "He openeth also their ear to instruction, and commandeth that they return from iniquity. If they hearken and serve him, they shall spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasures." Our own spiritual welfare dictates that we seek always the welfare of God's organization, praying for its integrity: "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee. For the sake of the house of Jehovah our God I will seek thy good."—Ps. 122:6-9, AS.

²¹ We can never succeed in our own strength or by our own wisdom. When we face conditions and developments that threaten our prosperity as God's people, we simply have to rely upon Jehovah's strength, while we encourage ourselves to do so by remembering his marvelous deeds recorded in his Word, also his deeds toward us in fulfillment of his prophecies. As we continue marching forth toward the final battle, singing Jehovah's praises, we

21. Upon what must we rely and to what must we hearken for a continued share in the prosperity?

must display faith in his prophecies for our future. They are inspiring prophecies. His theocratic King exhorts us: "Believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper." (2 Chron. 20:20) We need the guidance and encouragement of his prophecies, which he makes plain to us in this time of crisis. When the restored nation of Israel was rebuilding the house of Jehovah their God, they were greatly helped forward by his prophets whose writings we have today, and concerning which it is written: "The elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo." (Ezra 6:14) We, too, are busy in a rebuilding work respecting the pure worship of the living and true God. It is wisdom on our part to hearken to God's prophets speaking to us through his Word. It is necessary therefore for us to study the prophecies privately and go where we can hear them discussed, at meetings in our Kingdom Halls or in our circuit, district, national and international assemblies. If we take heed, then it assures our continuing to prosper in divine service.

²² If we seek always the advancement of God's Word and Kingdom interests we shall prosper, for his Word will never return to him void, but, says he, "It shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it," and, 'of the increase of his kingdom there shall be no end.'—Isa. 55:11; 9:7.

FURTHER WORK TO BE SHARED IN

²³ The work before the war of Armageddon is not yet done. Our own salvation is not yet complete. There are numberless other sheep far off from Jehovah's Right Shepherd who need help toward salvation. Our prayers need to rise to God, widening out beyond our own individual salvation

22. To prosper what must we seek to advance, and why?
23, 24. Why is the psalmist's prayer for salvation not fully answered yet in our case?

and taking in that of these other sheep. The prayer that the psalmist offered in conclusion is appropriately ours now: "Save us, O Jehovah our God, and gather us from among the nations, to give thanks unto thy holy name, and to triumph in thy praise. Blessed be Jehovah, the God of Israel, from everlasting even to everlasting. And let all the people say, Amen. Praise ye Jehovah."—Ps. 106:47, 48, AS.

²⁴ Many are the other sheep whom the Right Shepherd must yet gather. Among all nations they are held prisoner to Babylon through ignorance and fear, but deep down in their hearts they long to share in the prosperity of Jehovah's chosen ones and to rejoice in the gladness of his nation. Until we have worked for their deliverance according to God's will the prayer is not fully answered for God to save us and gather us (not simply me) from among the nations, to thank his holy name and to triumph through praising him.

²⁵ It is self-contradictory for us to call upon all the people to amen our blessing

25. (a) In order not to be self-contradictory in calling on all people to say amen, what must we do? (b) Why can we, should we, be liberal with our prosperity?

of Jehovah our God and then not let them hear and know about him and come in touch with his theocratic organization under Christ for their deliverance. Step forward, then. Let them see and hear us as his witnesses and observe our spiritual prosperity and feel an overwhelming desire to share it. Our attitude toward them must be that of the psalmist who said: "Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favor my righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, Jehovah be magnified, who hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant." (Ps. 35:27, AS) The prosperity with which he has blessed us is abundant enough for the great crowd of other sheep to share in it, no matter how many their number. We can afford to be liberal, openhanded. By sharing our welfare unselfishly with others we shall see the prosperity of God's visible organization boom yet more and more, despite the worsening situation in the world. We shall increase our own gladness in Jehovah with all his people, all the way into the new world. So to ourselves, to others, we join the psalmist in saying: "Praise ye Jehovah."



Christ's Kingdom No Part of World

¶ As long as the current percentage of religious and Biblical illiteracy exists, the clergy would do best to discharge their responsibility in their own avowed field, rather than ignoring it to dabble in others. God is not in earth's political wrangles. His kingdom is separate from such, and only through his power to abolish the wicked system will his blessing come to earth, not through any current politician. Christ and his apostles recognized this, and though in the world they were no part of it—a course far different from today's clergy. (John 15:17-19; 17:16, 17; 18:36; James 1:27) God speaks for himself through his Word. Those who contradict it should be rejected.

Theocratic Slaves

"Be slaves to Jehovah."—Rom. 12:11, NW.

IS THERE any honor and dignity in being a slave? By the standards of this world that could hardly be. During the prevalence of slavery generally those in such servitude, although often carrying on occupations and duties which are today looked upon as professional, cultured and honorable, were looked down upon as inferiors. There was great abuse of the institution of slavery, and relief for the slaves was slow and long in coming. Some Mohammedan lands are reported to cling to the institution still. It was introduced into the British colonies in America as late as the seventeenth century, and it was not abolished in the United States of America till the latter half of the nineteenth century. In fact, it was not till that same nineteenth century that slavery was abolished by the governments of Christendom in general. In many parts the descendants of those freed slaves are still considered with contempt and kept within bounds and under limitations. How, then, could being a slave carry any honor and dignity with it? How could being called a slave or choosing to call oneself such be anything but humiliating? Well, that all depends upon whose slave you are and upon what kind of one you are. To be a theocratic slave is an honor and privilege. It is a servitude that leads to eternal life.

² Slavery is an ancient institution. Its existence socially and economically before the flood is not recorded in the Bible. But

1. What makes it questionable whether being a slave is an honor, but upon what features does it depend?

2. When did slavery begin, and for whom was it a cursed state?

that it would arise sometime after the flood was forecast when Noah, after being abused by his son Ham, cursed one of Ham's boys, saying: "Cursed be Canaan! The meanest of slaves shall he be to his brothers.... Blessed of the LORD my God may Shem be; and let Canaan be his slave! May God expand Japheth, and dwell in the tents of Shem; but let Canaan be his slave!" (Gen. 9:25-27, AT; Mo) This did not condemn one of the three main branches of the human family to unavoidable slavery. No, but the fact is that this curse which God inspired Noah to speak was fulfilled centuries later. At that time Jehovah God brought his chosen people, the Israelites, into the land of Canaan and at the divine command they exterminated the Canaanites or enslaved many of them, such as the inhabitants of Gibeon and allied cities. To be such a slave, because of being descended from the cursed Canaan, would indeed be a humiliation.

³ But comparing slaves with slaves, what God-fearing man or woman would not count it an honor to have been a slave of Abraham the descendant of Noah's son Shem? Why? Because Abraham was a man of faith in the true God Jehovah, and for his obedient faith he was the "friend of God". Jehovah God did not forbid Abraham to have slaves according to the custom of that ancient time. Noah had blessed Abraham's great-grandfather Shem, and in harmony with that Jehovah would approve of Abraham's having slaves. While residing as an immigrant in the land of

3. Why was it honorable to be one of Abraham's slaves?

Canaan Abraham had hundreds of them. They fought with him to a theocratic victory when aggressor kings from Babylon's neighborhood invaded Canaanland and carried off his kinsman Lot and his household. We read: "When Abram heard that his kinsman had been taken prisoner, he called out his retainers, his household slaves, to the number of three hundred and eighteen, and went in pursuit as far as Dan. With his slaves he fell upon them at night, and defeated them." So those slaves were God's instruments and they were with Abraham on his return when King Melchizedek of Salem met him and ascribed his victory to Jehovah, saying: "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, the creator of the heavens and the earth! And blessed be God Most High, who delivered your foes into your power!"—Gen. 14:1-20, AT.

⁴ As long as Abraham was childless a slave who managed the household for him after Lot's departure was logically his heir, namely, Eliezer of Damascus. When Abraham got his son Isaac and it came time to have him marry, it was again a servant, "the oldest slave of his household, who had charge of everything that belonged to him," likely this Eliezer, whom Abraham sent to procure the wife for Isaac. In this prophetic drama this old slave is dignified by representing God's holy spirit, the active force which Jehovah used in drawing and preparing for his only-begotten Son Jesus a bride, a company of 144,000 faithful followers adopted by Jehovah God as his children. (Gen. 15:1-3; 24:1-10, 61-66, AT) Abraham did not degrade the practice of slavery in his household by taking advantage of it for immoral purposes. This would have resulted in debasing the position of his true wife Sarah, a free woman,

Also, it was by this one wife that God promised that Abraham would have a purely born heir in whom all the families of the earth would be blessed. Hence when Abraham did have his first son Ishmael by a slave girl, it was not by an immoral act. His wife Sarah, then so old as to despair of giving Abraham a son from her own body, asked him to take her Egyptian slave girl Hagar that she might adopt her son as her own. After Hagar's conception of Ishmael Abraham had no further relations with her. (Gen. 16:1-15; Gal. 4:21-25, NW; AT) Later Jehovah blessed Sarah miraculously with a son of her own.

⁵ Abraham was theocratic. He had faith in the Most High God and obeyed him as his Creator, Guide and Ruler. He ruled his big household as Jehovah would have it ruled. As a slave owner Abraham determined and controlled the religion or form of worship of his slaves, whom he had gotten either by purchase or by having his slaves marry among themselves. In that way he permitted no ungodliness, nor idolatry, but built up only the true faith in his household. At God's command he got himself circumcised and had all males in his household circumcised. "Abraham took his son Ishmael and all the slaves born in his house and all those purchased by him—every male in Abraham's household—and circumcised them in the foreskin that very same day, as God had commanded him." Any male refusing the circumcision was ordered cut off from Abraham's household. Abraham taught his slaves about God. To this fact God testified, saying: "I have known him, to the end that he may command his children and his household after him, that they may keep the way of Jehovah." Further testifying to Abraham's education of his slaves in God's worship is the prayer of his oldest

4. (a) How was Abraham's oldest slave dignified? (b) Why was Abraham never guilty of degrading slavery by abusing it?

5. What position did Abraham take toward the religion of his slaves, and how is this shown?

slave when sent to get a wife for Isaac: "O Jehovah, the God of my master Abraham, send me, I pray thee, good speed this day, and show kindness unto my master Abraham." All through the arranging for the marriage this old slave acknowledged Abraham's God and openly worshiped him.—Gen. 17:9-14, 22-27, AT; 18:19; 24:2-56, AS.

⁶ Abraham as a slaveholder pictured how the Most High God whom Abraham adored has slaves also on the earth. We do not refer just to the ancient past when the prophet Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt and through the Red sea to a free national existence. Moses and the Israelites sang after the pursuing Egyptians were engulfed in the Red sea. With fitting reference back to their song Revelation 15:3 describes the true Christians of our day in these words: "They are singing the song of Moses the slave of God and the song of the Lamb, saying: 'Great and wonderful are your works, Jehovah God, the Almighty.'" (NW) Yes, outstandingly Moses was God's slave then. But all of Moses' nation, the children of Israel, were God's slaves with him. How so? Because for many years they had been unwilling slaves in Egypt and their destruction was aimed at by their merciless taskmasters, and by superhuman means the God of their forefather Abraham had saved them and set them free. Said Jehovah when giving the Israelites the Jubilee law: "It is to me that the Israelites are slaves, being my slaves whom I brought out of the land of Egypt, I, the LORD your God. . . . they must not be sold as slaves."—Lev. 25:55, 42, AT; Mo.

⁷ As their Savior and absolute Owner Jehovah had every claim on their services.

6. What was the position of Moses and the Israelites toward God? Why?

7. So what claim and right did God have toward Israel, and what did he have them do toward their own slaves?

He had every right to dictate that their worship should be of Him, the One who had executed judgments against all the ridiculous false gods of Egypt. In the first two of his Ten Commandments to Israel he asserted his right and acted on it, saying: "I am the Eternal, your God, who brought you from the land of Egypt, that slave-pen. You shall have no gods but me. You shall not carve any idols for yourselves, the shape of anything in heaven above or on the earth below or in the sea; you shall not bow down to them nor worship them, for I the Eternal, your God, am a jealous God." (Ex. 20:2-5, Mo; AT) He had them celebrate yearly that deliverance from Egyptian bondage. (Ex. 13:3, 14, Mo; AT) They had every obligation to worship and obey their Owner and Master undividedly, with no complaint but with gratitude. He let the Israelites hold slaves, doubtless the descendants of the slaves of their forefather Jacob or Israel and who had moved into Egypt with them for the time. (Gen. 30:42, 43, Mo; AT) But Jehovah had his liberated people apply His laws to such servants. As an illustration, his Fourth Commandment ordered the Israelites: "On the seventh day, a sabbath to the LORD your God, you must not do any work at all, neither you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male or female slave." (Ex. 20:10, AT; Mo) As theocratic slaves of the Lord God, the Israelites were bound to see that their own slaves conformed to God's law and covenant.

⁸ For nineteen centuries the natural Israelites have ceased to be Jehovah's chosen people. Now he deals with the spiritual Israelites, those who are Jews inwardly. Are you one? Have you dedicated yourself entirely to him through his Son Jesus Christ and do you have the evidence of

8. Why are spiritual Israelites slaves, without need for shame?

being begotten by his spirit to a heavenly life? You are? Then, do you know that you are a slave? According to your own admission, you must be Jehovah's slave. Do not feel embarrassed at the term. Let the world scoff all they want to at the idea that God has slaves and imagine that, because they refuse to be His, they are the slaves to no one. Every man, woman and child on earth is and has to be the lowly servant of one of two opposing masters. If you refuse to be Jehovah's slave, do not sneer at His slaves. You are then the low-down slave of his opposer, Satan the Devil. What Jesus stated in the sermon on the mount makes it sure you cannot serve both masters. If you hate and despise the one, then it is inescapable that you must love and stick to the other. The only other is the Devil, the god of Mammon, selfish worldly riches. (Matt. 6:24, NW) You can have him, if you want to. But, as for us, we choose Jehovah. It is a blessed state to be his lowly servants, theocratic slaves. Greater men than you have counted it a high honor to be such, even Jesus Christ himself. We cannot avoid it: we are the slaves of the god whom we worship.

⁹ Jesus Christ the Son of God also has those whom he owns and controls and who are obligated to serve him. In this he matches Abraham's son and heir, Isaac, who inherited all the slaves of his father. (Gen. 26:19-32; 25:5, AT) All the 144,000 members of Christ's body are in servitude to Jesus, for he is the rightful Head of this body. This does not leave out the "twelve apostles of the Lamb". They and other prominent disciples of Jesus felt honored to declare themselves as his slaves, calling attention to their subservience to him at the beginning of their letters to the Christian congregation. (Rev. 7:3-8;

9. How does it come that Jesus has had slaves down to this world's end?

Rom. 1:1 and Titus 1:1 and 2 Pet. 1:1 and James 1:1 and Jude 1 and Phil. 1:1, NW) Today the remnant of the members of his body on earth find themselves in no higher status than the apostles. Jesus placed this obedient remnant in that same status when he asked in his prophecy on the world's end: "Who really is the faithful and discreet slave whom his master appointed over his domestics to give them their food at the proper time? Happy is that slave if his master on arriving finds him doing so. Truly I say to you, He will appoint him over all his belongings." —Matt. 24:45-47, NW; Luke 12:42, 44.

¹⁰ It is upon the members of this faithful and discreet class, after they have repented of their failings and shortcomings during World War I, that God's prophecy through Joel applies: "It shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy; your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. Furthermore, upon the male and female slaves, in those days I will pour out my spirit." The apostle Peter first applied this prophecy in his day, from Pentecost forward, and it has its final and complete application upon the remnant since the close of World War I in 1918.—Joel 2:28, 29, AT; Mo; Acts 2:16-18, NW; AT; Mo.

¹¹ It was not by any cheap payment of a few gold or silver coins that Jesus made us his property, to have control over our very life and death. He shed his own precious blood when he hung on a torture stake like a despicable criminal slave and by this he bought us. (1 Pet. 1:18, 19) What, then, do we have to fear from having such an unselfish, self-sacrificing, god-

10. On persons in what station, too, does Joel 2:28, 29 have fulfillment?

11. How did Jesus make us his property, and why need we not fear?

ly Master as he is? How could he ever oppress us, harm us or do anything but good to us?

¹² Appreciating at what a personal cost he bought us, how could we willingly yield ourselves to any other master, to sin, to our bellies, to this corrupt world, to the Devil? "For anyone in the Lord that was called a slave is the Lord's freedman: likewise he that was called a free man is a slave of Christ. You were bought with a price; stop becoming slaves of men.... Also, you do not belong to yourselves, for you were bought with a price. By all means, glorify God in the body of you people." (1 Cor. 7:22, 23; 6:19, 20, NW) Never do we want to deny his ownership of us. We are determined therefore to resist false prophets who Jesus said would rise up at the world's end; and Peter warned: "These very ones will quietly bring in destructive sects and will disown even the owner that bought them, bringing speedy destruction upon themselves." (Matt. 24:11, 24, 3; 2 Pet. 2:1, 2, NW) Never will we raise up a slave's revolt, like that of the Roman gladiator Spartacus A.D. 73, against our rightful Owner! Never will we desert his service and become runaways. We are in love with our Master. Rather than traitorously forsake his service we prefer to be like the Hebrew slave who refused to quit his master's service and had his ear bored through with an awl to the doorpost to signify that he was now his slave to time indefinite.—Ex. 21:1-5, AT; Deut. 15:17.

12. In view of the cost to him, how do we feel toward our Owner?



EGYPTIAN FAMINE SUFFERERS, GIBEONITES

¹³ The spirit-begotten remnant, the faithful and discreet slave class, are not alone now in preferring this proper servitude to God through his Son Jesus Christ. A fast-growing crowd, already hundreds of thousands, have yielded themselves over to God through Christ. In this day when death-dealing spiritual famine has hit Christendom and all the rest of this world but when there is spiritual plenty at the disposal of the remnant of Christ's body, these other sheep have imitated the Egyptians during the seven-year famine for which Pharaoh's prime minister Joseph had made ample provision. These good-will people have come to the Greater Joseph, Jesus Christ, who represents the Greater Pharaoh, Jehovah God, and have said in the language of the Egyptians: "There is nothing left for my lord but our bodies and our land. Why should we and our land perish before your eyes? Buy us and our land in exchange for food, and we and our land will be the property of Pharaoh. Give us seed that we may live and not perish, and the land may not become a waste." Christ Jesus has acted now just as Joseph did: "Joseph therefore bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh, for every one of the Egyptians sold his field because the famine was unbearable for them. Thus the land became Pharaoh's and from one end of Egypt to the other, Joseph made the people slaves." In response to Christ's rescue of them from a death by spiritual famine they respond like those famine-stricken Egyptians: "You have kept us alive; let us win the favor of my lord, and we will

13. Who also today have become slaves like the Egyptians in Joseph's day, and why?

be slaves of Pharao." (Gen. 47:15-26, *CB*; *AT*) So these other sheep have become State slaves, Kingdom slaves.

¹⁴ These earthly-destined other sheep of the Right Shepherd must follow him obediently wherever he leads. No one may pluck them out of his care without due punishment. They must serve God at his temple day and night. Their lives are to be spared like those of the Gibeonites, who were the descendants of the accursed Canaan and who were meant to be destroyed with the rest of the Canaanites by Joshua and the Israelites. But like the ancient Gibeonites they have sought and gained peace with the Greater Joshua, Jesus Christ, and his God Jehovah. As they keep coming out from among the modern condemned Canaanites, the Greater Joshua says to them: "Cursed then shall you be; never shall you cease providing slaves, hewers of wood and drawers of water, for the temple of my God!" To this they reply: "Here we are, then, in your power; do whatever you think it right and proper to do to us." They are cursed, not like Canaan, but because a ban, a taboo, has been put upon them. They have become the property of Jehovah God and his Christ, and no one may execute them or take them away from their temple service with impunity. God has absolute power over their life and death and only He can execute them for failing to be faithful slaves. Woe to anyone violating this divine prohibition over them! Five kings of the Amorites immediately tried to do so and their attacking forces were wiped out, Jehovah himself tossing down large deadly hailstones from heaven and causing the sun and moon to stand still at Joshua's prayer in order to complete the slaughter. In fanatical nationalism King Saul once tried to destroy the tabooed Gibeonites, and the whole na-

tion of Israel suffered a three-year famine for it until the death of those Gibeonites was expiated. Jehovah God will do similarly to Christendom for laying violent hands on the modern Gibeonites to prevent their doing temple service to God and gaining life in the new world.—Josh. 9:3-27, *AT*; 10:1-27; 2 Sam. 21:1-14.

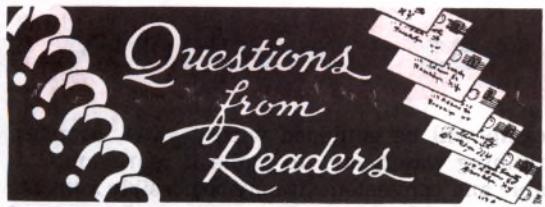
¹⁵ The faithful and discreet slave class welcome these fellow servants to their midst and try to protect the rights of these. Together with the Greater Gideon, Christ Jesus, they join in the iconoclastic work of tearing down the altar of the false god Baal and his sacred pole of false worship, and devote their sacrifices of praise to Jehovah God, in obedience to his command. As it is written: "So Gideon took ten of his slaves, and did as the LORD told him; . . . So Gideon was named Jerubbaal that day, meaning, 'Let the Baal take his own part against him; for he tore down his altar.'" (Judg. 6:27, 32, *AT*) *Baal* means "owner".

¹⁶ Jehovah is our Owner and our God. Gladly we all, both the remnant and the other sheep, confess ourselves to be his living property whom he has bought by the blood of his Son Jesus Christ. We bear the marks of it, like the apostle Paul, who said: "Henceforth let no one be bothering me, for I am bearing on my body the brand-marks of a slave of Jesus." (Gal. 6:17, *NW*) Hence we acknowledge God's right to dictate what must be our religion, our form of worship, and we will worship only Him as the true God. As against Him we have no rights. His commandments we are obligated to keep and we will lovingly render our sacred service to him, choosing to obey him as Ruler rather than men. We are his theocratic slaves now and forever.

15. In what work do all his slaves join the Greater Gideon?

16. In view of God's ownership, what do we acknowledge and what do we determine to do?

14. Why may these recent slaves not be taken from temple service or be killed off?



Questions from Readers

- Is it desirable to make provisions in Kingdom Halls for a soundproof room to which disturbing children can be taken and in which the parent can hear and perhaps see the sessions and yet the child cannot disturb congregational meetings?—G. E., Pennsylvania.

Children should be in the congregation with their parents, and the children should behave themselves. The parents should so train their children that they will behave. To provide some kind of "nursery" or "rumpus" room for unruly children seems to us a concession to obstreperousness. It deprives the children of training that should teach them that there are times when they must sit quietly and listen to others, when they are not to be the center of attraction. If a child cries or otherwise disturbs the meeting, it can be taken from the hall for whatever time is necessary to quiet it and then brought back. But if a special room is provided some parents will misuse it, going there and having their attention divided between the children and what is coming in over the loud-speaker, with the result that they give neither their children nor the meeting the attention necessary. Better for parent and child to be in the meeting, and when necessary the parent can take the child out and give it undivided attention, returning when the problem is settled. Parents can do this if they will sit with their children, and do it with little disturbance to others if they will sit toward the rear of the hall and near the end of the rows of seats.

We firmly believe that where disturbing children are a problem the solution lies with the parents and not in providing a soundproof room. Undoubtedly some parents are negligent in looking after their children and training them in proper conduct at meetings. It has been observed that it is in the more civilized

countries such as the United States that children are most disorderly, disobedient and generally unruly, and the responsibility for correcting this lies squarely upon the parents. In many countries of the world where children are attending meetings in greater numbers there is much less disturbance than there is in the United States and some of the other countries usually considered among the most civilized. Children must be trained, not spoiled. It is our belief that the problem is being dodged, not solved, by providing a separate room or "isolation ward" for negligent parents and obstreperous offspring. Such a room caters to parental negligence and juvenile disorderliness.

- Is it proper for a Christian witness of Jehovah to have business relationships with one who has been disfellowshiped?—F. G., California.

The circumstances of each case might influence the answer. Generally speaking, it would be desirable for us to have no contact with disfellowshiped persons, either in business or in social and spiritual ways. If it is possible to make new business connections relative to employer, employee, the acquiring of raw materials or the performance of needed services, and so forth, it would be advisable to do so. However, if circumstances do not allow for this as you continue to make necessary provision for yourself or family in a material way, then you may decide to continue the business contact with a disfellowshiped person. But if you deem this necessary, you must be very careful to see to it that you do not associate with the ousted one and do not discuss spiritual matters with him. Always bear in mind that our spiritual interests are of far greater concern to us than material interests, and follow closely the recommendations of the congregation regarding one who has been disfellowshiped. We safeguard not only our own personal spiritual interests by so doing, but also those of our brothers, and especially those of weaker ones or new ones who might be easily stumbled by our contact with disfellowshiped persons.



"TRAILER CITY" FOR 1953 CONVENTION

Here it is! There will be a trailer camp in conjunction with the 1953 International Convention. The Butterworth and Marks farms, located on Old New Brunswick road, near New Market, New Jersey, will again be the site of the camp. These properties that the Society has rented for this purpose comprise between eighty-five and ninety acres, which should provide ample room for all desiring accommodations for tents or trailers. Additional property will be available if more is required.

While this is about forty miles from Yankee Stadium, improved highway facilities have been built during the past two years that will make traveling to Yankee Stadium easier. The New Jersey Turnpike is a through highway to the George Washington bridge. Also, improvements have been made in the present four-lane highways to the Holland Tunnel.

You may begin making personal plans now if you wish to stay at the "Trailer City". The

camp will be equipped with a store, supplies, running water, etc., to make it more comfortable and convenient. It may be possible for some to get hold of camping equipment now and hold it through the winter for next summer. Whatever the case may be, planning should begin now, so that come next July you will be ready to travel.

We would suggest, however, that you do *not* write until you receive the form for trailer camp accommodations through your local company in the spring. There will be a nominal registration fee for each unit, to cover the cost of utilities and temporary buildings required. It is expected that the camp will be equipped with sound direct from the stadium so all the programs can be heard the same as in 1950.

Pioneer missionaries living in trailers, publishers with large families and those who think eight days of city living will be too expensive, here is your answer. J. W. "Trailer City" welcomes you!

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES

Week of January 11: Sharing in the Prosperity of God's Nation.

Week of January 18: Theocratic Slaves.