

The WATCHTOWER

What Basis Is There for Hope?

The Pacific Islands Hear the "Good News"

Survival and Life by Harmonizing with God's Purpose

NOVEMBER 1, 1974

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

The WATCHTOWER

November 1, 1974
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A watchtower enables a person to see far into the distance and announce to others what is coming. Can a magazine serve similarly in our day? Yes, from its first issue (July 1879) onward, *The Watchtower*, published by Jehovah's witnesses, has done just that.

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

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

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

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WHAT BASIS IS THERE FOR HOPE?

HERE was a hardworking man in his sixties. He had grown up in New Jersey, led a very active life, had never been sick, but suddenly he began to feel ill. He tried to ignore the feeling, but it would not go away. And no wonder; for a diagnosis revealed that he had cancer. He tried various remedies and spent a number of weeks at a famed cancer clinic. He returned seemingly cured, a new man, as it were. But not for long. Slowly his health began to slip again and soon it was apparent that nothing would help. Yet through it all he had a cheerful disposition. Why? Because he had a basis for hope.

Also, there was a Canadian couple who started out in their married life very much in love with each other. But then he got a job playing in a hotel orchestra and over a radio network, which kept him late every night, while she worked during the daytime. Now they started to drift apart. Soon it seemed that a divorce was the only solution. But then something came into their lives that drew them together in heart and mind. What was that? A basis for hope.

Typical also was the lot of a certain hippie in Virginia. He became completely disillusioned because of the way selfish men were running the world. As a result, he let his ideals slip away from him. But when he found that that did not make him happy he looked elsewhere. Eventually he, as so many others like him, found a basis for hope that brought him happiness.

A BASIS FOR HOPE

True, there are many who speak disparagingly of hope. But whether one's

hope proves valuable or disappointing all depends upon what that hope is based on. No one who sincerely desires to do what is right needs to be without hope. Why can that be said? Because of the fact that Jehovah God, the Creator of all things, a God who is loving, wise and almighty, does indeed exist.—Rom. 1:20.

Surely reason tells us that this marvelous universe with its beauty, symmetry, order and infinite variety, did not come into existence by itself, by accident. Thus Sir Isaac Newton, whom many historians of science classify as "the greatest scientific mind the world has ever seen," wrote in a letter to a friend that in his greatest work, the *Principia*, he had made it a point to highlight proofs that God did indeed exist, and that he was glad to see that these proofs had their effect on people.

In that famed document he had written: "This most beautiful system of the sun, planets, and comets, could only proceed from the counsel and dominion of an intelligent and powerful Being. . . . This Being governs all things . . . as Lord over all . . . The Supreme God is a Being eternal, infinite, absolutely perfect."

Some, however, may argue, 'Not so. Look at all the misery and wickedness on the earth.' But the existence of such conditions does not soundly argue against God's existence nor against putting faith in Him. Why not? Because his Word, the Holy Bible, satisfactorily explains God's reasons for permitting wickedness to con-

tinue so long. In brief, God has permitted these conditions for two basic reasons. *One*, because of a challenge made by the Devil impugning God's rulership, boasting that he could turn all creatures away from God. God knew that some would keep integrity in spite of all that Satan could do. And *two*, to let imperfect man demonstrate his utter inability to bring peace, prosperity and happiness apart from God.

And let it be noted that there are many and powerfully compelling reasons for accepting the Bible as the inspired Word of God, even as there are for having faith in the existence of God. Foremost is the fulfillment of so many of its prophecies throughout the centuries; the marvelous harmony of its many writings though written over a period of more than fifteen centuries and by men often living many, many miles apart; the candor of its writers, as well as its support by secular history and archaeology.*

BIBLE-BASED HOPE BENEFITS NOW

Hope in Jehovah God and in his Word is fittingly likened to an anchor. Even as an anchor can give a ship stability in a raging storm, so the anchor of a Bible-based hope can give us stability amid life's storms. It is also likened to a helmet that can protect one's mind from disturbing doubts.—1 Thess. 5:8; Heb. 6:19.

That is why that man from New Jersey could continue cheerful though his life was ebbing away as a result of cancer. He had the hope of a resurrection and believed that God rewards those who serve him faithfully.—2 Tim. 4:8; Heb. 11:6.

The value of the resurrection hope is also seen from the experience of a Hindu woman living in the territory of Durban, South Africa. She was steeped in Hindu traditions and customs and was intensely devoted to her husband. When he suddenly

ly died of a heart attack, she felt so disconsolate that she could not eat. In fact, she was determined to commit suicide by starving herself to death and even wrote a letter to God asking him to forgive her for taking her own life. But after a fast of forty days she began to eat again. Why? Because Christian witnesses of Jehovah, who believe in the resurrection, were able to comfort her with the hope that someday she would see her beloved husband again.—Acts 17:31; 24:15; John 5:28, 29.

And how did Bible-based hope mend the marriage of that Canadian couple that had broken up? By bringing them a better understanding of what God's requirements are and giving them a mutual goal for which to strive.—Matt. 6:33; 19:3-6.

The same was true of the youth who was attracted to the hippie way of life because the world had nothing to offer and he saw no real hope for the future. While in Vietnam as an American soldier he got in touch with Christian missionaries, Jehovah's witnesses, who helped him to see the certainty of the promises of God and gave him a basis for hope—a hope that will soon be realized. How can we be certain that the time is near?

GOD'S TIMETABLE POINTS TO NOW

God's Word assures us: "For everything there is an appointed time, even a time for every affair under the heavens." (Eccl. 3:1) Thus Jehovah God permitted the wickedness and violence of the pre-Flood world for just so long, and then sent the Deluge that wiped the earth clean of all wicked and violent men. (Gen. 6:3-12; 7:11-24) Similarly, in his due time God brought the wretchedly enslaved Israelites out of Egyptian bondage and settled them in Canaan, in a land flowing with milk and honey.—Ex. 1:8-14; 2:23-25; Josh. 21:45.

* For details, see *Is the Bible Really the Word of God?*

And what about the present 'difficult times hard to deal with'? The Bible says: "When the wicked ones sprout as the vegetation and all the practicers of what is hurtful blossom forth"—which they certainly are doing now—"it is that they may be annihilated forever." Then, with the destruction of wickedness, God's due time will have come for his 'will to be done on earth as in heaven.' "He will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore."—2 Tim. 3: 1-5; Ps. 92:7; Matt. 6:10; Rev. 21:4.

But why can we be so certain that these promises will be fulfilled? Because the Bible tells us that we have 'a basis for hope because God, who cannot lie, has made these promises.' (Titus 1:2) Yes, ever so many prophecies recorded in the Bible have been fulfilled, such as the years when the land of Judah would be desolate, seventy years; the exact year when the Messiah would come; where he would be born; what he would do; how he would die and be raised from the dead.—Jer. 29:10; Isa. 53:1-12; Dan. 9:2, 24-27; Mic. 5:2; Ps. 16:10.

That this very generation can hope to see God's promises regarding the future of this earth fulfilled is confirmed by what this present generation has seen in fulfillment of the prophecies of Jesus and his apostles. (See Matthew, chapters 24 and 25; Mark, chapter 13, and Luke, chapter 21.) In connection with what we today have witnessed, Jesus declared: "Truly I say to you that this generation will by no means pass away until all these things occur."—Matt. 24:34.

HOW TO STRENGTHEN YOUR HOPE

Do you want a strong, spirit-sustaining hope? Then you must put forth earnest and sincere efforts to acquire it. It is as a well-known American sociologist once wryly observed: "Leaders who preach a

message of hope are never very welcome, for they require . . . effort, activity, fidelity, commitment." Of course, he had reference to leaders who put forth human-based hopes; still, the same principle applies to hope based on God's Word.

First in importance is to acquaint yourself with the Book of Hope, the Holy Bible, and with its reasons for your having hope. Endeavor to read a portion of that Book every day. Knowledge is essential if there is to be faith, and faith is what makes hope possible.

Of course, merely reading the Bible will not give you faith; you must understand what you are reading. The Bible itself makes this point in the account of an Ethiopian official who was reading the prophecy of Isaiah, chapter 53, but confessed he did not understand to whom the prophecy was referring. It took the evangelizer Philip to explain that the prophecy was referring to Jesus Christ.—Acts 8: 27-38.

Who can help you to understand the Bible? Obviously, it would need to be Christians who really believe the Bible to be the Word of God. From the foregoing you can see that this magazine is published—and distributed—by those who have faith in the Bible as God's Word. Moreover, these, the Christian witnesses of Jehovah, sincerely endeavor to live by what they preach, further recommending them to you as sincere students and teachers of Bible truths.

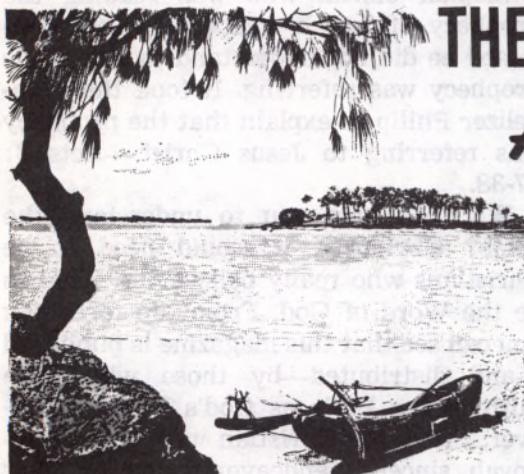
In fact, this is being recognized by more and more persons who are not Witnesses. The New York *Amsterdam News*, of August 10, 1974, on its editorial page, had a large drawing of an upright Bible with a witness of Jehovah standing on it, peering with a telescope into the future. The drawing was captioned "Keeping the Faith." In its editorial the newspaper stated: "This is a religious group which has, over the years, unswervingly held to

its beliefs by precept and example and rigidly practices what it preaches in a world where such things are rare.... Such Keepers of the Faith are good for our city and good for our sinful nation because of the example they set amid the scandals, murders and moral breakdowns of our times. Welcome to New York, Jehovah's Witnesses!"

These Christian witnesses of Jehovah are fully equipped to help you strengthen your faith in God and the Bible so that you can have a bright and strong hope regarding the future. Not only do they publish Bibles and Bible study aids but

they are ready to help you to understand the Bible by conducting a weekly Bible study in your own home absolutely free of charge. Moreover, they also welcome you to their Kingdom Halls. There they have five one-hour gatherings each week where Bible teachings and principles are expounded and inculcated.

No question about it—because Jehovah God the Creator exists, because he has fine qualities and has interest in his earthly creatures and because his Word the Bible is true—there is abundant reason for you to hope. But to make that hope your own, you must work at it.



THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

Hear The "Good News"

"GET away from it all! Come to the Sunny South Pacific Islands" are slogans on travel posters around the world. And, indeed, 'away from much of it' are the nine colorful South Pacific island groups where Christian preaching activity is supervised by the Fiji branch of the Watch Tower Society.

The warm island climate and fertile, productive lands are reflected in the easy-going people. Life is still very casual. Time and other factors that govern in countries where people lead more regu-

lated lives are not so important to many people here. It seems that they live for the sheer joy of living, and they are usually very hospitable and friendly. Among them are many of Jehovah's Christian witnesses.

Serving the 1,200,000 people scattered over hundreds of lovely islands, there are fifteen times as many proclaimers of the "good news" about God's kingdom as there were just twenty years ago. Would you like to come on a brief tour with us to meet some of them? It will mean some traveling.

Beginning east of Australia, these nine island groups stretch eastward across more than 3,000 miles of the South Pacific and reach north as far as the Equator. Tahiti is our first stop.

FRENCH POLYNESIA

Tahiti is the largest and most developed of the 130 islands in French Polynesia. Reaching the 80,000 people in all these islands with the "good news" is a real challenge, but more than 200 of Jehovah's Christian witnesses are eagerly meeting that challenge.

Very warm and humid air, fragrant with the perfume of the Tiara flower, greets us as we arrive on Tahiti island. But the kisses and flower leis from the many local Witnesses who come to meet us are what make us truly feel at home and welcome. Our guide, Jacques Inaudi, who came from France to work among these friendly people, is a traveling circuit overseer of Jehovah's witnesses.

We travel by bus to reach the nearby Puunauia Congregation. At the end of a small valley, a large Kingdom Hall that can hold 400 persons awaits us. Our Christian brothers swarm all around, wanting to shake hands and embrace us. Noise outside signals the arrival of a busload who appreciate the meetings here so much that they regularly travel ninety miles to attend! After the meeting, the congregation prepares to visit the homes of local people to tell them about God's promises. Brother Inaudi describes a typical visit:

"We usually begin at about 8:30 a.m. The people live in modest homes with either thatched or corrugated iron roofs. As we approach the house, we are surrounded by the usual pack of dogs. In response to our knock, a man appears with no shirt on, followed by his wife and several children. On learning that we are Jehovah's witnesses, the man asks to be excused for a few moments and goes back into the house, returning with a shirt on. Tahitians are very respectful of the Bible and do not wish to discuss spiritual matters if they feel they are neglectfully dressed."

An example of how the Bible's truth develops appreciation for God among these

humble people is a mother of six on the island of Raiatéa. Christian meetings are held on the other side of the island and the only bus comes along the main road at any time between one and three a.m.! So, at one o'clock in the morning the family come down out of the valley where they live, walk for about fifteen minutes and cross two rivers before reaching the road. Then they cover themselves and try to sleep while waiting for the bus. Would you put forth that much effort to attend Christian meetings to build up your knowledge of God and his purposes?

Before we take our leave of him, we ask Brother Inaudi about how he travels between the islands. "Well, on the five islands that I serve," he answers, "I have traveled in everything from modern turboprop airplanes to small outrigger canoes. Some of the islands we are now reaching out to from Tahiti are hundreds of miles away. So, to save time, we travel by small airplanes. It is costly, but it is the only way we have of reaching these people with the good news quickly."

Flying westward over about 1,500 miles of blue Pacific, we come to the lush, tropical Samoas.

THE SAMOAS

Unlike French Polynesia with its many islands, Western Samoa has just two of any real size, with a total population of about 147,000. Because of the hot climate, people usually wear only a wrap-around piece of material tied at the waist, and their houses have no walls. In place of walls, plaited coconut-leaf blinds are lowered when they desire privacy at night and other times.

Paul Evans, a missionary from the United States who came with his wife to the Samoas in 1955, tells us about calling at these open homes in his Christian ministry. He says:

"It is easy to see who is at home in the village as one approaches. Before we enter a home Samoan custom requires that we remove our shoes so that the pandanus mats that cover the floor are not soiled. The householder then offers a 'word' of greeting, sometimes taking several minutes. The visitor replies, wishing that all is well in the home and returning the good wishes stated in the householder's opening remarks. It is only when this formal greeting is over that the visitor is able to go ahead with his message."

In one case a Samoan woman who appreciated this message could not be permitted to share in spreading it to others because she was not legally married to the man with whom she was living. With loving concern, Paul Evans and his wife concentrated on helping the man of the house, pointing out to him what the Bible says about marriage and clean living habits in order for his worship to be acceptable to God. Soon he legalized their marriage and quit his heavy drinking, smoking and other unchristian practices. In 1974 he and his wife were baptized, symbolizing their dedication to do God's will.

Just a few miles across the water, on the more westernized islands of American Samoa, about 70 proclaimers of the "good news" work among the 28,000 inhabitants, and up to 130 persons associate at the local Kingdom Hall.

FRENCH MELANESIA

Our next stop takes us another 1,500 miles to the westernmost group of islands under the Fiji branch, French Melanesia. About 125,000 people live on the large island of New Caledonia and the Loyalty Islands off its coasts.

"The preaching of the good news started in this area of the Pacific in the middle 1950's," says Jacques Chichemanian, who has long been associated with the work.

"Because it can get very warm in this country, we try to do all our traveling early in the morning. After the first day's work, we set up camp beside a small river in a fine shady spot. There are eleven of us from three families and we are going to be preaching in this area for a whole week."

One day this group spoke informally to a mechanic who replaced a broken wind-screen on one of their cars. They explained to him the reason for their being in such an isolated area, and were pleasantly surprised when he said: "This interests me a great deal. Come in!" He took the Witnesses into his modest home and invited his family to join in the conversation. After the Witnesses finished their explanation, he told them:

"I am one of the chiefs of my tribe. Recently our priest brought us together and said that we should go and work for him without pay so that he could make some money to repair the church. So I stood up and asked him, 'Why is it that the contractor who is a Catholic is being paid 800,000 CFP [over \$10,000] to construct the church and repair it, while we who are also Catholics must work without wages? Are there two Gods, one for the contractor and the other for us? We refuse to help you out!'" So the mechanic said, "I believe that my religion is not the true one, and I am looking for the true one."

"Needless to say," Brother Chichemanian continued, "that night we went back to camp tired but happy that we had made the effort to come to this isolated area."

On nearby Lifou Island, after a whole week of advertising a slide showing on the subject "A Close Look at the Churches," there appeared to be no newly interested persons at all in attendance at starting time. But, surprise! Out of the shadows and from behind trees, people started ap-

pearing in groups. It seems that they had been watching one another to see who would make the first move to go into the hall. The final count was 117 in attendance, and many had to be turned away for lack of space!

NEW HEBRIDES

Flying north from New Caledonia with a French "Bon Voyage" still ringing in our ears, we soon arrive at Port Vila, in the New Hebrides island group. About 85,000 people live primarily on the twelve larger islands in this group. English, French and many native dialects are spoken here; in fact, it is not uncommon to find tribes within a few miles of each other on the same island speaking a different language!

Allan Taylor, an Australian Witness, tells us that recently they made an effort to reach some of the closer islands in their area. Fifteen of the Witnesses made a twelve-day trip to five islands off the coast of their main island. Although it cost them \$400 to hire the boat, and they had quite a rough passage at times, they were able to get the Kingdom message to many people who would not have otherwise heard.

On the island of Pele, a native Hebridean schoolteacher, on learning that they were Jehovah's witnesses, answered: "Oh, is that true? I, too, am one of Jehovah's witnesses. A man brought me the book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life*. I read the whole book and knew it was the truth, so I started applying it in my life. I thank Jehovah for putting you on my trail."

So the "good news" of the Kingdom is reaching out into the most remote places. Helping in this expansion has been the fine effort by Witnesses who have sold their homes and moved to serve where there is a greater need for proclaimers of

the good news. In a similar way the message is reaching the coral atolls of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands to the north, as well as the other island territories supervised by the Watch Tower Society's Fiji branch. Before leaving the South Pacific, come with us on a visit to the hub of this activity, Fiji itself.

FIJI

Fiji's multiracial population of over a half million saw the start of this movement of truth into the far reaches of the South Pacific. Since 1947 the Kingdom work has spread to twenty congregations located on six of the surrounding 105 inhabited islands, with as many as 524 sharing in preaching the "good news."

Donald Clare, who currently supervises the activity in all these islands, reflects: "It has been my joy to see the work develop from the days when we had only 35 proclaimers of the good news in Suva, Fiji's capital, and when it was only being done in Fiji, to the point where it has now expanded to nine territories and has grown to the fine number of 1,214 preachers having an active share. With Jehovah's help we have overcome the problems of distance, isolation, and so many language barriers. As a result, just as Jesus commanded, the good news is being preached in these remote islands of the South Pacific."

IN COMING ISSUES

- **Concern About Others—A Sorely Needed Quality.**
- **The King's Marriage Feast in the Purpose of God.**
- **Is There Danger in Occult "Charms"?**

How Would You Treat AN AMBASSADOR?

IN RECENT times we often hear of attacks on embassies and even the kidnapping or assassination of an ambassador because the people are displeased with that country or its policies. But in times past when there was relative peace between the nations, ambassadors were generally treated well.

However, there is an instance in ancient times where the royal "messengers" or envoys of a peaceful nation were treated shamefully. King David of Israel had made a friendly gesture by sending official representatives to King Hanun of Ammon. But Hanun showed gross disrespect for David by subjecting the envoys to great indignities. This treacherous act provoked a war that resulted in the near wiping out of the Ammonite nation.—1 Chron. 19:1-20:3.

Centuries later, a more flagrant instance was the treatment of Jehovah God's Son, whom Jehovah sent as an act of loving-kindness to the Jewish nation. (John 8:18, 19, 49) Their leaders cruelly mistreated him and finally had him killed. This resulted in God's casting off the Jewish nation as his chosen people and the destruction of their city Jerusalem with its temple, in 70 C.E., at the hands of the Roman armies.

But the treatment that they gave Jesus Christ was not enough for the opposing Jews. Prior to the destruction of Jerusalem, they also shamefully mistreated those whom Christ sent as ambassadors, his anointed disciples, killing many of them. (2 Cor. 5:20) Though the people were in-

cited to participate in these atrocities, the Jewish religious leaders were primarily to blame, because they deliberately kept the people in ignorance of God. Jesus told them: "You took away the key of knowledge; you yourselves did not go in, and those going in you hindered!" (Luke 11:52) These leaders were selfishly afraid of losing their position of power. They said among themselves: "If we let [Jesus] alone this way, they will all put faith in him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation."—John 11:48.

WHY CHRIST'S AMBASSADORS HAVE BEEN HATED

It was not personal hatred that caused opposers among the Jews to persecute the first-century ambassadors of Christ. It was because these ambassadors declared and explained the kingdom of God to the people. They pointed out to the Jews, who thought that kingdom would be a Jewish earthly kingdom, that it is a heavenly government, that it will destroy all human governments and will bring in a "new earth," a righteous human society. They showed that God's requirement for life for individuals is that they make over their personalities according to God's principles as set forth in the Bible. They must demonstrate love for their fellowman without distinction or prejudice. This exposed the selfish religious leaders and made them hate the Kingdom ambassadors.—2 Pet. 3:7, 12, 13; Eph. 4:22-24.

Today, anointed ambassadors of the kingdom of God would necessarily be proclaiming the same truths. It is good news to honest-hearted people, but incurs the enmity of many religious leaders. Due to propaganda against these ambassadors, many people are caused either to oppose or to pay no attention to the proclamation being made. In many cases the ambassadors of the Kingdom are insulted, persecuted or shown inhospitality.

However, if you knew that a person was actually an ambassador or an envoy of the kingdom of God, how would you treat him? Would you do things for him in something more than a mere humanitarian spirit? Would you not accord him special respect and attention, listening carefully to what he had to say? Jesus said to his disciples: "Whoever gives you a cup of water to drink *on the ground that you belong to Christ*, I truly tell you, he will by no means lose his reward." (Mark 9:41) Contrastingly, he said that some would do bad to his disciples *on account of his name*.—Matt. 24:9; John 15:20, 21.

HOW GOATLIKE ONES MANIFEST THEMSELVES

In the preceding issue of this magazine we discussed Jesus' parable of the sheep and the goats, focusing on the "sheep" and the reward of everlasting life given to them because of their good, hospitable treatment of Christ's ambassadors. Who, then, are the "goats," what reward do they receive, and why?—Matt. 25:31-46.

The "goats," Jesus shows, are those people of "all the nations" who, different from the hospitable, loving "sheep," give no favorable reception or aid to Christ's ambassadors. They are shown in the parable to be called by Jesus "cursed" ones. They reply to Jesus' condemnation because of the inhospitable attitude by saying: "Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or

in prison and did not minister to you?"—Matt. 25:44.

Yes, they call him "Lord," but it is in a hypocritical way if by this they mean that he is *their* Lord. Because, if they really loved him, they would love the truths about him and would want to see his kingdom come. (Matt. 6:10) Their excuse is of no value, for their actions belie their claim. A person does not have to see another one directly in person in order to decide whether to help him or to refuse him help. The question is, How does the individual treat a visible representative of Christ who has clearly shown that he truly represents Christ?

This is the point that Jesus makes in the parable, when the king answers the self-excusing "goats" at his left hand of disfavor: "Truly I say to you, To the extent that you did not do it to one of these least ones, you did not do it to me."—Matt. 25:45.

It does not matter how unimportant one of Christ's spirit-begotten, anointed "brothers" may be. As a matter of fact, none of Christ's "brothers" are prominent in the political field or in the religious field of Christendom, for Christ's true "brothers," his ambassadors, are no part of this world just as Christ himself has never been a part of this world. (1 Cor. 1:26-31; John 15:19; 17:14, 16) The "goats" do not have to persecute these ambassadors, although some of them have kidnapped, imprisoned and killed these servants of Christ. Withholding help or hospitality to them, ignoring them, refusing to give any support to their work of proclaiming the Kingdom message, the "goats" make an intelligent decision on the issue. Actually they take a stand, in their hearts, against God's Messianic kingdom, which the ambassadors proclaim, and therefore a stand against Christ, as revealed by their attitude and actions.—Compare Matthew 7:21-23.

REWARD TO THE "GOATS"

What, therefore, is the reward of these "goats"? Christ tells them: "Be on your way from me, you who have been cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his angels."—Matt. 25:41.

What is the "fire prepared for the Devil and his angels"? Is this everlasting conscious torment in a firelike element in the invisible realm? Someone may say, Surely it must be, for Revelation 20:10 says: "And the Devil who was misleading them was hurled into the lake of fire and sulphur, where both the wild beast and the false prophet already were; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever."

However, if a person gives closer consideration to this statement in Revelation he can see that it is in figurative or symbolic language. How? Well, the "wild beast" and the "false prophet" are hurled into the "lake of fire." These are obviously not a literal beast and a single man, but are representative of organizations. (Rev. 17:8-14) Furthermore, the Bible itself goes on to explain: "And death and Hades were hurled into the lake of fire. This means the second death, the lake of fire." (Rev. 20:14) Death and Hades (mankind's common grave) are abstract things, further showing that the "lake of fire" is symbolic. It represents absolute annihilation, permanent destruction, "the second death," a death from which there is no recovery.

Moreover, Christ says that the "goats" will depart into everlasting "cutting-off." (Matt. 25:46) The Greek word here used means, literally, "pruning." The "goats," by suffering everlasting death, "the second death," are cut off from life in any realm everlasting.

A DECISION WE ALL FACE

There is no question that Christ has ambassadors on earth today. The decision set

before us to make is, Who are these ambassadors? Who are bringing us the good news of the Kingdom, telling us of its nearness and the blessings it will bring to the earth after destroying wickedness? And each of us can ask, What am I doing to promote knowledge of God? Do I myself serve as a representative of Christ by my words and righteous course of action? If not, then we must identify who is doing so. We must extend hospitality to them just as we would to the ambassadors of a highly respected king. We cannot 'limp' on two opinions.—1 Ki. 18:21.

You would welcome such an ambassador into your home. You would be highly concerned about the message he brought from his king or government. You would treat him with respect. The ambassadors of Christ have no ordinary message. It is news from the Creator of the universe and his King, Jesus Christ. Therefore, it is vital to consider what the ambassadors have to say, because it is more than a matter of respect. It reflects your attitude toward God and Christ, and therefore means life or death to you.

Hundreds of thousands of persons in this present time have treated these ambassadors with kindness, not primarily by giving them material help, but by standing alongside these ambassadors when they are mistreated by their enemies. (2 Cor. 1:6, 7; Phil. 4:14; Heb. 10:33) More than this, they have joined with the ambassadors in order to help them to get the good news proclaimed world wide. (Zech. 8:23) In doing so, these sheeplike ones have become envoys, companions of the ambassadors of the King, Jesus Christ. (Ps. 45:14, 15) Have you identified the true ambassadors and their companion envoys, and do you treat them with respect, knowing that to the extent that you do it to one of the least of Christ's brothers, and to their loving sheeplike companions, you do it to Christ?

What is MORE IMPORTANT to you?

IS A handful of grain of more value to you than a handful of diamonds? Is a closet full of clothes more to be desired than a closet full of gold? The circumstances you are in have a bearing on what is more important.

If you were isolated in some remote part of the earth and without food, the grain would mean more to you than diamonds. Or, if you were marooned on a freezing mountaintop, you would spurn the gold for warm clothes.

The Creator has richly endowed this earth for man's enjoyment. Surely it brings pleasure to have certain material things in rich supply. But is there something else that is even more important, more valuable, now?

HONEST ANALYSIS WISE

Many persons have been examining this question seriously. As Christians, their answer may be, "The gaining of material possessions is not the big thing in my life." But are such persons really living in harmony with what they say?

That is what a well-to-do couple in Kirchberg, Germany, asked about themselves last year. As they were seated in their comfortable home considering their material prosperity, they began talking about the present critical times, and about their service to God. They reflected on the ministry of Jesus Christ discussed exten-

sively in the recent *Watchtower* article "Get a Firm Hold on the Real Life." The result?

The man reports: "We made two columns on a piece of paper. In the one we noted what our expenses would be if we lived more modestly. In the other, what I would have to earn in order to meet these reduced expenses. We found that we could actually manage with only half the money I was making!"

So they gave up their comfortable home, and found a small apartment. The man adjusted his employment, working only five hours a day instead of eight or nine. Now both he and his wife devote much more of their time sharing with others the good news of God's kingdom, which they believe will soon replace this entire system of things with a righteous rule.

—Matt. 6:9, 10; Dan. 2:44.

It is not an easy thing to make adjustments in one's lifestyle in order to serve God more fully. But those who do so often realize a joyful contentment and clean conscience that no amount of material possessions can bring. This has been the experience of a thirty-four-year-old Witness in Dortmund, Germany. As a fireman, his work schedule was such that for six consecutive weeks he was unable to attend any of the congregational meetings of Jehovah's witnesses; then for six weeks he was free to attend.

This circumstance bothered him. Eventually, toward the end of 1973, an article entitled "How Will You React to Pressure?" appeared in *The Watchtower*. It said:

"Keep in mind that the Devil claims you are more interested in your own economic security than in God's worship, and that if the going gets rough you will abandon Jehovah. He made that claim in connection with God's servant Job. But, in spite of being deprived of family, friends and possessions, Job refused to bend to such a pressure tactic. . . . Will your reaction to economic pressure be the same as Job's? If so you can be assured of a comparable reward."

The fireman pondered over this. He had a wife and child to support, but knew that the family could manage on less materially. So he quit his secure position and obtained other employment at lower pay. He explains:

"I rejoice that I made this decision and am able to attend all the meetings with my family. As an elder, I can now do so much more in the congregation to serve my brothers. I am convinced that Jehovah blesses all of his servants when they put true worship ahead of personal interests."

NEW ONES MAKE ADJUSTMENTS

It is not only persons with years of Christian experience that are making such adjustments to serve Jehovah God. A young couple in Hemmoor, Germany, came to a knowledge of God's purposes in 1971. But they had a farm for which to care, and this interfered with attending congregational meetings. The man explains what they finally did:

"We continually took the matter to Jehovah in prayer, and decided to sell our farm. However, there was no purchaser. But, since we wanted to stick to our de-

cision, we turned the farm over to my brother without receiving any money for it.

"We haven't regretted it. True, we don't have fresh eggs, milk and fowl, but at the convention of Jehovah's witnesses in Düsseldorf in 1973 we were baptized. We have had encouraging experiences that show how Jehovah can assist one. Therefore we look to the future with confidence."

In another instance, a karate expert from Korea married a German girl who, in 1971, became one of Jehovah's witnesses. The husband, however, was so wrapped up in his athletic career that he was not interested in Bible study. But in 1973 it became clear to him that something in his life was not right. He realized that due to his activities he had completely isolated himself, making it impossible to enjoy family life. He began seriously to consider his situation.

"I suggested to my wife," he reports, "that she arrange for someone to study the Bible with me. Today I am convinced that the Bible is inspired of God and I believe that I have found the truth."

He gave up his athletic career and accepted work as a mechanic at 1,000 DM (\$400) less a month than he was making before. Yet he says: "I am much happier now being able to serve Jehovah along with my wife and daughter."

PROVING WHAT IS MORE IMPORTANT

It is easy to say that one feels that God's service is more important, but how one lives is indicative of what really holds priority in one's life. Thus a young man from Ilvesheim, Germany, had a desire to be a full-time Kingdom preacher, but he also enjoyed a high-paying job. In discussing plans with his prospective wife, he discovered that she had a similar desire to preach full time. So they both applied for this service, which they wanted to begin on January 1, 1971, shortly after their marriage.

Two weeks before they were to begin their special service, the young man was called in by his boss who, with a smile, said that he surely was not serious about quitting. After being assured that he was, the boss expressed confidence he would change his mind upon hearing that he would be receiving a pay increase of 700 DM (\$280) a month and a bonus of 6,000 DM (\$2,400)! The young man said he would discuss the matter with his wife.

"We prayerfully considered the situation," the young man explained, "and decided that our desire to be full-time preachers would never materialize if we put it off. So we decided to place everything in Jehovah's hands. I quit my job on January 1, 1971, and we have since enjoyed many spiritual blessings."

But what if one has spent a lifetime achieving a prestigious position in this system? Are even persons like this proving that the full-time preaching work is more important to them?

In 1945, after eight years in German military service, a man returned from a prisoner-of-war camp to begin life anew. He had two small children, and two more were born shortly thereafter. He plunged into a study of law, and after several years reached his goal when he was appointed as a judge.

Years later, in 1958, his family came in contact with Jehovah's witnesses. His oldest daughters dedicated their lives to serve Jehovah and symbolized this by water baptism. Then, in 1961, the judge agreed to have eight delegates to the international assembly of Jehovah's witnesses in Hamburg stay in their home.

"We attended the sessions," the judge reports, "and from that time on we attended all the meetings in the local congregation. In October my wife and I started in the house-to-house preaching activity,

and the following January we were baptized."

In time the children grew up. "We now had no Biblical reason that would hinder us from serving Jehovah in the full-time preaching work," the judge noted. "So we applied for that service and were accepted. I gave up my judgeship without receiving any settlement or pension, after many years of service and having long before reached the maximum wage scale."

"Those of our relatives and friends who are not Jehovah's witnesses, as well as business associates, thought I was crazy. They could not understand how anyone could give up such a position that late in life. But in reality it was a reasonable and objective decision. For if the Bible is the infallible Word of God—and there is no reason to doubt that it is—then we are living in the last part of the time of the end of this wicked system of things. So in the remaining time one should have faith to the preserving alive of the soul, and with everything we have and are we should serve Jehovah.—Heb. 10:38, 39.

"It was in the spring of 1969, as grandma and grandpa, that we went into the full-time preaching work. After one year I was asked to serve as a traveling representative of the Watch Tower Society, and I still serve in this capacity. I am convinced that there is no activity that is more important today than to preach the lifesaving message of God's kingdom."

Is that how you feel? Is this the time to be overly concerned with money or other material possessions? Bible prophecy indicates that such things will not preserve us during the coming day of divine wrath. (Prov. 11:4; Zeph. 1:18) But what truly is important is proving our love for Jehovah by sharing whole-souled now in the work that he has given us to do. Our very life is dependent upon our doing so.

Insight on the News

- The world faces a "crisis of extraordinary dimensions," according to Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim of the United Nations.

'Helpless' Feeling Earth Wide In his annual report to the General Assembly, released in early September, the secretary-general said that an "almost universal sense of apprehension" about the course of world events now combines with feelings of "helplessness and fatalism which I find deeply disturbing." He spoke of threatening circumstances that "could create almost unimaginable dangers for the survival of our civilization and the human race." In concluding, he warned:

"Many great civilizations in history have collapsed at the very height of their achievement because they were unable to analyze their basic problems, to change direction and to adjust to the new situations which faced them . . . Today the civilization which is facing such a challenge is not just one small part of mankind—it is mankind as a whole."

Without doubt, these conditions correspond with the Bible's forecast of conditions due to prevail at the conclusion of an unrighteous system of things and preceding the entrance of a righteous new order of God's making, namely: "On the earth anguish of nations, not knowing the way out . . . while men become faint out of fear and expectation of the things coming upon the inhabited earth." "In the last days critical times hard to deal with will be here."—Luke 21:25, 26; 2 Tim. 3:1.

- Nearly two out of every three persons on earth today lives in a nonchristian land. Why do "Christian" religions often have little appeal in these areas? Two items appearing in the September 16 issue of the New York "Times" shed light on this.

Who Bears the Real Blame? One involves mainland China, which, with its 800 million inhabitants, holds almost one fifth of the earth's population. Recently an international theological conference was held in Belgium to discuss the inability of Christendom's religions to send missionaries into China. According to

the "Times" report, the view that early missionaries in China had been "too closely identified with Western imperialist interests" was stressed. One conference statement said:

"It is unfortunate that Christianity being the official religion of the West was made to justify in various ways imperialism, feudalism, colonialism and bourgeois capitalism."

The other item comes from Saudi Arabia, religious center for 530 million Moslems. Mohammed Salahuddin, editor of the newspaper "Al Medina," in commenting on the growing modernization of wealthy Arab lands, said:

"We know what Western society is like, and we are frightened. We see the breakdown of the family and the widespread sexual immorality, and we know that this is no way to live."

In his day, the apostle Paul said of hypocritical persons claiming to serve God: "For 'the name of God is being blasphemed on account of you people among the nations.'" (Rom. 2:24) Similarly in modern times, Christendom's religions have proved hypocritical, abandoning genuine Bible principles in exchange for political gain, condoning sexual immorality, and so they have hindered rather than helped people in nonchristian lands as regards appreciating the Bible's true message.

- The first Mormon temple east of the Rocky Mountains was recently completed on the outskirts of Washington, D.C., which has a predominantly black population. So, at a

Mormons and Racism news conference, Mormon president Spencer W. Kimball was questioned on the Mormon practice of excluding blacks from full and equal privileges in their religion. The seventy-nine-year-old leader passed the question on to the Church's chief public relations adviser for reply. His reply? "We have met here at this sacred place primarily to discuss the temple." Thus the question of racial discrimination was evaded. In refreshing contrast, the Bible plainly says that "God is not partial" and 'makes no distinction at all' among those sincerely seeking him.—Acts 10:34, 35; 15:7-9.

SURVIVAL and LIFE

BY HARMONIZING WITH GOD'S PURPOSE

AT FIRST it seems too good to be true, but a grand future arranged by someone fully competent is now invitingly calling mankind. In spite of the din and clamor of all sorts of propaganda, many sharp-eared persons have heard this calling and have responded favorably to it. They are the happier for it. Now they have a worthwhile calling in life. It gives them purpose in life. Yes, real reason for living on and surviving to see bright hope come true. No longer does life seem humdrum, aimless, leading nowhere but to a "dead end." They live for the approaching righteous new system of things.

Many persons think that they have a calling to this or to that. But not so with this calling. It is not just some strong inward impulse driving one to a particular course of action. It is not a mere strong religious impulse accompanied by the conviction of having divine influence connected with it, such as the impulse to take up the ministry of some religion. It is not just an inward urge that one does not know how to describe and that one person has and the others do not have. Instead of

"He saved us and called us with a holy calling, not by reason of our works, but by reason of his own purpose and undeserved kindness."
—2 Tim. 1:9.

being an undefinable, often sentimental thing, this present-day calling or invitation comes in definite terms, and a person knows that

it is open for him to accept. It is not the beckoning of a possible future that holds out a golden opportunity. No, but it comes from a person of authority and responsibility. So what one is called to is not imaginary but fully guaranteed. Our responding favorably to this wonderful calling will lead to no disappointment.

What makes this calling or invitation so special? Well, in most cases an invitation is an act of generosity, of goodwill. It has a good purpose behind it. This is the case with the particular invitation that so many persons having fine appreciation of things are gratefully accepting today. The largehearted person whose invitation they have accepted is the One who long ago planted a paradise on earth for mankind to enjoy forever. This was at the beginning of man's existence on earth. Was that not a well-meaning thing for that One to do? It was just the thing to be expected of that One, for he is no one else but God, the Creator of heaven and earth.

1. What is now inviting mankind, and how has purpose been given to the lives of those responding to it?
2. What kind of calling is this, and why does acceptance of it not lead to disappointment?

3. An invitation is usually an expression of what, and how is this true of the one who extends the present-day calling?

He was the One who brought man into being on this earth, with all needed things faultlessly prepared for man. Not only was this an act of undeserved kindness on God's part to man, but God had a purpose in mind. It was a good purpose.

⁴ How purpose and undeserved kindness combine in God's operations for an excellent end is called to our attention by a news-bringer of good things during the first century of our Common Era. This was Paul, the writer of a couple of letters to his close friend and fellow worker Timothy, these letters of Paul being preserved for us on the later pages of the Sacred Bible. His second letter was written to Timothy shortly after the Roman Empire under Caesar Nero had begun its persecution against Christians. So Paul was a prisoner in Rome for the sake of true Christianity. But he had no fault to find with God for this situation, nor with the Founder of true Christianity, Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Unashamed of his imprisonment, Paul wrote:

⁵ "Therefore do not become ashamed of the witness about our Lord, neither of me a prisoner for his sake, but take your part in suffering evil for the good news according to the power of God. He saved us and called us with a holy calling, not by reason of our works, but by reason of his own purpose and undeserved kindness."—2 Tim. 1:8, 9.

⁶ In those words the apostle Paul admits that his being called with a holy calling was not by reason of meritorious works on his own part, but was by reason of the "purpose and undeserved kindness" on the part of God. The same was true in the case of Timothy. The calling in the cases of Paul and Timothy was not in the form of some strong inner impulse toward their

4, 5. How did Paul, in his second letter to Timothy, show how purpose and undeserved kindness combine together in a calling by God?

6, 7. Was the calling of Paul in the form of a strong inward impulse to take a certain course of action or duty, or how?

particular course of action or duty. Paul was directly called by means of the resurrected Jesus Christ, who appeared to Paul while on the road to Damascus of Syria and who told Paul that in Damascus he would be informed as to what he should do. After Paul got baptized as a Christian at Damascus, he promptly began to do the things that he was called and told to do. (Acts 9:1-30; 22:1-16) So, when testifying before King Herod Agrippa in a Roman court session in Caesarea, Paul said:

⁷ "Wherefore, King Agrippa, I did not become disobedient to the heavenly sight, but both to those in Damascus first and to those in Jerusalem, and over all the country of Judea, and to the nations I went bringing the message that they should repent and turn to God by doing works that befit repentance."—Acts 26:12-20.

⁸ In Timothy's case, also, it was not a calling or inviting of him in the form of a mere inward urge accompanied by the conviction of divine influence. There was nothing sentimental about it, but Timothy heard the apostle Paul preach to the congregation in Lystra and he accepted the Kingdom message and got baptized as a Christian. (Acts 14:6-23) The apostle Paul confirmed the Christian calling of Timothy by laying his hands upon him and imparting a spiritual gift to him. Consequently, in his last letter to Timothy, he said to him: "For this very cause I remind you to stir up like a fire the gift of God which is in you through the laying of my hands upon you." (2 Tim. 1:6) Because of responding to the call as a baptized Christian, the way was opened for Timothy to become a trusted close associate of the apostle Paul in his missionary work. By receiving God's spirit with its manifestation, both Paul and Timothy knew that they had been called by God by reason of God's purpose and undeserved kindness.

8. What part did the apostle Paul have in connection with the calling of Timothy?

⁹ A person's knowing definitely that he has a calling or invitation puts purpose in his life. Paul called attention to this fact when, in the course of his second letter, he said to Timothy: "You have closely followed my teaching, my course of life, my purpose, my faith, my long-suffering, my love, my endurance." (2 Tim. 3:10) Because Paul had a purpose he endured with long-suffering and stuck to a certain course of life. He kept his eye on his God-given purpose. He had an "eye goal" or "eye target," as the Japanese and Korean words for "purpose" mean. (Japanese, *moku teki*; Korean, *mok jok*) He likened himself to a contestant in a footrace with his eyes undeviatingly fixed on the goal where the prize was to be conferred upon the winner. So he wrote these words about himself:

¹⁰ "I am pursuing to see if I may also lay hold on that for which I have also been laid hold on by Christ Jesus. Brothers, I do not yet consider myself as having laid hold on it; but there is one thing about it: Forgetting the things behind and stretching forward to the things ahead, I am pursuing down toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God by means of Christ Jesus."—Phil. 3:12-14.

¹¹ According to those words of the apostle Paul, God was the One who did the calling by means of Christ Jesus, and this calling was for a purpose. In appreciation of this undeserved kindness on God's part toward him, Paul harmonized his life course with God's purpose. Paul saw clearly which way to go, for God had set a goal before him. If he successfully reached that goal, he would receive a prize at God's hands. Paul did not disdain that prize, for to do so would mean for him to spurn God's undeserved kindness. It was a marvelous

prize, and it represented an extraordinary generosity, largeheartedness, on God's part. It was in fact the highest, the greatest, prize that God could give creatures, namely, joint heirship with the glorified Son of God, Jesus Christ, in his heavenly kingdom. (Phil. 3:7-11; 2:9-11) No wonder that Paul considered as a lot of refuse all earthly advantages that meant selfish gain for him! He kept his eyes fixed on the prize.

GOD'S PURPOSE WITH WHICH TO HARMONIZE NOW

¹² For the past nineteen centuries men like the apostle Paul and Timothy have been harmonizing their lives with God's call to a heavenly hope, to a share with the highly exalted Jesus Christ in a heavenly kingdom that will shower down blessings upon mankind. They have followed Paul's exhortation and encouragement, "to the end that you should go on walking worthily of God who is calling you to his kingdom and glory."—1 Thess. 2:11, 12.

¹³ However, God has not only a purpose with regard to that Kingdom class but also a purpose with regard to mankind who will live in happiness under that heavenly kingdom. Is it not good to know that God has not left mankind in general out of his purposes? That which God has set before mankind, and to which he is now calling special attention, is something grand for mankind to attain to under the kingdom of God's dear Son Jesus Christ. It has become a goal that hundreds of thousands of appreciative persons are now striving to reach, with God's help. To them it is like a prize that beckons them onward, a gracious thing that invites them to come and partake.

¹⁴ The hospitable tone of the invitation

9, 10. (a) What did Paul's knowing that he had a calling put into his life? (b) Hence, on what did Paul keep his eyes fixed, like a contestant in what games?

11. (a) So, with what did Paul harmonize his life course? (b) What value did Paul place upon the prize set before him?

12, 13. (a) During the past nineteen centuries, with what have men like Paul been harmonizing their life course? (b) Recently, what have hundreds of thousands been making their goal according to God's purpose?

14. (a) How is the hospitable tone of this invitation expressed in Revelation 22:17? (b) What is the life for mankind that this invitation has in view?



is expressed in the inspired words found in Revelation 22:17: "And the spirit and the bride keep on saying: 'Come!' And let anyone hearing say: 'Come!' And let anyone thirsting come; let anyone that wishes take life's water free." The life here meant is not the distasteful sort of life that we are obliged to live at present due to world conditions and to our natural inheritance by birth. It is a life on earth that no human governments till now have been able to give to mankind, but that only God's kingdom by means of his Son Jesus Christ will be able to impart to mankind as its subjects. It is the life that God the Creator purposed for earth's inhabitants to have when he put the first man and woman on earth amid the glories and beauties of that paradise called the Garden of Eden.

¹⁵ When the loving Creator produced the first man and woman in the Garden of Eden, he did not mean for that Paradise to be just a temporary home for them, or a little "love nest" for them to be alone in for a while without having children around. The reason why that Paradise on earth turned out to be a temporary home for them was that they stopped harmonizing their course of action with God's loving purpose.

15, 16. (a) Why did the earthly Paradise prove to be a temporary home for Adam and Eve? (b) In stating his purpose for them, did God say anything about a heavenly home for them, or what?

God's purpose for the first man and woman was for them and their offspring to extend their Edenic garden earth wide and to enjoy Paradise forever

¹⁶ God's purpose had never been that of taking them to heaven after a period of testing and proving here on earth. They did not need heaven to become perfectly happy and satisfied. Nor did God need them up there in heaven with him for him to be perfectly happy and contented. Hence, when God stated his purpose for them, he said nothing about a heavenly home but did say: "Be fruitful and become many and fill the earth and subdue it, and have in subjection the fish of the sea and the flying creatures of the heavens and every living creature that is moving upon the earth."—Gen. 1:28.

¹⁷ According to the Holy Bible, God assigned a period of seven thousand years for this privilege of service to be accomplished. Today we are just about six thousand years along in human history, and this earth is no global paradise. The earth has now a population of almost four thousand million inhabitants, but the untold number of graveyards around the globe testify that the vast majority of those who

17. (a) How much time did God assign for this privilege of service to be accomplished? (b) Earth's conditions at the end of six thousand years of human history are due to what cause?

have descended from Adam and Eve have died and that all mankind today is also under the condemnation of death. The birds of the heavens, the land animals and the fish of the sea have been held in subjection to mankind till now, but their numbers have been dangerously reduced, in some cases near to the point of extinction. The ground under our feet has been polluted, not merely by the waste products of cities and industrialized communities, but, most seriously of all, by the spilling of blood through murders on a private scale and on a mass scale in wars, religious, racial, commercial and political. Why all this? Evidently because mankind has not acted harmoniously with God's purpose.

¹⁸ The success of God's original purpose for man and his earthly home seems blocked or, at least, threatened critically. In view of the allowance of time that is left the question forces itself upon us, Will God's original loving purpose for mankind fail or has it been abandoned as a hopeless case?

¹⁹ For Almighty God no project is unrealizable. The passage of long periods of time does not make any difference with regard to his purposes. He does not forget his stated purposes. He never proves untrue to his given word. In the Garden of Eden he gave his word in blessing upon his perfect human creatures, Adam and Eve, and nearly three thousand three hundred years later he said, by the mouth of his prophet Isaiah: "Just as the pouring rain descends, and the snow, from the heavens and does not return to that place, unless it actually saturates the earth and makes it produce and sprout, and seed is actually given to the sower and bread to the eater, so my word that goes forth from my mouth will prove to be. It will not return

to me without results, but it will certainly do that in which I have delighted, and it will have certain success in that for which I have sent it."—Isa. 55:10, 11.

²⁰ Also, more than seven centuries after that divine declaration, or on Passover day of the year 33 of our Common Era, Jesus Christ the Son of God held out the hope of the restoration of Paradise to mankind. On that day, when the kingdom of God seemed to be a lost cause as Jesus hung nailed to a torture stake by Roman soldiers, a condemned evildoer hanging alongside expressed faith in the resurrection of the dead and in God's Messianic kingdom.

²¹ Taking seriously the charge that was laid against Jesus of being the "king of the Jews," this dying evildoer said respectfully to him: "Jesus, remember me when you get into your kingdom." Jesus also had full faith in the resurrection and in the then far distant kingdom of God, and so he replied to the evildoer: "Truly I tell you today, You will be with me in Paradise." (Luke 23:39-43) On the third day from that, Jesus Christ was resurrected from the dead as a glorious spirit being, and he looked forward to the time when God would bestow Messianic kingdom power upon him and he could restore Paradise to earth for the benefit of this sympathetic evildoer and the rest of redeemed mankind.—Heb. 10:12, 13.

²² Thus we have Jesus Christ corroborating the original purpose of his heavenly Father, Jehovah God, concerning mankind and their earthly home. Concerning Jesus, it is written down under divine inspiration: "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today, and forever." (Heb. 13:8) So he will never break his word given, even though the receiver of the promise

18. What seems to be the state of God's original purpose, and what question forces itself upon us?

19. At Isaiah 55:10, 11, what did God say as to whether his stated purpose will be allowed to fail?

20, 21. (a) When did Jesus specifically hold out hope of the restoration of Paradise to earth? (b) After his resurrection, to what work did he look forward?

22. (a) How does Hebrews 13:8 ensure the successful carrying out of God's purpose toward mankind? (b) With what now is this fulfillment tied up?

was a condemned evildoer. This ensures the successful carrying out of God's original purpose toward the descendants of Adam and Eve. But it ties up the fulfillment of that divine purpose with the Messianic kingdom of God in the hands of his Son Jesus Christ. In this way God's original purpose concerning mankind is blended in with His purpose concerning the Messianic kingdom.

²³ Jesus Christ the Son of God was the meekest man ever on earth, meeker even than the prophet Moses. (Num. 12:3) In his Sermon on the Mount Jesus said to his disciples: "Happy are the mild-tempered ones, since they will inherit the earth." (Matt. 5:5; Ps. 37:11) In harmony with this inspired statement, Jesus Christ as the most mild-tempered or meek man on earth came into the inheritance of the earth. In agreement with this, it is stated in the letter to the Hebrews, chapter two, verses five through nine: "It is not to angels that he has subjected the inhabited earth to come, about which we are speaking. . . . but we behold Jesus, who has been made a little lower than angels, crowned with glory and honor for having suffered death, that he by God's undeserved kindness might taste death for every man." As the inheritor of the earth, the glorified Jesus Christ feels his obligation to bring the earth as a whole to the state that God purposed it to have, that of a Paradise, a Garden of Eden, for mankind's everlasting happy home. He will put his inheritance in perfect repair.

SOMETHING WORTH WHILE FOR WHICH TO SURVIVE

²⁴ Is that not something for which appreciative men and women would want to

23. Who has inherited the "inhabited earth to come," and what does he feel obligated to do about it?

24. The survival of whom on earth is now put in question, and why?

survive? Today almost everybody is preoccupied with selfish efforts to survive so as to live just a little longer under this unsatisfying system of things. (Jas. 4:13, 14) Under the worsening conditions in the world, human survival is becoming more and more difficult. Bad though conditions may be now world wide, far-visioned men are predicting worse things to come, what with world famine looming up on the horizon! Survival of even the whole human race indefinitely is now put in question, nuclear warfare with intercontinental ballistic missiles being a terrifying possibility, with the stockpile of mass-killing weapons on hand now being more than are needed to exterminate the entire human family, not to speak of animal life.

²⁵ Certainly, when pronouncing his blessing upon Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden at the beginning of human existence in its perfection, God did not purpose for mankind to bring themselves to such a state of affairs as exists today. The earth in such a sorry state brings no credit to Him as the Creator. Should he not be expected to do something about it? Should not the one whom God made the inheritor of the earth also want to do something for the improvement of his property? When God and Jesus Christ are both measured by what they did in the past, it is only reasonable for us to expect them to take things in hand and do something about the situation. Long ago, not in prehistoric times but in historic times, God took a hand under a situation similar to that of today but not as bad as ours now. The situation back there was only 1,656 years after man's creation, whereas today it is just short of six thousands of years from man's creation and downfall.

²⁶ Due to the steady decline in human

25, 26. (a) Does the present situation on earth bring any credit to the Creator, and what is it reasonable to expect on His part? (b) Why is the reason for Him to take action more justifiable now than thousands of years ago?

behavior, the depraved immoral selfish state of mankind ought to be far worse now than four thousand three hundred years ago. This fact poses more justifiable

reason for God the Creator to take due action now than existed so long ago. The time has come for Him to do so for the purpose of vindicating himself.

A Prophetic Drama THAT FORESHADOWED SURVIVAL

BACK there, so long ago, in the second millennium of human existence, the earth had become a dangerous place in which to live. Yes, as in our case today, it was because violence was filling the earth. That was so, even though men back there did not have shotguns and revolvers and cannons and nuclear weapons. God had the overall viewpoint of things during that ancient period, and that is how he described the world situation. More than a century before the worst stage in human affairs was reached, he determined to take due action and set the exact time for this.

* In a statement disclosed to man, God said: "My spirit shall not act toward man indefinitely in that he is also flesh. Accordingly his days shall amount to a hundred and twenty years." (Gen. 6:3) He was not going to act forbearingly toward that long-lived generation for an indefinite period of time, but now he set a limit for that generation to get deeper and deeper into its degradation, so far away from the image and likeness of God in which he had created the first man of flesh and blood. Twelve more decades would be allowed be-

fore there would be a worldwide "act of God." There would not be a natural death to that generation!

* Let us, by way of comparison, look at the present human generation with regard to its morality, as we now read how God viewed the condition of mankind, for whose creation he was responsible: "Consequently Jehovah saw that the badness of man was abundant in the earth and every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only bad all the time. And Jehovah felt regrets that he had made men in the earth, and he felt hurt at his heart. So Jehovah said: 'I am going to wipe men whom I have created off the surface of the ground, from man to domestic animal, to moving animal and to flying creature of the heavens, because I do regret that I have made them. . . . The end of all flesh has come before me, because the earth is full of violence as a result of them; and here I am bringing them to ruin together with the earth.' " (Gen. 6:5-7, 13) Can we say that the human generation of the present time is any better than that ancient one thus described, or is there any reason for us to believe that it is even worse?

1. Why, in the second millennium of human existence, had the earth become a dangerous place in which to live?

2. What time limit did God set on that long-lived generation, for it to suffer what kind of death?

3. What statement did God make as to the badness of mankind then, and what question do we ask about our generation in comparison?

⁴ Not that we are self-righteously wanting to condemn others and overlook ourselves. We owe it to ourselves to direct the question to ourselves: Am I myself on the corrupt level of that ancient generation? We should put such a question to ourselves individually, because we are in this world and living with this present generation. What if we find ourselves to be an integral part of this world society and like to be a part of it in spite of its historical record till now? Well, if God's constant sticking to the same set of principles and course now obliges him to take action because of the likeness of this generation to that ancient one, then we cannot expect to escape when the Creator again performs a worldwide "act of God." Survival of it would be out of the question for us. We would be classed in with the rest.

⁵ Of course, not everybody away back there was of that corrupt world society; otherwise, the human race would not be here today. There was a family that was an exception, and God recognized it. The exceptional family was that of Noah, the son of Lamech, the son of Methuselah. (Gen. 5:25-32) Let us notice the difference between Noah and the world society of his day, according to this Bible account: "Noah was a righteous man. He proved himself faultless among his contemporaries. Noah walked with the true God. In time Noah became father to three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth. And the earth came to be ruined in the sight of the true God and the earth became filled with violence. So God saw the earth and, look! it was ruined, because all flesh had ruined its way on the earth." "After that Jehovah said to Noah: 'Go, you and all your household, into the ark, because you are the one I have seen

to be righteous before me among this generation.' "—Gen. 6:9-12; 7:1.

⁶ Noah remembered what his great-grandfather Enoch had prophesied under divine inspiration: "Look! Jehovah came with his holy myriads, to execute judgment against all, and to convict all the ungodly concerning all their ungodly deeds that they did in an ungodly way, and concerning all the shocking things that ungodly sinners spoke against him." (Jude 14, 15; Gen. 5:18-24) Noah did not care to be classed in with such an ungodly group of sinners and to have divine judgment executed against him. So Noah walked with the true God, Jehovah, by keeping in harmony with him. He was glad to harmonize his life course with God's purpose by proving himself worthy to be the one through whom the human race of descendants from Adam and Eve should be preserved through the time when the worldwide "act of God" would be performed. Because of Noah's harmonizing his life course with God's purpose, we find ourselves here today more than four thousand three hundred years later. We today have an opportunity before us like that of Noah.

⁷ Do we realize what Noah and his family, all together eight human souls, survived back there? It was the end of a world! The global deluge of waters that swept all the corrupt, ungodly generation of mankind off the surface of the earth, did not, of course, destroy our earthly globe. It is still here beneath our feet. To live through that deluge Noah had to harmonize his course of action with God's unchanged purpose by building the tremendous ark according to God's instructions, for the preservation of his household and basic specimens of land animals and bird-

4. What question should we individually ask ourselves, and in what case would escape from God's worldwide act be quite out of the question for us?

5. What family was an exception to that world society, and what does the Bible account say of that family?

6. What class foretold by Enoch did Noah not want to be grouped with, and how did he walk with the true God?

7. What was it that Noah and his household survived, by harmonizing his life course with God's purpose in what way?

life. (Gen. 6:14 through 8:22) The fact that it was the destruction of a world that Noah and his family survived is plainly stated under divine inspiration in the following descriptive scriptures:

⁸ "Certainly if God did not hold back . . . from punishing an ancient world, but kept Noah, a preacher of righteousness, safe with seven others when he brought a deluge upon a world of ungodly people; . . . Jehovah knows how to deliver people of godly devotion out of trial, but to reserve unrighteous people for the day of judgment to be cut off, . . . For, according to their wish, this fact escapes their notice, that there were heavens from of old and an earth standing compactly out of water and in the midst of water by the word of God; and by those means the world of that time suffered destruction when it was deluged with water."—2 Pet. 2:4-9; 3:5, 6.

SURVIVAL OF WORLD DESTRUCTION

⁹ It is possible! Survival of world destruction is possible on earth! The survival of Noah and his family through the global deluge of 2370-2369 B.C.E. is an illustration of this. But, more than that! It is a prophecy or prophetic drama picturing survival by some here on earth of the fast-approaching world destruction, the end of today's world of ungodly people. It means their surviving of the complete end of this wicked, polluted system of things. Most people on earth today are content to survive the present hard times and live through one world crisis after another and finally die after they have hoped for better times, which they never realize. That is the only survival they know of or think of, as they try to hang onto human life as long as they can. This does not compare

8. How does Peter testify that it was the destruction of a world that Noah and his family survived?

9. How was the survival of Noah and his family more than an illustration of surviving a world destruction, and more than survival that most people today have in mind?

with the survival foreshadowed by Noah's passing safely through the deluge.

¹⁰ The survival that God now offers to human creatures on earth is the survival of the end of this wicked system of things with the opportunity for the survivors to live forever on earth under His new system of things. Is that not something worth surviving for? But this wonderful survival will not be by using any man-made methods of self-salvation, self-rescue, nor by any evolutionistic "survival of the fittest." Again, it will be by the harmonizing of one's course of action with God's purpose. In the case of Noah, he had to exercise great faith in God's warning concerning the destruction of the "ancient world" and do what God told him to do for the preservation of himself and his family. He was given warning plenty of time in advance. It was in the sixth century of his life and when he was the father of three married sons that he was told to build a spacious, weatherproof, wooden ark in which to ride out the waters of the global deluge. He obeyed.

¹¹ A waterproof wooden ark was all right for surviving the end of the "world of that time." Such an ark would not do for the "great tribulation" with which the present "world" or human society will end. More than just one family is involved. Those who are hoping and preparing to survive are located all around our earthly globe. Furthermore, the total destruction of this system of things will not be by water. After the Deluge, God said so. (Gen. 9:8-16; Isa. 54:9) Twenty-four centuries after that assurance from God the inspired apostle Peter wrote his last letter and said:

¹² "The world of that time suffered destruction when it was deluged with water. But by the same word [of God] the heav-

10. The survival that God now offers human creatures means what, and it will be by what course, as in Noah's case?

11, 12. Why would a waterproof wooden ark not be suitable for surviving the coming "great tribulation," as indicated by what words of Peter?

ens and the earth that are now are stored up for fire and are being reserved to the day of judgment and of destruction of the ungodly men. . . . Jehovah's day will come as a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a hissing noise, but the elements being intensely hot will be dissolved, and earth and the works in it will be discovered."—2 Pet. 3:6, 7, 10.

¹³ Would it harmonize with God's original purpose concerning man and his earthly home for God to burn up this earth with literal fire and reduce it to an uninhabited charred crisp? That would signify for God to admit defeat of his purpose by his Chief Adversary, Satan the Devil. This will never occur, for Almighty God can carry out his purpose to glorious success. The watery deluge of Noah's day did not destroy the earth, but merely swept the "world of ungodly people" off the surface of the earth and cleansed it, gave it a good bath. Likewise, the fire of Jehovah's day, the coming day of judgment, will not destroy the earth, neither all creature life in it, but will destroy off earth's surface the society of ungodly people and also their works that are out of harmony with God's purpose. Our earthly planet and also our sun and the billions of other suns in our Milky Way, which are already balls of fire, will survive that day of judgment.

¹⁴ Literal fire such as is common to our earth and our solar system could never affect the invisible Satan and his spirit demons or destroy them from being an unseen, spirit heavens that has dominated mankind from the expulsion of Adam and Eve from Eden down till now. A profusion of Bible texts indicate that the "fire" of the coming day of world judgment is symbolic, but destructive like fire; and just

13. What did the global deluge do with regard to the earth, and what will the "fire" of the coming day of judgment do to it?

14. What kind of fire will it be that will be able to take care of the "heavens" as well as the "earth," and with what result?

how literal fire of such things as lightnings may be employed on that day by Jehovah God, we do not know now. Jehovah's executive power will remove Satan and his demons from their heavenly position of control over mankind and will destroy the earthly society (or, "world") of ungodly people. Thus, again the literal earth will be cleansed just as gold and silver are purified by fire. Earth will then be a fine home for survivors.

¹⁵ That there will then be something excellent for which to survive, the apostle Peter assures us as he goes on to say: "Awaiting and keeping close in mind the presence of the day of Jehovah, through which the heavens being on fire will be dissolved and the elements being intensely hot will melt! But there are new heavens and a new earth that we are awaiting according to his promise, and in these righteousness is to dwell."—2 Pet. 3:12, 13.

¹⁶ How to survive into that "new earth" under the "new heavens" of Christ's kingdom is now the question. In order to live through the destruction of that "ancient world," Noah built the ark as told by Jehovah God. By harmonizing his course of action with God's purpose to preserve the human race, Noah and his family enacted a prophetic drama that has its fulfillment in our generation. Accordingly, Noah pictured Jesus Christ, and his wife pictured the "Bride" of Christ, or, more particularly, the remnant of that collective "Bride" that still finds itself on earth. The three sons of Noah and their wives picture those baptized worshipers of Jehovah God who now associate with the remnant of the "Bride" class and who expect to become the earthly children of the Eternal Father, Jesus Christ, under his millennial kingdom. (Isa. 9:6, 7) In this prophetic drama as

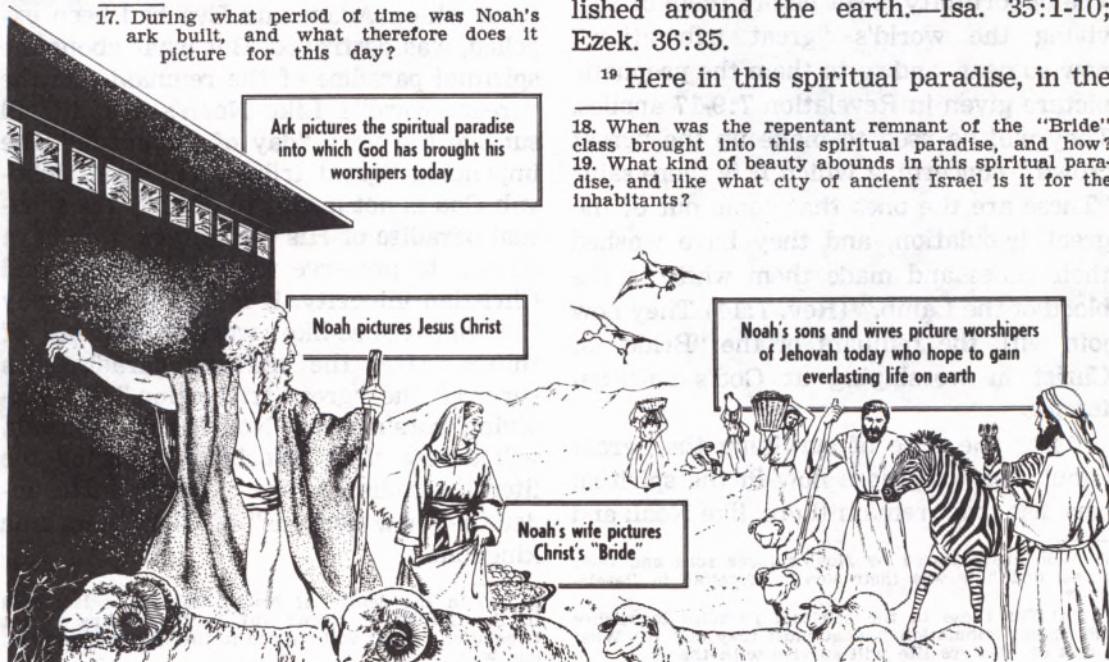
15. How does the apostle Peter assure us that there will be something worth while for which to survive?

16. In the prophetic drama as being fulfilled right down here, whom did Noah, his wife and their three sons and the wives of these picture?

being fulfilled just here in our day, what does Noah's ark picture?

¹⁷ Well, Noah built the ark with the help of his married sons, hence far less than a century before the deluge broke. So the ark building took place during the "time of the end" of that "ancient world." So we must look for something special during this "time of the end," a thing from which this present generation of mankind can benefit or take advantage of during the urgency of the times. By Scripture and fulfillment of Bible prophecy it has been well established that the "time of the end" of this present "world" began in the autumn of the year 1914, while World War I was raging. Noah's ark would therefore picture that provision for survival that God makes through Christ for his faithful worshipers as the fiery end of this system of things draws near. That divine provision is the spiritual paradise into which God has brought his faithful worshipers since the year 1919 C.E., in which they live as his people restored to his favor and under his protection.

17. During what period of time was Noah's ark built, and what therefore does it picture for this day?



¹⁸ This spiritual paradise of peace and security has certainly been built up on earth since the postwar year of 1919. During World War I and its hard times and persecutions for the Christian witnesses of Jehovah, they incurred a painful measure of divine disfavor due to their compromising course and other shortcomings as Christians. Jehovah God let them be brought into bondage to religious Babylon the Great and her political, military and judicial paramours. But in the postwar year of 1919 the repentant remnant determined to harmonize their united course of action with God's revealed purpose according to the Bible knowledge that he began unfolding to them. So God graciously used his Son Jesus Christ like a modern-day Cyrus to release his repentant people from exile under Babylon the Great. (Isa. 44:28 through 45:6) After their restoration to peaceful relationship with Jehovah God in 1919, as it were to their God-given spiritual homeland, the spiritual paradise was built up, many congregations of Jehovah's Christian witnesses being established around the earth.—Isa. 35:1-10; Ezek. 36:35.

¹⁹ Here in this spiritual paradise, in the

18. When was the repentant remnant of the "Bride" class brought into this spiritual paradise, and how?

19. What kind of beauty abounds in this spiritual paradise, and like what city of ancient Israel is it for the inhabitants?

midst of this doomed polluted "world," is where true spiritual beauty obtains, where the fruitage of God's spirit comes to maturity. Peace and true Christian brotherhood obtain here, and each one seeks to build up the others spiritually and to prepare them against the oncoming day of Jehovah. (2 Pet. 3:14-18) Here, as it were, is their "city of refuge," where they are safe from the Great "Avenger of Blood" who will execute Jehovah's vengeance against all the bloodguilty "world" in the oncoming "day of judgment and of destruction of the ungodly men."—2 Pet. 3:7; Num. 35:12, 19-27.

²⁰ The remnant of the "Bride" of Christ, pictured by Noah's wife, are not the only ones now occupying this spiritual paradise, this location of restored peaceful relationship with God. Since the year 1935 there have come to this spiritual paradise those who were pictured by the sons of Noah and the wives of these sons. These are the prospective earthly children of the Eternal Father, Jesus Christ, the Greater Noah. The opportunity is set before them of surviving the world's "great tribulation," now so near, and so to them the prophetic picture given in Revelation 7:9-17 applies. They will be used to make up the "great crowd," concerning which it is there said: "These are the ones that come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." (Rev. 7:14) They now join with the remnant of the "Bride" of Christ in worshiping at God's spiritual temple.

²¹ For the sake of surviving the "great tribulation" all those now in the spiritual paradise must remain there, like Noah and

his family in the ark, the door of which God shut behind them before the deluge burst upon the world. (Gen. 7:1) Only by remaining within God's provided place of approval, favor and protection can they hope to survive the fiery destruction of the worldly system of things. With them there will also survive under God's protection specimens of birds, flying creatures, land animals and fishes and other marine creatures, for the earthly survivors of the "great tribulation" will carry out the divine commission to have these lower forms of creature life in subjection for the preservation and good of these living creations of God.

²² The coming "great tribulation" will culminate in the fiery "war of the great day of God the Almighty" at Har-Magedon. (Matt. 24:21, 22; Rev. 16:14-16) For the worshipers of Jehovah, his Christian witnesses, to get safely through that tribulation, their symbolic ark, the spiritual paradise, must remain, with them staying inside. In the deluge of Noah's day the Garden of Eden or Paradise of Pleasure, from which Adam and Eve had been expelled, was destroyed. But what about the spiritual paradise of the remnant and the "great crowd"? Like Noah's ark, it will survive the fiery "day of judgment." The impending "great tribulation" from Jehovah God is not meant to destroy the spiritual paradise of His worshipers, who have striven to preserve their spirituality and Christian integrity. It is meant to destroy the unparadise-like worldly system of things. After the spiritual paradise has survived the "great tribulation," the surviving worshipers of Noah's God, Jehovah, will devote their efforts to restoring the literal paradise to the cleansed earth under the "new heavens" of God's Messianic kingdom.

20. Who are pictured by Noah's three sons and their wives, and how was their survival foretold in Revelation?

21. (a) For those in the spiritual paradise to survive the "great tribulation," what must they do? (b) What forms of creature life will survive with them?

22. (a) In the deluge of Noah's day, what happened to the Garden of Eden? (b) In the coming "great tribulation," what will happen to the spiritual paradise, and why?

²³ Life in the spiritual paradise during this "time of the end" is no life of idleness for those enjoying God's favor and protection there. Living there has purpose according to the will of God. At the beginning of human existence, God put Adam in the original earthly paradise or "garden of Eden," not to loaf and idle away his time lazily, but "to cultivate it and to take care of it." God imparted purpose to the lives of Adam and Eve by giving them the commission to raise a family that would within seven thousand years of time fill the whole earth and turn the whole earth into a Paradise garden and would have all the lower forms of creature life in beneficial subjection. (Gen. 2:15; 1:26-28) So, too, in the spiritual paradise since 1919 C.E. there is worldwide work to do, before the "great tribulation." Those dwelling there must harmonize their course with God's purpose.

²⁴ Those whom God now admits to this spiritual paradise on earth seek not just a place of security and survival during the "great tribulation" ahead. They seek to prove worthy and to prepare themselves for everlasting life in God's righteous era of "new heavens and a new earth." (2 Pet. 3:13) They well know that it is God's purpose to usher in this peaceful, righteous era by means of his Messianic kingdom in the hands of his enthroned Son, Jesus Christ. In harmony with that purpose of God, they must participate in the fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy concerning the "conclusion of the system of things," namely, "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for

a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come." Also, Christ's direct command to them must be obeyed, to "make disciples of people of all the nations, baptizing them." (Matt. 24:14; 28:19, 20) Thereby more seekers of God are brought into his safe and secure spiritual paradise for survival and life in His righteous new era.

²⁵ Do we want to survive the "great tribulation" and live forever within the embrace of God's promised "new heavens and a new earth"? To do this, we must harmonize now with God's purpose.

25. If we want to survive and live in God's new order, what must we now do?

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23. What shows that Adam and Eve were not to lead a life of idleness, and so what about those now in the spiritual paradise?

24. (a) What do those now in the spiritual paradise seek to do? (b) In harmony with that purpose, they must now participate in what activities?

Missionaries Urged to 'Work Together with God'

THE apostle Paul's words about 'working together with God,' recorded in the Bible at 2 Corinthians 6:1, set the theme for Gilead missionary school's fifty-seventh graduation exercises, held on September 8, 1974. Though the class of twenty-five students was Gilead's smallest to date (not because of any lack of applicants but because the housing facilities were needed for workers to print Bibles and Bible-study aids), relatives and friends from the United States, Canada, Hawaii and Europe packed out Jehovah's Witnesses Assembly Hall in the borough of Queens, New York, for the occasion. The graduating students had come from four countries and were assigned to thirteen lands.

The morning session was highlighted by N. H. Knorr, the school's president, who encouraged the graduates to manifest long-suffering, along with the other fruits of God's spirit, in their evangelizing work. In this way, he said, they would be cooperating with God, who actually 'makes the seed of the word of the Kingdom to grow.'—1 Cor. 3:6.

Prior to Knorr's talk, the instructors and overseers in the School and the Watchtower Society's headquarters gave brief counsel. Then F. W. Franz spoke on the urgency of the evangelizing work, with a view to saving as many lives as possible from destruction at the "great tribulation," which is now, according to all evidences, very near at hand.—Matt. 24:21.

The afternoon program belonged to the students. After an entertaining session of musical novelties from their countries of origin, they presented two dramas. The first was a brief portrayal, in ancient and modern scenes, of the way women can apply counsel given them by the apostles Paul and Peter. (Titus 2:2-5; 1 Pet. 3:1-6) The program concluded with a dramatic historical review of events during the rule of Israel by wicked King Ahab and his wife Jezebel, and the role played during that period by God's prophet Elijah.

STRENGTHENING OF FAITH THE SCHOOL'S PURPOSE

Gilead School training gives the missionaries, above all things, a strengthening of faith. The School stresses the *overall* view of God's purposes, not just a few doctrinal points. The object is to convey to the students the "pattern

of healthful words" that the entire Bible gives. This provides a bulwark against "the sin that easily entangles us," namely, lack of faith. (2 Tim. 1:13; Heb. 12:1) For missionary work puts one's faith to a real test. Furthermore, real missionaries of Jesus Christ must be able to build that strong, unbreakable kind of faith in others.

This test of faith often comes because of the great difference in environment the missionary finds himself in when he goes to another land. Usually there are concepts of God and of the Bible and ways of daily living that are new to the missionary. Then, in the early stages of missionary life, learning the language is a problem—striving to be able to express thoughts in a way that people will understand, reaching their hearts.

Said a missionary who has spent twenty years in that field: "While Gilead School training proved to be a fine help to all of us, I found that the missionaries who held firm in their assignments were those who developed a real love for the people and a desire to help them. They had a deep interest in others. For one to be a successful missionary this is the basic requirement. Of course, this is no amazing thing, for Jesus Christ had that attitude. He came to earth as a perfect man. He lived every day with people full of imperfections. Yet of him it is said: 'On seeing the crowds he felt pity for them, because they were skinned and thrown about like sheep without a shepherd.'—Matt. 9:36.

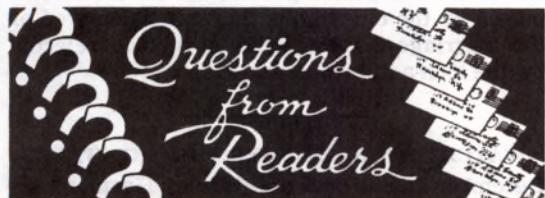
"That's true," the missionary's wife said. "At first the strange surroundings and customs, and particularly the language, occupied most of my thoughts, and sometimes I felt like I'd never learn. But the people kindly helped me with the language, and by the time I had learned enough of the language to express myself, I found so many lovable persons. They appreciated and responded so readily to the spiritual help I was able to give them that the assignment became my real home, and I would never have wanted to leave it for what I formerly called 'home.'"

A tremendous increase in the number of active witnesses of Jehovah has been experienced world wide since the Gilead School was opened in 1943. However, this increase is by no means limited to those whom the missionaries

and our dear ones here on Jehovah's witness stand. But what excellent results others have been able to help. Most of these new Witnesses have joined the ranks because of the fine work of fellow countrymen who perhaps heard the good news first through the missionaries, but who have zealously carried on and have also set a fine example of living, of working, of raising their families in harmony with God's Word. They have carried the message of good news into places harder to reach and

have helped scores of thousands to take their stand for the truth alongside them. Gilead missionaries have been happy to see this.

Through all of this, Jehovah's wisdom has been manifested, and all thanks for spiritual prosperity and increase go to him. As expressed by the apostle Paul, who did much missionary work: "I planted, Apollos watered, but God kept making it grow."—1 Cor. 3:6.



- In cases of adultery, are there any circumstances where the *guilty* party could obtain a divorce and be viewed by the congregation as free to remarry?—Jamaica.

There could be circumstances that would allow for the congregation, through its appointed elders, to take such position. Before considering such circumstances, however, we should first review the basic Bible principles concerning divorce.

Jesus' words at Matthew 5:31, 32 and 19:9 show that the committing of "fornication" (Greek: *porneia*) by a mate constitutes the only ground for divorce that is valid in God's eyes. His words also indicate that God grants the *innocent* mate the right to terminate the marriage, to bring about a dissolution of the marriage bonds.

It should be noted, however, that it is not simply the act of fornication that brings about the loosing of those binding ties. The innocent mate can choose to forgive the wrong act of the adulterous mate. In such a case the marriage bonds remain intact. So, then, the *determining factor* is, in all cases, the decision of the innocent mate either to forgive or to refuse to forgive the adulterous mate.

What, then, if—following the committing of "fornication" by a mate—the innocent mate thereafter refused to accept such a one back, perhaps refusing to live in the same home or, though living in the same home, refused to have sexual relations with the guilty one, and

yet did not seek a legal divorce in the courts of the land? What if this situation continued for a prolonged time, *a year or even years*, thereby depriving the mate who had committed the wrong of having any honorable sexual relations through his or her mate's payment of the marriage due?

The Bible shows that married persons should not withhold the marriage due "except by mutual consent for an appointed time," hence only temporarily, as otherwise temptation could easily enter in. (1 Cor. 7:2-5) To deprive a mate of such due for an extended or unlimited time would be an unloving course. If the non-adulterous mate did this it would constitute evidence that no real forgiveness of the adulterous act had been granted. To all intents and purposes, the non-adulterous mate has rejected the offending one as his or her marriage partner. And, as has been seen, the Scriptural dissolution of a marriage hinges on the decision of the non-adulterous mate to forgive or not to forgive the committing of "fornication" by the other mate.

Jehovah God would certainly be aware of such rejection even though the non-adulterous mate did not go before "Caesar's" courts to formalize the dissolution of the marriage. It is good to remember that it is the laws of Jehovah's divine court that are of first importance. Caesar's authority is relative and does not determine whether the bonds of marriage are broken or remain intact in God's eyes. (Compare Acts 5:29.) Caesar can only say whether he grants his legal recognition or not to the marriage as still in force. Thus, when the Scriptural ground ("fornication") does not exist, even though Caesar grants a divorce, it is not valid in God's eyes to the extent of freeing the divorcees to remarry.

In 'recommending himself to every human conscience,' the Christian, of course, rightly

will endeavor to gain such legal recognition by the State in marriage or in divorce. (2 Cor. 4:2) But that legal recognition is not the vital factor; God's judicial decision is. This being so, and since the non-adulterous mate's decision to forgive or not to forgive is the crucial factor in the dissolving of a marriage, what can the guilty mate do when faced with a situation in which the non-adulterous mate has not forgiven him or her and yet will not formalize the dissolution of the marriage before Caesar? The guilty mate could take action to establish the fact that he or she has actually been rejected by the non-adulterous mate. This should first be done before the elders of the congregation, presenting them with the evidence that a definite, consistent—not temporary—rejection has taken place. Then the one whose mate refuses to forgive could seek legal recognition of the rejection in Caesar's courts, using whatever truthful grounds for divorce such courts will accept, thereafter becoming free to remarry. In lands where there is no provision for divorce, his or her procedure would follow that described on page 151 of the book *True Peace and Security—From What Source?*

In addition to the above, if the guilty mate does not wish to remain in the marriage, he or she could file a suit for divorce in the local court, giving as grounds the adultery of the other mate. If the guilty mate is successful in this, he or she may then file for a decree of separation, and the guilty mate would then be free to remarry. This would be a good way to end a marriage if the guilty mate does not want to remain in it.

It is important to remember that the law of God's Word is the standard of justice, and that the

Elders in a congregation, faced with such a case, should weigh matters judiciously, determining that there is indeed clear and convincing evidence of a definite rejection by the non-adulterous mate. For example, the offended mate might not wish to renew sexual relations for a few weeks or even months due to the memory of the adultery still being fresh in mind. This would not constitute genuine rejection. It should be noted also that the preceding information does not say that the failure to pay the marriage due of itself is a ground for divorce. There must have been "fornication" (the Scriptural ground for divorce) committed by the one who is thereafter deprived of the marriage due and who is, in fact, rejected by the non-adulterous mate.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

December 1: Survival and Life by Harmonizing with God's Purpose. Page 657. Songs to Be Used: 1, 61.

December 8: A Prophetic Drama That Fore-shadowed Survival. Page 663. Songs to Be Used: 96, 109.