

# THE WATCHTOWER

JUNE 1, 1996

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

When  
prejudice  
will be no  
more!

# THE WATCHTOWER®

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

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

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# are you a victim of PREJUDICE?

**W**HAT do ethnic violence, racism, discrimination, segregation, and genocide have in common? They are all consequences of a widespread human tendency—prejudice!

What is prejudice? One encyclopedia defines it as “an opinion formed without taking the time or care to judge fairly.”

As imperfect humans, we are prone to be prejudicial to some degree. Perhaps you can think of instances when you made a judgment without having all the facts. The Bible contrasts such prejudicial inclinations with the way Jehovah God judges. It says: “Not the way man sees is the way God sees, because mere man sees what appears to the eyes; but as for Jehovah, he sees what the heart is.”—1 Samuel 16:7.

## Prejudice Can Hurt

Undoubtedly everyone has been misjudged by someone at some time. (Compare Ecclesiastes 7:21, 22.) In a general sense, all of us are victims of prejudice. However, when quickly dispelled, prejudicial thoughts will likely cause little or no hurt. It is the nurturing of such thoughts that can result in harm. It can deceive us into believing a falsehood. For example, under the influence of prejudice, some people truly believe that a person can be greedy, lazy, stupid, or proud simply because of belonging to a certain religious, ethnic, or national group.

*Nurturing  
prejudice foments  
racial hatred*



In many cases such misjudgment gives birth to unfair, abusive, or even violent treatment of others. Millions of people have lost their lives in massacres, genocides, ethnic killings, and other forms of extreme prejudice.

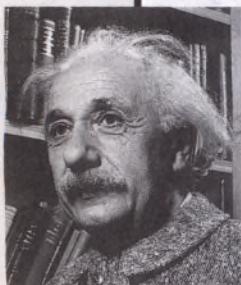
All over the earth, governments have fought prejudice by legally guaranteeing the inviolable right to freedom, security, and equality. If you read the constitution or principal body of laws of your country, no doubt you will find a clause or an amend-

ment designed to protect the rights of all citizens, regardless of their race, gender, or religion. Yet, prejudice and discrimination are rampant on a worldwide scale.

Are you a victim of prejudice? Have you been branded as greedy, lazy, stupid, or proud simply because of your race, age, gender, nationality, or religious beliefs? Are you being denied opportunities for proper education, employment, housing, and social services because of prejudice? If so, how can you cope?

## when PREJUDICE

will be no more!



U.S. National Archives photo

**R**EPORTEDLY, scientist Albert Einstein once said that in this sad world, it is more difficult to overcome a prejudice than to split an atom. Similarly, Edward R. Murrow, a journalist who became famous during World War II and later was director of the U.S. Information Agency, stated that "no one can eliminate prejudices—just recognize them."

Do these statements ring true? Is it impossible to eliminate discrimination and racism? How does God feel about prejudice?

### God Is Not Partial

The Bible speaks against partiality. (Proverbs 24:23; 28:21) It states that "the wisdom from above is first of all chaste, then peaceable, reasonable, ready to obey, full of mercy and good fruits, not making partial distinctions, not hypocritical." (James 3:17) Such wisdom was stressed to the judges

in ancient Israel. "You people must not do injustice in the judgment," they were instructed. "You must not treat the lowly with partiality, and you must not prefer the person of a great one."—Leviticus 19:15.

The Bible's firm position against partiality and prejudice was emphasized by Jesus Christ and his apostles Peter and Paul. Jesus was impartial toward those who "were skinned and thrown about like sheep without a shepherd." (Matthew 9:36) He taught: "Stop judging from the outward appearance, but judge with righteous judgment."—John 7:24.

Peter and Paul reassure us that Jehovah God himself is not partial. Peter stated: "For a certainty I perceive that God is not partial, but in every nation the man that fears him and works righteousness is acceptable to him." (Acts 10:34, 35) The apostle Paul tells us: "There is no partiality with God."—Romans 2:11.

### The Bible's Influence

The Bible has the power to change the personalities of those who are guided by it. Hebrews 4:12 says: "The word of God is alive and exerts power." With Jehovah's help a prejudiced person can even change his way of thinking and become impartial in his dealings with others.

Take, for example, the case of Saul of Tarsus. According to the Bible account, he at one time violently opposed the Christian congregation because he followed rigid religious traditions. (Acts 8:1-3) He was fully convinced by Jewish tradition that all Christians were apostates and enemies of true worship. His prejudice led him to support the killing of Christians. The Bible says that he was "breathing threat and murder against the disciples of the Lord."

(Acts 9:1) While doing so, he imagined that he was rendering a sacred service to God. —Compare John 16:2.

Yet, Saul of Tarsus was able to shed his extreme prejudice. He even became a Christian himself! Later, as Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, he wrote: "Formerly I was a blasphemer and a persecutor and an insolent man. Nevertheless, I was shown mercy, because I was ignorant and acted with a lack of faith."—1 Timothy 1:13.

Paul was not the only one who made such drastic changes in his way of thinking. In his letter to Titus, a fellow evangelizer, Paul admonished Christians "to speak injuriously of no one, not to be belligerent, to be reasonable, exhibiting all mildness toward all men. For even we were once senseless, disobedient, being misled, being slaves to various desires and pleasures, carrying on in badness and envy, abhorrent, hating one another."—Titus 3:2, 3.

### Breaking Down the Barriers of Prejudice

Today, genuine Christians strive to follow that counsel. They want to avoid judging people on the basis of superficial impressions. This prevents them from 'speaking injuriously' of others. They enjoy an international brotherhood that crosses all the nationalistic, ethnic, and racial boundaries of this world.

Consider the experience of Henrique, a dark-skinned Brazilian. Himself a victim of racial discrimination, he developed a deep-seated hatred for white people. He explains: "Two light-skinned Witnesses came to my house to talk about God's name. Initially I did not want to listen because I did not trust white people. But soon I could see that their message had the ring of truth. Well, I accepted a Bible study. The first

question I had was, 'Are there many black people in your church?' They answered, 'Yes.' Then they showed me the last picture in the book *My Book of Bible Stories*,\* depicting young people of different races. Included was a black boy, and this encouraged me. Later I visited the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, where I saw people of different races treating one another with respect. This was very important to me."

Now, as one of Jehovah's Witnesses, Henrique is delighted to belong to a genuine Christian brotherhood. He understands that the credit does not go to any human. He says: "Today I am thankful to Jehovah and Jesus for everything they have done in my behalf. I work with millions of Jehovah's loyal servants of all races, colors, and backgrounds, united in one purpose."

While growing up, Dario was another victim of prejudice. At 16 years of age, he began to study the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses. He observed: "Among the Witnesses, I have found that there are no feelings of racial superiority." He was impressed by the atmosphere of genuine love. He especially noticed that individuals of different races served in positions of responsibility within the congregation. Whenever he is subjected to some type of prejudice or discrimination by people outside the congregation, Dario remembers that Jehovah loves people of all nations, tribes, and tongues.

### How to Cope

All of us like to be treated with dignity and respect. That is why being a victim of prejudice is a difficult trial to endure. The Christian congregation does not protect us from all exposure to the prejudicial atti-

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tudes of this wicked world. As long as Satan the Devil is controlling the affairs of the world, there will be injustices. (1 John 5:19) Revelation 12:12 warns us: "Woe for the earth and for the sea, because the Devil has come down to you, having great anger, knowing he has a short period of time." His intention is not merely to cause discomfort. He is compared to a predatory animal. The apostle Peter tells us: "Your adversary, the Devil, walks about like a roaring lion, seeking to devour someone."—1 Peter 5:8.

The Bible also tells us: "Subject yourselves, therefore, to God; but oppose the Devil, and he will flee from you." (James 4:7) A fine help to cope with prejudice is looking to God for protection, as King David did: "O my God, provide me with escape from the hand of the wicked one, from the palm of the one acting unjustly and oppressively." (Psalm 71:4) We may even pray like the psalmist: "Show me favor, O God, because mortal man has snapped at me. Warring all day long, he keeps oppressing me." —Psalm 56:1.

How will God respond to such prayers? The Bible answers: "He will deliver the poor one crying for help, also the afflicted one and whoever has no helper. He will feel sorry for the lowly one and the poor one, and the souls of the poor ones he will save." (Psalm 72:12, 13) How good to know that in due time Jehovah will bring relief to all who are victims of injustice!

### "They Will Not Do Any Harm"

The governments of this world may continue to fight prejudice with their laws and programs. They may continue to promise equality and fairness. But they cannot succeed. (Psalm 146:3) Only God can and will eliminate all prejudicial treatment. He will



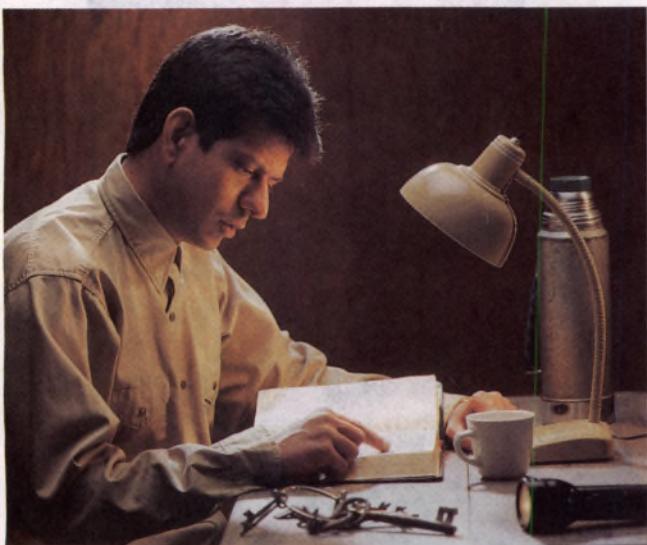
transform mankind into one united family. "A great crowd, which no man was able to number, out of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues" will survive the end of this wicked system and enjoy living in peace.—Revelation 7:9, 10.

Jehovah will undo all harm caused by racial and social prejudice. Imagine, no one will be treated unjustly! "They will actually sit, each one under his vine and under his fig tree, and there will be no one making them tremble." (Micah 4:4) And Isaiah 11:9 says: "They will not do any harm."

If you are a victim of prejudice now, this marvelous hope for the future will strengthen your relationship with Jehovah. It will help you to endure the injustices of this wicked system. As you cope with prejudice and look ahead, follow the Bible's wise advice: "Be courageous, and may your heart be strong, all you who are waiting for Jehovah."—Psalm 31:24.

# KINGDOM PROCLAIMERS REPORT

## "All Your Commandments Are Truth"



SHORTLY before his death, Moses exhorted the people of Israel to obey each and every one of Jehovah's commandments. He said: "Apply your hearts to all the words that I am speaking in warning to you today, that you may command your sons to take care to do all the words of this law. For it is no valueless word for you, but it means your life."—Deuteronomy 32:46, 47.

Hundreds of years later, the psalmist highlighted the importance of all of God's teachings when he said: "You are near, O Jehovah, and all your commandments are truth." (Psalm 119:151) In the first century, Jesus himself made reference to the value of "every utterance coming forth through Jehovah's mouth." (Matthew 4:4) And under God's direction the apostle Paul wrote that "all Scripture is inspired of God and beneficial."—2 Timothy 3:16.

Clearly, Jehovah God expects his worshipers to give serious consideration to the entire message conveyed to us in the pages of his Word. There is not a single passage in the Bible that lacks value. That is how Jehovah's Witnesses feel about God's Word, as illustrated by the following experience from Mauritius.

Mr. D—— lived in a remote village, where he was a night watchman. For a long time, he had been sincerely searching for the right way to worship God. At night during his watch, he began to read the Bible. In time he had read it from cover to cover. He learned that God's name is Jehovah—a name that appears many times in his Hindi Bible. He found that the book of Revelation was especially intriguing.

Then he asked himself whether there was a religion that followed the Bible in its entirety. He noticed that the religions he was acquainted with were, at best, merely following parts of the Bible. Some religions accepted the Hebrew Scriptures and rejected the Christian Greek Scriptures. Other religions were ignoring the Hebrew Scriptures, ascribing practical value only to the Christian Greek Scriptures.

One day Mr. D—— saw a couple getting wet in the rain and invited them to find shelter in his home. They were Jehovah's Witnesses. The wife was holding the book *Revelation—Its Grand Climax At Hand!*\* Immediately Mr. D—— asked them for the book. The Witnesses felt that the material on the prophecy of Revelation was too deep for him, so they offered him another publication instead. But Mr. D—— insisted on having the *Revelation* book.

When he got his copy, he read the book quickly. He then accepted a Bible study with Jehovah's Witnesses. Soon he was impressed by the fact that the Witnesses hold the entire Bible in high esteem. He began to attend meetings regularly at the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, where both the Hebrew Scriptures and the Christian Greek Scriptures are studied carefully. He is now a Kingdom proclaimer and a baptized member of the Christian congregation.

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# THE SERPENT'S SEED —HOW EXPOSED?

*"I shall put enmity between you and the woman and between your seed and her seed."*—GENESIS 3:15.

JEHOVAH is the happy God and with good reason. He is the greatest and foremost Giver of things that are good, and there is nothing that can thwart the fulfillment of his purposes. (Isaiah 55:10, 11; 1 Timothy 1:11; James 1:17) He wants his servants to share his joy, and he provides sound reasons for them to do so. Thus, at one of the blackest moments in human history—the rebellion in Eden—he provided the basis for us to look to the future with hope.—Romans 8:19-21.

<sup>2</sup> One of Jehovah's spirit sons, by resisting and slandering God, had just made himself into Satan the Devil. The first humans, Eve and then Adam, had fallen under his influence and had violated Jehovah's clearly stated law. They were justly sentenced to death. (Genesis 3:1-24) Yet, when pronouncing judgment on these rebels, Jehovah provided a basis for hope for the offspring of Adam and Eve. In what way? As recorded at Genesis 3:15, Jehovah said: "I shall put enmity between you and the woman and between your seed and her seed. He will bruise you in the head and you will bruise him in the heel." That prophecy is a key to understanding the entire Bible as well as past and present events involving both the world and Jehovah's servants.

1. (a) Why is Jehovah the happy God? (b) What has he done to enable us to share his joy?
2. When pronouncing judgment on the rebels in Eden, how did Jehovah provide a basis for hope for the offspring of Adam and Eve?

## What the Prophecy Means

<sup>3</sup> To appreciate its significance, consider the various elements of the prophecy itself. *The one addressed* at Genesis 3:15 is the Serpent—not the lowly snake but the one who used it. (Revelation 12:9) *"The woman"* is not Eve but Jehovah's heavenly organization, the mother of his spirit-anointed servants on earth. (Galatians 4:26) *The Serpent's "seed,"* is Satan's seed, his offspring—demons and humans as well as human organizations that manifest the traits of Satan and that show enmity toward the "seed" of the woman. (John 15:19; 17:15) *The woman's "seed"* is primarily Jesus Christ, who was anointed with holy spirit in 29 C.E. The 144,000, who are "born again . . . from water and spirit" and who are heirs of the heavenly Kingdom with Christ, are a subsidiary part of that seed of promise. These began to be added to the woman's seed from Pentecost 33 C.E. onward.—John 3:3, 5; Galatians 3:16, 29.

<sup>4</sup> The literal serpent in Eden was used as a mouthpiece by the one whose deceit led to mankind's loss of Paradise. Genesis 3:15 pointed forward to the time when

3. As referred to at Genesis 3:15, identify (a) the Serpent, (b) "the woman," (c) the Serpent's "seed," (d) the woman's "seed."
4. How does Genesis 3:15 relate to earth's becoming a paradise, filled with people free from sin and death?



### **Jesus exposed hypocritical religious leaders as being part of the seed of the Serpent**

the one who manipulated that serpent will be crushed. Then the way will again be open for human servants of God to inhabit Paradise, free from sin and death. What a joyful time that will be!—Revelation 20:1-3; 21:1-5.

<sup>5</sup> Following the rebellion in Eden, individuals and organizations began to appear that manifested traits like those of Satan the Devil—rebellion, lying, slander, and murder, coupled with opposition to Jehovah's will and to those who worship Jehovah. Those traits identified the offspring, the spiritual children, of the Devil. Among these was Cain, who murdered Abel when Jehovah favored Abel's worship instead of Cain's. (1 John 3:10-12) Nimrod was one whose very name identified him as a rebel and who became a mighty hunter and ruler in opposition to Jehovah. (Genesis 10:9) In addition there was a succession of ancient kingdoms, including Babylon, with their

5. What traits characterize the spiritual offspring of the Devil?

state-sponsored religions built on falsehood, and these cruelly oppressed worshippers of Jehovah.—Jeremiah 50:29.

### **“Enmity Between You and the Woman”**

<sup>6</sup> During all this time, there was enmity between the Serpent and Jehovah's woman, between Satan the Devil and Jehovah's heavenly organization of loyal spirit creatures. Satan's enmity was shown as he taunted Jehovah and sought to disrupt Jehovah's heavenly organization, enticing angels to forsake their proper dwelling place. (Proverbs 27:11; Jude 6) It was manifested when Satan used his demons to try to interfere with angelic messengers dispatched by Jehovah. (Daniel 10:13, 14, 20, 21) It was outstandingly evident in this 20th century when Satan sought to destroy the Messianic Kingdom at its birth.—Revelation 12:1-4.

<sup>7</sup> There was also enmity on the part of Je-

6. In what ways has Satan shown enmity toward Jehovah's woman?
7. Why did Jehovah's loyal angels feel enmity toward the symbolic Serpent, yet what restraint have they shown?

hovah's woman, the body of loyal angels, toward the symbolic Serpent. Satan had slandered the good name of God; he had also called into question the integrity of every one of God's intelligent creatures, including all the angels, and he was actively trying to subvert their loyalty to God. (Revelation 12:4a) Loyal angels, cherubs, and seraphs could not do otherwise than feel a loathing toward the one who had made himself Devil and Satan. Yet, they have waited on Jehovah to handle matters in his own time and way.—Compare Jude 9.

### Hostility Toward the Seed of God's Woman

<sup>8</sup> Meanwhile, Satan was on the lookout for the foretold Seed of the woman, the one who Jehovah said would bruise the Serpent in the head. When the angel from heaven announced that Jesus, who had been born in Bethlehem, was the "Savior, who is Christ the Lord," this was strong confirmation that he would become the foretold Seed of the woman.—Luke 2:10, 11.

<sup>9</sup> The vicious enmity of Satan was soon shown when he lured pagan astrologers on a mission that took them first to King Herod in Jerusalem and then to the house in Bethlehem where they found the young boy Jesus and his mother, Mary. Shortly thereafter King Herod ordered the death of all the boys from two years of age and under, in and around Bethlehem. In this, Herod showed satanic hatred for the Seed. Herod evidently knew full well that he was trying to snuff out the life of the one who was to be the Messiah. (Matthew 2:1-6, 16) History testifies that King Herod was unscrupulous, crafty, and murderous—truly one of the seed of the Serpent.

8. For whom was Satan on the lookout?
9. After Jesus' birth, how did Satan manifest vicious enmity?

<sup>10</sup> After Jesus had been anointed with holy spirit in 29 C.E. and Jehovah had spoken from heaven acknowledging Jesus as his Son, Satan tried repeatedly to get Jesus to succumb to temptation, thus seeking to thwart Jehovah's purpose regarding his Son. (Matthew 4:1-10) Failing in that, he resorted to further use of human agents to achieve his aims. Among those used in attempting to discredit Jesus were the hypocritical religious leaders. They employed lies and slander, the kind of devices used by Satan himself. When Jesus told a paralytic, "Take courage, . . . your sins are forgiven," the scribes, without waiting to see whether the man had indeed been healed, judged Jesus to be a blasphemer. (Matthew 9:2-7) When Jesus healed people on the Sabbath, the Pharisees denounced him as a violator of the Sabbath law and took counsel to destroy him. (Matthew 12:9-14; John 5:1-18) When Jesus cast out demons, the Pharisees charged that he was in league with "Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons." (Matthew 12:22-24) After Lazarus was raised from the dead, many of the people put faith in Jesus, but the chief priests and Pharisees again took counsel to kill him.—John 11:47-53.

<sup>11</sup> On Nisan 11, 33 C.E., Jesus, though well knowing what they were scheming, went fearlessly right into the temple area in Jerusalem and there publicly pronounced judgment upon them. As a group, the scribes and Pharisees had consistently demonstrated what kind of people they were; so Jesus said: "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because you shut up the

10. (a) Following Jesus' baptism, how did Satan personally try to thwart Jehovah's purpose regarding the promised Seed? (b) How did Satan use the Jewish religious leaders in pursuing his aims?
11. Three days before Jesus' death, whom did he identify as part of the seed of the Serpent, and why?

kingdom of the heavens before men; for you yourselves do not go in, neither do you permit those on their way in to go in." Jesus pointedly declared that they were part of the seed of the Serpent, saying: "Serpents, offspring of vipers, how are you to flee from the judgment of Gehenna?" (Matthew 23:13, 33) His language reflects back to the prophecy at Genesis 3:15.

<sup>12</sup> On hearing Jesus' words, were they cut to the heart, so that they implored mercy from God? Did they repent of their wickedness? No! Mark 14:1 reports that the very next day, at a meeting in the courtyard of the high priest, "the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to seize [Jesus] by crafty device and kill him." They continued to manifest the murderous spirit of Satan, whom Jesus had earlier described as being a manslayer. (John 8:44) Soon they were joined by Judas Iscariot, whom Satan induced to be an apostate. Judas abandoned the blameless Seed of God's woman and joined the seed of the Serpent.

<sup>13</sup> Early on the morning of Nisan 14, the members of the Jewish religious court took Jesus as a prisoner to the Roman governor. Here it was the chief priests who took the lead in shouting for him to be impaled. When Pilate asked, "Shall I impale your king?" it was the chief priests who answered, "We have no king but Caesar." (John 19:6, 15) Indeed, they proved in every way that they were part of the seed of the Serpent. But they were certainly not alone. The inspired record at Matthew 27:24, 25 gives this report: "Pilate took water and washed his hands before the crowd." Then all the people said: "His blood come upon us and upon our children." Thus many Jews

12, 13. (a) How did the chief priests and the scribes give further evidence as to who their spiritual father was? (b) Who joined them? (c) In fulfillment of Genesis 3:15, how was the woman's Seed bruised in the heel?

of that generation identified themselves as part of the Serpent's seed. Before the end of that day, Jesus was dead. By using his visible seed, Satan had bruised the Seed of God's woman in the heel.

<sup>14</sup> Had Satan won? By no means! Jesus Christ had conquered the world and had won out over its ruler. (John 14:30, 31; 16:33) He had maintained his loyalty to Jehovah right down till death. His death as a perfect human provided the ransom price needed to buy back the life rights forfeited by Adam. So he opened the way to eternal life for those who would exercise faith in that provision and obey God's commandments. (Matthew 20:28; John 3:16) Jehovah raised Jesus from the dead to immortal life in heaven. At Jehovah's due time, Jesus will crush Satan out of existence. At Genesis 22:16-18, it is prophesied that Jehovah will bestow favor on all the families of the earth who take needed action to bless themselves by means of that loyal Seed.

<sup>15</sup> After Jesus' death, spirit-anointed Christians continued to expose the seed of the Serpent, as their Lord had done. Moved by holy spirit, the apostle Paul warned against "the man of lawlessness" whose presence would be "according to the operation of Satan." (2 Thessalonians 2:3-10) This collective "man" has proved to be the clergy of Christendom. The seed of the Serpent, in turn, fiercely persecuted the followers of Jesus Christ. In the prophecy recorded at Revelation 12:17, the apostle John foretold that Satan would continue to wage war against the remnant of the seed of God's woman right down to our day. That is exactly what has occurred. In scores of lands,

14. Why did the bruising of the heel of the woman's Seed not mean victory for Satan?
15. (a) After the death of Jesus, how did his apostles continue to expose the seed of the Serpent? (b) What further hostility has been manifested by the seed of the Serpent right down to our day?

Jehovah's Witnesses have been banned, mobbed, imprisoned, or thrown into concentration camps because of their firm stand for God's Kingdom and his righteous ways.

### Modern-Day Exposé of the Serpent's Seed

<sup>16</sup> In imitation of Jesus Christ, true Christians have not let up in their fearless exposé of the Serpent and his seed. In 1917 the Bible Students, as Jehovah's Witnesses were then known, published the book *The Finished Mystery*, in which they laid bare the hypocrisy of Christendom's clergy. This was followed, in 1924, by a printed resolution entitled *Ecclesiastics Indicted*. Fifty million copies were given international distribution. In 1937, J. F. Rutherford, then president of the Watch Tower Society, delivered powerful exposés of Satan's seed in discourses entitled "Exposed" and "Religion and Christianity." The following year, while 50 convention audiences in various lands listened, he gave the discourse "Face the Facts" by radiotelephone from London, England. A month later, an extensive radio network in the United States carried the speech "Fascism or Freedom." These were supplemented by powerful exposés in such books as *Enemies* and *Religion* and also in the booklet *Uncovered*. In harmony with what had been published since the 1920's, the book *Revelation—Its Grand Climax At Hand!*,<sup>\*</sup> now printed in 65 languages, identifies corrupt political rulers and greedy, unprincipled commercial traffickers as being among the foremost members of the visible seed of the Serpent. When political leaders make it a practice to resort to falsehood to mislead their subjects, to show no regard for the sacredness

\* Published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.

16. In modern times, who have been exposed as being part of the seed of the Serpent, and how?

of blood, and to oppress Jehovah's servants (thus showing hatred for the seed of God's woman), they surely do identify themselves as part of the seed of the Serpent. The same is true of commercial traffickers who, without any qualms of conscience, lie for financial gain and who manufacture or sell products that are known to cause disease.

<sup>17</sup> Not every individual tainted by worldly religion, politics, or commerce will be reckoned in finally as part of the seed of the Serpent. Some of these men and women come to admire Jehovah's Witnesses. They use their influence to help them and in due course embrace true worship. (Compare Acts 13:7, 12; 17:32-34.) To all such ones, this appeal has been extended: "Now, O kings, exercise insight; let yourselves be corrected, O judges of the earth. Serve Jehovah with fear and be joyful with trembling. Kiss the son, that He may not become incensed and you may not perish from the way, for his anger flares up easily. Happy are all those taking refuge in him." (Psalm 2:10-12) Indeed, it is vital for all who desire Jehovah's favor to act now,

17. What opportunity is still open to prominent individuals who may come out of the world's system?

### Do You Remember?

- Who is the Serpent referred to at Genesis 3:15? And who is the woman?
- What traits characterize the seed of the Serpent?
- How did Jesus expose the Serpent's seed?
- Who have been exposed as part of the Serpent's seed in modern times?
- What urgent action is required to avoid identification with the Serpent's seed?

before the heavenly Judge swings shut the door of opportunity!

<sup>18</sup> Only those who will make up the heavenly Kingdom are part of the seed of the woman. These are few in number. (Revelation 7:4, 9) Yet, there is a great crowd of others, yes, millions of them, who as worshipers of Jehovah look forward to eternal life on a paradise earth. Both by word and by deed, they say to Jehovah's anointed ones: "We will go with you people, for we have heard that God is with you people."—Zechariah 8:23.

<sup>19</sup> Now is the time when all mankind must make a choice. Do they want to worship Je-

18. Though not part of the seed of the woman, who are nevertheless worshipers of Jehovah?

19. (a) What choice must all people make? (b) To whom in particular is an earnest appeal made to act wisely while there is still opportunity?

hovah and uphold his sovereignty, or will they allow Satan to be their ruler by doing the things pleasing to him? Some five million people out of all nations have taken their stand on the side of Jehovah in association with the remaining ones of the seed of the woman, the Kingdom heirs. Eight million others have shown interest in studying the Bible with them or in attending their meetings. Jehovah's Witnesses say to all of these: The door of opportunity is still open. Take your stand unequivocally on Jehovah's side. Acknowledge Christ Jesus as the promised Seed. Joyfully associate with Jehovah's visible organization. May you share in all the blessings that He will provide through the rule of the King, Christ Jesus.

## FLIGHT TO SAFETY BEFORE THE “GREAT TRIBULATION”

*“When you see Jerusalem surrounded by encamped armies, . . . let those in Judea begin fleeing to the mountains.”*—LUKE 21:20, 21.

FOR all who are part of Satan's world, flight is urgent. If they are to be spared when the present system of things is wiped off the earth, they must give convincing evidence that they have taken their stand firmly on Jehovah's side and are no longer part of the world of which Satan is ruler.—James 4:4; 1 John 2:17.

1. Why is flight urgent for those who are still part of the world?

<sup>2</sup> In his great prophecy regarding the conclusion of the system of things, Jesus emphasized the vital need for such flight. We frequently discuss what is recorded at Matthew 24:4-14; yet, what follows it is no less important. We encourage you to open your Bible now and read verses 15 to 22.

2, 3. What questions in connection with Jesus' words recorded at Matthew 24:15-22 are we going to discuss?

<sup>3</sup> What does that prophecy mean? In the first century, what was “the disgusting thing that causes desolation”? What did its being “in a holy place” portend? Of what significance is that development to us?

### “Let the Reader Use Discernment”

<sup>4</sup> Notice at Matthew 24:15 that Jesus referred to what was written in the book of Daniel. In chapter 9 of that book is a prophecy that foretold the coming of Messiah and the judgment that would be executed on the Jewish nation for rejecting him. The latter part of verse 27 says: “And upon the wing of *disgusting things* there will be the one *causing desolation*.” Early Jewish tradition applied that part of Daniel’s prophecy to the profaning of Jehovah’s temple in Jerusalem by Antiochus IV in the second century B.C.E. But Jesus cautioned: “Let the reader use discernment.” The desecration of the temple by Antiochus IV, though certainly disgusting, did not result in desolation—of Jerusalem, of the temple, or of the Jewish nation. So Jesus was evidently cautioning his hearers that fulfillment of this was not in the past but was yet future.

<sup>5</sup> What was “the disgusting thing” for which they were to be on the lookout? It is noteworthy that Matthew’s account says: “When you catch sight of the *disgusting thing* that causes desolation . . . standing in a holy place.” However, the parallel account at Luke 21:20 reads: “When you see Jerusalem surrounded by *encamped armies*, then know that the desolating of her has drawn near.” In 66 C.E., Christians living in Jerusalem did see what Jesus had foretold.

4. (a) What did Daniel 9:27 say would follow the Jews’ rejection of the Messiah? (b) When referring to this, why, evidently, did Jesus say, “Let the reader use discernment”?

5. (a) How does a comparison of Gospel accounts help us to identify the first-century “disgusting thing”? (b) Why did Cestius Gallus rush Roman troops to Jerusalem in 66 C.E.?

A series of incidents involving conflict between the Jews and Roman officials led to Jerusalem’s becoming a hotbed of rebellion against Rome. As a result, violence flared up throughout Judea, Samaria, Galilee, the Decapolis, and Phoenicia, north into Syria, and south into Egypt. In order to restore a measure of peace to that part of the Roman Empire, Cestius Gallus rushed military forces from Syria to Jerusalem, which the Jews spoke of as their “holy city.”—Nehemiah 11:1; Isaiah 52:1.

<sup>6</sup> It was customary for the Roman legions to carry standards, or ensigns, which they viewed as sacred but which the Jews viewed as idolatrous. Interestingly, the Hebrew word translated “disgusting thing” in the book of Daniel is used principally of idols and idolatry.\* (Deuteronomy 29:17) In spite of resistance by the Jews, the Roman forces bearing their idolatrous ensigns penetrated into Jerusalem in November of 66 C.E. and then started to undermine the temple wall on the north. There was no doubt about it—a “disgusting thing” that could cause complete desolation to Jerusalem was “standing in a holy place”! But how could anyone flee?

### Flight Was Urgent!

<sup>7</sup> Suddenly and for no apparent reason from a human standpoint, when it seemed that Jerusalem could be easily taken, the Roman army withdrew. The Jewish insurgents pursued the retreating Roman troops but only as far as Antipatris, some 30 miles from Jerusalem. They then turned back. On arrival in Jerusalem, they assembled in

\* See *Insight on the Scriptures*, published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., Volume 1, pages 634-5.

6. How was it true that a “disgusting thing” that could cause desolation came to be “standing in a holy place”?

7. What did the Roman army unexpectedly do?



**To survive, Jesus' followers had to flee without delay**

the temple to map out their further war strategy. Youths were recruited to strengthen fortifications and to serve in the military. Would the Christians get caught up in this? Even if they avoided it, would they still be in the danger zone when the Roman armies returned?

<sup>8</sup> Christians in Jerusalem and in all Judea soon acted on the prophetic warning given by Jesus Christ and fled out of the danger zone. Flight was urgent! In time they made their way into the mountainous regions, with some possibly settling in Pella, in the province of Perea. Those who took to heart Jesus' warning did not foolishly turn back to try to save their material possessions. (Compare Luke 14:33.) Leaving under those circumstances, pregnant women and nursing mothers surely found it a difficult trip to make on foot. Their flight was not hindered by restrictions of the Sabbath day,

<sup>8</sup>. What urgent action did the Christians take in obedience to Jesus' prophetic words?

and though winter was near, it had not yet arrived. Those who had heeded Jesus' warning to flee quickly were soon safely outside of Jerusalem and Judea. Their lives depended on this.—Compare James 3:17.

<sup>9</sup> The very next year, in 67 C.E., the Romans renewed war operations against the Jews. First, Galilee was subdued. The following year, Judea was dismembered. By 70 C.E., the Roman forces encircled Jerusalem itself. (Luke 19:43) Famine became extremely severe. Those trapped in the city turned on one another. Any who tried to escape were slaughtered. What they experienced was, as Jesus had said, "great tribulation."—Matthew 24:21.

<sup>10</sup> Did that fully satisfy what Jesus had foretold? No, more was to come. If, as Jesus advised, we read the Scriptures with discernment, we will not fail to take note of what is yet ahead. We will also think seriously about its implications in our own lives.

9. How soon did the Roman forces return, and with what result?
10. If we read with discernment, what else will we take note of?

## **Modern-Day “Disgusting Thing”**

<sup>11</sup> Note that, in addition to what we have seen at Daniel 9:27, there are, at Daniel 11:31 and 12:11, further references to “the disgusting thing that is causing desolation.” In neither of these latter instances is the destruction of Jerusalem being discussed. In fact, what is said at Daniel 12:11 appears just two verses after a reference to “the time of the end.” (Daniel 12:9) We have been living in such a time period since 1914. So we need to be alert to identify the modern-day “disgusting thing that is causing desolation” and then to be sure that we get out of the danger zone.

<sup>12</sup> What is that modern-day “disgusting thing”? The evidence points to the League of Nations, which went into operation in 1920, shortly after the world entered its time of the end. But how could that be a “disgusting thing that causes desolation”?

<sup>13</sup> Remember, the Hebrew word for “disgusting thing” is used in the Bible principally with reference to idols and idolatrous practices. Was the League idolized? Indeed it was! The clergy put it “in a holy place,” and their followers proceeded to give it passionate devotion. The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America declared that the League would be “the political expression of the Kingdom of God on earth.” The U.S. Senate received an avalanche of mail from religious groups urging it to ratify the Covenant of the League of Nations. The general body of Baptists, Congregationalists, and Presbyterians in Britain lauded it as “the only available instrument for attaining [peace on earth].”—See Revelation 13:14, 15.

11. In what other two passages does Daniel refer to “the disgusting thing,” and what time period is there being discussed?

12, 13. Why is it appropriate to describe the League of Nations as the modern-day “disgusting thing”?

<sup>14</sup> The Messianic Kingdom of God had been established in the heavens in 1914, but the nations proceeded to fight for their own sovereignty. (Psalm 2:1-6) When the League of Nations was proposed, the nations that had just fought in the first world war, as well as the clergy who had blessed their troops, had already demonstrated that they had forsaken the law of God. They were not looking to Christ as King. Thus they assigned to a human organization the role of the Kingdom of God; they put the League of Nations “in a holy place,” a place where it did not belong.

<sup>15</sup> As a successor to the League, the United Nations came into being on October 24, 1945. Later, the popes of Rome hailed the United Nations as “the ultimate hope for harmony and peace” and “the supreme forum of peace and justice.” Yes, the League of Nations, along with its successor, the United Nations, truly became an idol, a “disgusting thing” in the sight of God and of his people.

### **Flee From What?**

<sup>16</sup> On ‘catching sight’ of this, on recognizing what that international organization is and how it is being idolized, lovers of righteousness need to flee to safety. Flee out of what? Out of that which is the modern-day antitype of unfaithful Jerusalem, namely, Christendom, and out of all of Babylon the Great, the worldwide system of false religion.—Revelation 18:4.

<sup>17</sup> Remember, too, that in the first century, when the Roman army with its idolatrous standards made its way into the holy city of the Jews, it was there to bring desolation to Jerusalem and its system of

14, 15. In what way did the League and later the United Nations come to be “in a holy place”?

16. Out of what do lovers of righteousness need to flee today?

17, 18. What desolation will the modern-day “disgusting thing” cause?

worship. In our day the desolation is going to come, not merely upon one city, nor only upon Christendom, but upon the entire worldwide system of false religion.—Revelation 18:5-8.

<sup>18</sup> At Revelation 17:16, it is foretold that a figurative scarlet-colored wild beast, which has proved to be the United Nations, will turn on harlotlike Babylon the Great and violently destroy her. Using graphic language, it says: “The ten horns that you saw, and the wild beast, these will hate the harlot and will make her devastated and naked, and will eat up her fleshy parts and will completely burn her with fire.” What this will mean is awesome to contemplate. It will result in the end of false religion of every kind in all parts of the earth. This will indeed show that the great tribulation has begun.

<sup>19</sup> It is noteworthy that since the United Nations began operations in 1945, atheistic, antireligion elements have been prominent in its membership. At various times all over the world, such radical elements have been instrumental in having religious practices either severely restricted or completely banned. In the past few years, however, there has been a letup in many places in government pressure on religious groups. To some people it may seem that any danger to religion is gone.

<sup>20</sup> The religions of Babylon the Great continue to be a violently disruptive force in the world. News headlines frequently identify warring factions and terrorist groups by naming the religion that they espouse. Riot police and soldiers have had to force their way into temples to stop violence between rival religious factions. Religious bodies

19. What elements have been part of the United Nations since its formation, and why is this significant?

20. What sort of reputation have the world's religions made for themselves?

have financed political revolution. Religious hatred has frustrated efforts by the United Nations to maintain stable relations between ethnic groups. In pursuing the goal of peace and security, elements within the United Nations would like to see the elimination of any religious influence that stands in their way.

<sup>21</sup> There is also another important factor to consider. Although the militarized horns from within the United Nations will be used to destroy Babylon the Great, that destruction will really be an expression of divine judgment. The execution of judgment will come at God's appointed time. (Revelation 17:17) What should we do in the meantime? “Get out of her”—get out of Babylon the Great—the Bible answers.—Revelation 18:4.

<sup>22</sup> This flight to safety is not a geographic move, such as Jewish Christians made when abandoning Jerusalem. It is a flight out of the religions of Christendom, yes, out of any part of Babylon the Great. It means completely separating oneself not only from false religious organizations but also from their customs and the spirit they engender. It is a flight to the place of safety within Jehovah's theocratic organization.—Ephesians 5:7-11.

<sup>23</sup> When Jehovah's anointed servants first identified the modern-day disgusting thing, the League of Nations, after World War I, how did the Witnesses react? They had already severed their memberships with the churches of Christendom. But they gradually realized that they were still clinging to some of Christendom's customs and practices, such as the use of the cross and the celebration of Christmas and other pa-

21. (a) Who will determine when Babylon the Great is to be destroyed? (b) What is it urgent to do before then?

22, 23. What does such a flight involve?

gan holidays. When they learned the truth about these things, they acted promptly. They took to heart the counsel at Isaiah 52: 11: "Turn away, turn away, get out of there, touch nothing unclean; get out from the midst of her, keep yourselves clean, you who are carrying the utensils of Jehovah."

<sup>24</sup> Especially from 1935 on, a growing crowd of others, people who embraced the prospect of living forever on a paradise earth, began to take similar action. They too have 'caught sight of the disgusting thing standing in a holy place,' and they recognize what it means. After making their decision to flee, they have had their names removed from membership rolls of organizations that are part of Babylon the Great.—2 Corinthians 6:14-17.

<sup>25</sup> However, fleeing out of Babylon the Great involves much more than abandoning false religion. There is more to it than attending a few meetings at a Kingdom Hall or going out preaching the good news in field service once or twice a month. A person may be physically outside of Babylon the Great, but has he truly left it behind? Has he separated himself from the world

24. Especially since 1935, who have joined in the flight?

25. What is required in addition to breaking off any ties that a person may have with false religion?

### Do You Remember?

- What is the modern-day "disgusting thing"?
- In what sense is "the disgusting thing . . . in a holy place"?
- What is involved in flight to safety now?
- Why is such action urgent?

of which Babylon the Great is a prominent part? Does he still cling to those things that reflect its spirit—a spirit that flouts God's righteous standards? Is he treating sexual morality and marital faithfulness lightly? Does he emphasize personal and material interests more than spiritual interests? He must not allow himself to be fashioned after this system of things.—Matthew 6:24; 1 Peter 4:3, 4.

### Let Nothing Impede Your Flight!

<sup>26</sup> In our flight to safety, it is imperative that we do not look longingly at the things behind. (Luke 9:62) We need to keep our minds and hearts fixed firmly on God's Kingdom and his righteousness. Are we determined to demonstrate our faith by seeking these first, with confidence that Jehovah will bless such a faithful course? (Matthew 6:31-33) Our Scripturally based convictions should incite us to that end as we eagerly await the unfolding of significant developments on the world scene.

<sup>27</sup> The execution of divine judgment will start with the destruction of Babylon the Great. That harlotlike empire of false religion will be forever blotted out of existence. That time is very near! What will be our position as individuals when that momentous time arrives? And at the climax of the great tribulation, when the rest of Satan's wicked system is destroyed, on which side will we be found? If we take the needed action now, our safety is ensured. Jehovah tells us: "As for the one listening to me, he will reside in security." (Proverbs 1:33) By continuing to serve Jehovah loyally and joyfully during this system's conclusion, we may qualify to serve Jehovah forever.

26. What will help us not merely to start the flight but to complete it successfully?

27. Why is it important to think seriously about the questions asked here?

# JEHOVAH PROVED TO BE WITH ME

AS TOLD BY MAX HENNING

It was 1933, and Adolf Hitler had just come to power in Germany.

However, the some 500 Jehovah's Witnesses in the Berlin area did not waver. Many young folk became pioneers, or full-time ministers, and some even accepted assignments to other European countries. My friend Werner Flatten and I used to ask each other: "Why do we just stand around wasting our time? Why don't we get out there and pioneer?"

**E**IIGHT days after my birth in 1909, I came under the care of loving foster parents. In 1918 our family was crushed when my little foster sister died suddenly. Shortly thereafter the Bible Students, as Jehovah's Witnesses were then known, called at our door, and the hearts of my foster parents opened wide to accept Bible truth. They also taught me to appreciate spiritual things.

I applied myself to secular schooling and became a plumber. But more important, I took my stand spiritually. Werner and I started pioneering on May 5, 1933. We would bike to a town about 60 miles out of Berlin, where we stayed and preached for two weeks. Then we returned to Berlin to care for necessary matters. Afterward we went back to our preaching territory for another two weeks.

We applied to serve in another country, and in December 1933 we received an assignment to what was then Yugoslavia. However, before we could leave, our assignment was changed to Utrecht in the Netherlands. Shortly afterward I was baptized.

In those days less emphasis was placed on baptism; the ministry was the important thing. Reliance on Jehovah now became a constant feature in my life. I found much comfort in the words of the Bible psalmist: "Look! God is my helper; Jehovah is among those supporting my soul."—Psalm 54:4.

## Pioneering in the Netherlands

Not long after arriving in the Netherlands, we were reassigned to the city of Rotterdam. The father and a son in the family with whom we stayed were also pioneers. A few months later, a big house in Leersum, a town not far from Utrecht, was purchased as a residence for pioneers, and Werner and I moved there.

While living in that pioneer home, we traveled by bicycle to territories nearby and used a seven-passenger car for territories farther out. At the time, there were only a hundred Witnesses in all the Netherlands. Today, 60 years later, the territory that we worked from that pioneer home has more than 4,000 publishers in about 50 congregations!

We worked hard, up to 14 hours in the ministry each day, and that kept us happy. A chief aim was to place as much literature as possible. We commonly left more than a hundred booklets a day with interested ones. Making return visits and conducting Bible studies was as yet not a part of our regular activity.

One day my partner and I were working in the town of Vreeswijk. While he was giving a witness to a man at the gate of a military fort, I used the time to read my Bible. It was copiously underlined in red and blue. Later, a carpenter who had been working on a nearby roof warned the man at the gate that I was probably some kind of spy. As a result, that same day I was arrested while witnessing to a storekeeper, and my Bible was confiscated.

I was taken to court. There it was charged that the marks in my Bible were an effort to make a drawing of the fort. I was declared guilty, and the judge sentenced me to two years in prison. However, the case was appealed, and I was acquitted. How happy I was to be free, but I was even happier when my Bible with all its notes was returned!

During the summer of 1936, Richard Brauning, one of the pioneers in the home, and I spent the summer preaching in the north of the country. The first month, we spent 240 hours in the ministry and placed large quantities of literature. We lived in a tent and cared for all our own needs, doing our own laundry, cooking, and so forth.

Later I was transferred to the boat named *Lightbearer*, which became well-known in the north of the Netherlands. Five pioneers lived on the boat, and from it we were able to reach a lot of isolated territory.

#### **Added Privileges**

In 1938, I was assigned to be a zone servant, as circuit overseers of Jehovah's Wit-

nesses were then called. So I left the *Lightbearer* and began visiting congregations and isolated Witnesses in three southern provinces.

The bicycle was our only means of transportation. It often took a whole day to travel from one congregation or group of interested ones to the next. Among the cities I visited was Breda, where I now live. At the time, Breda had no congregation and just one elderly Witness couple.

While serving the brothers in Limburg, I was invited to answer many questions propounded by a mine worker named Johan Pieper. He took a firm stand for Bible truth and became a courageous preacher. Four years later he landed in a concentration camp, where he spent three and a half years. After his release he zealously took up preaching again, and today he is still a faithful elder. That small congregation of 12 Witnesses in Limburg has now grown to 17 congregations with some 1,550 publishers!

#### **Under the Nazi Heel**

In May 1940 the Nazis invaded the Netherlands. I received an assignment to the Watch Tower Society's branch office in Amsterdam. We had to carry on our work with extreme caution, which made us appreciate the Bible proverb: "A true companion . . . is

## **In Our Next Issue**

**What Does It Mean to Love God?**

**Blessings or Maledictions  
—There Is a Choice!**

**"Recognize Men of That Sort"**

a brother that is born for when there is distress." (Proverbs 17:17) The sweet bond of unity that thrived during this time of stress had a profound effect on my spiritual development, and it conditioned me for the still more difficult days ahead.

My assignment was to oversee the delivery of literature to the congregations, which was usually done by couriers. The Gestapo was constantly looking for young men to work as forced laborers in Germany, so we used Christian sisters as couriers. In time Wilhelmina Bakker, always known as Nonnie, was sent to us from The Hague, and I took her to where our branch overseer, Arthur Winkler, was hiding. To try to be as inconspicuous as possible, I dressed up as a Dutch farmer, wooden shoes and all, and escorted Nonnie by streetcar. Later I learned that she had a hard time holding back from laughing, since she felt I was anything but inconspicuous.

On October 21, 1941, the storage place for literature and paper in Amsterdam was betrayed to the enemy. During the Gestapo raid, Winkler and Nonnie were arrested. When they were handed over to prison, they overheard two Gestapo agents talking about how they had been chasing "a small dark-haired fellow" whom they lost track of in the crowded streets. It was obvious they were talking about me, so Winkler managed to get a message out to the brothers. Immediately, I was moved to The Hague.

In the meantime Nonnie was released from prison, and she returned to The Hague to pioneer. There I met her again. But when the congregation servant in Rotterdam was arrested, I was sent to take his place. Later the congregation servant in the Gouda Congregation was arrested, and I was moved there to replace him. Finally, on March 29, 1943, I was caught. While I was checking

our stock of Bible literature, I was surprised by a Gestapo raid.

Besides the Bible literature spread out on a table, there was also a list of names of Christian brothers and sisters, although these were in coded form. In anguish, I prayed that Jehovah would provide a way for me to protect those who were still free to preach. Without being detected, I managed to place my open hand atop the list of names and rumple it up inside my palm. Then I asked permission to go to the toilet, where I shredded the list and flushed it down.

When in such dire straits, I learned to draw strength from Jehovah's dealings with his people in the past and from his promises of deliverance. This is one inspired assurance that has always stuck in my mind: "Had it not been that Jehovah proved to be for us when men rose up against us, then they would have swallowed us up even alive."—Psalm 124:2, 3.

### Prisons and Concentration Camps

I was taken to the Rotterdam prison, where I was thankful to have my Bible with me. I also had the book *Salvation*, portions of the book *Children*, and plenty of time to read all this literature. After six months I took seriously ill and had to go to a hospital. Before I left the prison, I hid the literature under my mattress. Later I learned that another Witness, Piet Broertjes, was transferred to my cell and discovered it. Thus the literature was being used to strengthen still others in the faith.

When I recovered I was transferred to a prison in The Hague. While there I met Leo C. van der Tas, a law student who was in prison for resisting the Nazi occupation. He had never heard of Jehovah's Witnesses, and I had opportunity to witness to him. Sometimes he would wake me up in the



**Standing next to the tent used while pioneering in the 1930's**

middle of the night and ask questions. He could not hide his admiration for the Witnesses, especially after learning that we could be released if we would only sign a document renouncing our faith. After the war, Leo became a lawyer and fought dozens of legal cases for the Watch Tower Society that involved freedom of worship.

On April 29, 1944, I was loaded onto a train for an agonizing 18-day journey to Germany. On May 18 the gates of the Buchenwald concentration camp closed behind me. Until we were liberated by the Allied forces nearly a year later, life was indescribably horrible. Thousands died, many before our eyes. Since I refused to work in a nearby factory that produced war materials, I was put to work on a sewer.



**The boat used to reach isolated territory**



**Being interviewed on convention program in 1957**

One day the factory was bombed. Many dashed into the barracks for safety, while others ran into the woods. Stray bombs hit the barracks, and incendiary bombs set the woods on fire. It was a terrible sight! Many were burned alive! I had found a safe hiding place, and when the fire subsided, I walked past the countless dead bodies back to the camp.

Most people today are aware of the horrors of the Nazi Holocaust. I am thankful to Jehovah that he strengthened my thinking ability, so that the horrors that I experienced have not dominated my thoughts throughout the years. When I think of my period of imprisonment, my foremost feeling is that of joy for having kept integrity to Jehovah to the glory of his name.—Psalm 124:6-8.



### With my wife today

sis for a whole year. My body was sapped of strength, but my pioneer spirit was still strong. During my illness, I grasped every opportunity to witness. I feel that this pioneer spirit was an important factor in not allowing my cases of illness to turn me into an idle sick man. Nonnie and I are determined to stick to the full-time service for as long as our health permits.

Following my recovery, we were assigned to the city of Breda. This was 21 years after I had first visited the city as a zone servant. When we arrived in 1959, there was a small congregation of 34 Witnesses. Today, 37 years later, it has grown to six congregations with over 500 Witnesses, who meet in three Kingdom Halls! At our local meetings and at assemblies, we see many who came to a knowledge of Bible truth as a result of some efforts of ours. We often feel as did the apostle John when he wrote: "No greater cause for thankfulness do I have than these things, that I should be hearing that my children go on walking in the truth." —3 John 4.

We have now grown old. I am 86, and Nonnie is 78, but I must say that pioneering is a healthy occupation. Since I have been in Breda, I have overcome most of the health problems that I picked up during my imprisonment. I have also enjoyed many productive years in Jehovah's service.

Looking back over many years of fruitful service is a source of joy to both of us. Our daily prayer is that Jehovah will give us the spirit and the strength to continue in his service as long as there is breath in our bodies. Confidently, we express ourselves in the words of the psalmist: "Look! God is my helper; Jehovah is among those supporting my soul." —Psalm 54:4.

### Postwar Activity

After my liberation and return to Amsterdam, I reported directly to the branch office for an assignment. I was anxious to be brought up-to-date on what had taken place during my absence. Nonnie was already working there. During the last year of the war, she had served as a courier delivering Bible literature to the congregations. She had not been arrested again, although she had experienced dozens of narrow escapes.

I pioneered a short while in Haarlem, but in 1946, I was asked to go to the branch in Amsterdam to work in the Shipping Department. Toward the end of 1948, Nonnie and I were married, and we left the branch to pioneer together. Our pioneer assignment was in Assen. Twelve years earlier Richard Brauning and I had spent the summer there, living in a tent and preaching. I learned that Richard had been shot to death en route to a concentration camp.

My period of imprisonment had obviously impaired my health. Six years after being released from Buchenwald, sickness confined me to bed for four months. Years later, in 1957, I was laid low by tuberculo-

# GILEAD SCHOOL

## *sends out its 100th class*

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THE Watchtower Bible School of Gilead has played an important role in the global proclamation of God's Kingdom in modern times. Since Gilead School began training missionaries in 1943, its graduates have served in upwards of 200 lands. On March 2, 1996, the 100th class graduated.

The students had attended school during a period when well over six feet of snow had fallen in the area of the Watchtower Educational Center at Patterson, New York. Not surprisingly, snow was falling on their graduation day. Nevertheless, the auditorium was full, and overflow audiences listened at Patterson, Wallkill, and Brooklyn—2,878 persons in all.

Theodore Jaracz, a member of the Teaching Committee of the Governing Body, served as chairman. After a warm welcome to the guests present from many lands, he invited all to stand and sing song number 52. The auditorium reverberated with praise to Jehovah as they sang "Our Father's Name," from the book *Sing Praises to Jehovah*. That song, coupled with the chairman's remarks about using education to praise Jehovah, set the tone for the program that would follow.

### **Scriptural Counsel From Older Men**

The first part of the program was made up of short talks to the graduating class by a number of longtime servants of Jehovah. Richard Abrahamson, a member of the headquarters staff who began his full-time

service in 1940, urged the class: "Continue to Be Readjusted." He reminded them that they had already experienced various periods of readjustment in their lives as Christians, including their five months of schooling at Gilead. So why should they continue to be readjusted?

The speaker explained that the expression used by the apostle Paul at 2 Corinthians 13:11 "implies a progressive process, a continued submitting to Jehovah's forming or refining of one, a fine-tuning, so that one meets the more exacting standards of Jehovah." In their foreign assignments, the graduating class would face new challenges to their faith. They would need to learn a new language, adjust to a different culture and living conditions, and adapt to different types of territory. They also would be dealing with different personalities in their missionary homes and in their new congregations. If they would carefully apply Bible principles to all these situations, with a willingness to be readjusted, then, as the apostle Paul wrote, they could also "continue to rejoice."

John Barr, one of the five members of the Governing Body who shared in the program, took his theme from 1 Corinthians 4:9. He reminded his hearers that Christians are a spectacle to angels and to men. "Knowing this," he said, "greatly adds to the importance of a Christian's course in life, especially so when he realizes that by what he says and what he does, he can have



### 100th Graduating Class of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead

In the list below, rows are numbered from front to back, and names are listed from left to right in each row.

- (1) Shirley, M.; Grundström, M.; Genardini, D.; Giaimo, J.; Shood, W.; Phair, P.; Buchanan, C.; Robinson, D.
- (2) Pine, C.; Kraus, B.; Racicot, T.; Hansen, A.; Beets, T.; Berg, J.; Garcia, N.; Fleming, K.
- (3) Whinery, L.; Whinery, L.; Harps, C.; Giaimo, C.; Berg, T.; Mann, C.; Berrios, V.; Pfeifer, C.
- (4) Randall, L.; Genardini, S.; Kraus, H.; Fleming, R.; D'Abadie, S.; Shirley, T.; Stevenson, G.; Buchanan, B.
- (5) Robinson, T.; Garcia, J.; Harps, P.; Racicot, D.; D'Abadie, F.; Phair, M.; Stevenson, G.; Shood, D.
- (6) Beets, L.; Pfeifer, A.; Berrios, M.; Pine, J.; Mann, L.; Randall, P.; Grundström, J.; Hansen, G.

a marked effect on those who are watching, unseen as well as seen. I believe that this is something that it would be very well for all of you dear brothers and sisters of the 100th class of Gilead to remember as you go away to the far-flung corners of the earth."

Brother Barr urged the 48 students to keep in mind, as they help sheeplike ones to learn the truth, that "joy arises among

the angels of God over one sinner that repents." (Luke 15:10) Referring to 1 Corinthians 11:10, he showed that one's attitude regarding theocratic arrangements affects not only our brothers and sisters whom we see but also the angels whom we do not see. How beneficial it is to keep this larger picture in mind!

Another member of the Governing Body, Gerrit Lösch, himself a graduate of Gilead

School, discussed such scriptures as Psalm 125:1, 2; Zechariah 2:4, 5; and Psalm 71: 21 to show that Jehovah 'surrounds his people.' He provides protection for them on every side. Will God provide such protection only during the great tribulation? "No," answered the speaker, "for Jehovah is already a 'wall of fire,' a protection to his people. The postwar year of 1919 found the remnant of spiritual Israel eagerly desiring to preach the good news of the Kingdom worldwide as a witness to all the nations. They were representatives of the figurative Jerusalem in the heavens. Jehovah guarantees divine protection of these representatives as a group during the time of the end. Who then can effectively stop them? Nobody." How reassuring to them and to all who closely associate with them in doing the divine will!

Ulysses Glass, the senior member of the school faculty, encouraged the class to 'finish carving out their niche in Jehovah's worldwide organization.' A niche is a situation or an activity specially suited to a person's abilities or character. "You prospective missionaries have found your niche in the worldwide organization of Jehovah's Witnesses," he declared. "But, valuable as it is now, this is only the beginning of your life as a missionary." They would need to apply themselves to use well their abilities and to fit into the special assignments that Jehovah and his organization were giving them.

The final talk in this part of the program was given by Wallace Liverance, a member of the Gilead faculty who served for 17 years in Bolivia. "Will you put God to the test?" he asked the student body. How should they do it? The nation of Israel put God to the test in the wrong way. (Deuteronomy 6:16) "Obviously, putting God to

the test by complaining or murmuring or perhaps by showing a lack of faith in his way of handling matters is wrong," stated the speaker. "When you arrive in your new assignment, resist that inclination," he urged. What, then, is the right way to put God to the test? "It is by taking him at his word, by doing exactly what he says, and then leaving the outcome in his hands," Brother Liverance explained. As seen at Malachi 3:10, Jehovah invites his people: "Test me out, please." He promised that if they faithfully brought their tenth parts into the temple storehouse, he would bless them. "Why not view your missionary assignment in a similar way?" the speaker asked. "Jehovah wants you to be successful at it, so put him to the test. Stick to your assignment. Make the adjustments he wants you to make. Endure. See if he will not bless you." What fine advice for all who are serving Jehovah!

After a song the program changed from discourses to a series of delightful interviews.

#### Class Statistics:

**Number of countries represented:**

8

**Number of countries assigned to:**

17

**Number of students:**

48

**Average age:**

33.75

**Average years in truth:**

17.31

**Average years in full-time ministry:**

12.06

## **Practical Expressions From the Field**

Mark Noumair, a new member of the Gilead faculty, invited the students to relate experiences that they had had in the field ministry while attending the school. These highlighted the value of showing initiative in the ministry and gave the audience practical ideas that they could use.

During their school term, students in this Gilead class were especially benefited by being able to associate with Branch Committee members from 42 lands, who were also at the Patterson Educational Center for special training. Many of them had graduated from Gilead years earlier. On the program, interviews were conducted with representatives from the 3rd, 5th, 51st, and 92nd classes, as well as from the Gilead Extension School in Germany. How beneficial their comments were!

They told how missionaries have felt as they have seen the number of praisers of Jehovah in their assignments increase from a handful to tens of thousands. They told of the share that they have had in carrying the good news to scattered dwellings in the Andes Mountains and villages at the headwaters of the Amazon River. They discussed witnessing to illiterate people. They told about their own struggle to learn new languages and what the graduates could realistically expect as to how soon they would be able to witness and to give talks in a language such as Chinese. They even demonstrated sample presentations in Spanish and in Chinese. They emphasized that missionaries are most effective when they learn not only the language but also the thinking of the people. They told about the often harsh living conditions in poor lands and stated: "Missionaries should recognize that this situation often has to do with exploitation. A mis-

sionary does best if he feels as Jesus did—he had pity for the people, who were like sheep without a shepherd."

After a song the program continued with a discourse by A. D. Schroeder, a member of the Governing Body. He was privileged to be one of the original instructors at Gilead School when it opened in 1943. As a fitting finale to the program, he discussed the subject "Hailing Jehovah as Sovereign Lord." Brother Schroeder's absorbing discussion of the 24th Psalm impressed all in attendance with just how grand a privilege it is to hail Jehovah as Sovereign Lord.

After distribution of the diplomas, and a final song, Karl Klein of the Governing Body concluded with heartfelt prayer. What a practical and spiritually refreshing program it was!

In the days after the graduation, the 48 members of the 100th class began to move out to missionary assignments in 17 lands. But they were not just beginning their ministry. They already had a solid record of full-time Christian ministry. When they enrolled in Gilead, they were, on an average, 33 years of age and had devoted over 12 years to the full-time ministry. Some of them had been members of the Watch Tower Society's global Bethel family. Others had served as traveling overseers. A number of the students had already shared in some form of foreign service—in Africa, Europe, South America, the islands of the sea, and among foreign-language groups in their home countries. But now they are joining the many other missionaries who have been delighted to be able to say, 'We will serve anywhere in the world where we are needed.' Their heartfelt desire is to use their lives to magnify Jehovah.



## Casiodoro de Reina's Fight for a Spanish Bible

SIXTEENTH-CENTURY Spain was a dangerous place to read the Bible. The Catholic Church had instructed the Inquisition to snuff out the slightest flicker of unorthodoxy. But there was a young man in southern Spain who not only read the Scriptures but also vowed to translate them into the vernacular so that every Spaniard could read them. His name was Casiodoro de Reina.

Reina's interest in the Bible was aroused during the years he spent in the monastery of San Isidro del Campo, on the outskirts of Seville, Spain. During the 1550's, the majority of the monks at this extraordinary monastery spent more hours reading the Scriptures than attending to their

canonical duties. And the Bible's message changed their thinking. They rejected Catholic doctrine regarding the use of images and belief in purgatory. Inevitably, their views became known in the area, and fearing arrest by the Spanish Inquisition, they decided to flee abroad. Reina was one of the 12 who succeeded in escaping to Geneva, Switzerland.

After that narrow escape, he journeyed from one European city to another, somehow managing to keep one step ahead of his persecutors. In 1562 the frustrated inquisitors burned his effigy in Seville, but even that brutal threat did not make Reina flinch from his task of translating the Scriptures. Despite having a price on

his head and living in constant fear of arrest, he worked incessantly on his Spanish translation. "Except for the time that I was sick or traveling, . . . the pen never left my hand," he explained.

Within ten years Reina completed the job. In 1569 his translation of the entire Bible was published in Basel, Switzerland. This outstanding work was the first complete Spanish translation made from the original languages. For centuries Latin Bibles had been available, but Latin was the language of the elite. Reina believed that the Bible should be understood by everyone, and he risked his life in the furtherance of that goal.

In the introduction to his translation, he explained his reasons. "To prohibit the Holy Scriptures in the common language inevitably does singular insult to God and harm to the welfare of men. This is the plain work of Satan and those whom he controls. . . . Seeing that God gave his Word to men, desiring that it be understood and be put into practice by all, he who would prohibit it in any language whatsoever cannot have a good motive."

This statement was a bold one, coming as it did just 18 years after the Index of the Spanish Inquisition had specifically outlawed the Bible "in Castilian romance [Spanish] or in any other vulgar tongue." Clearly, Reina did not allow fear of man to bridle his love for the truth.

Apart from having a keen desire to make the Bible accessible to all Spanish-speaking people, Reina also wanted to produce the most accurate translation possible. In his introduction, he expounded the advantages of translating directly from the original languages. Some errors had crept into the Latin text of the Vulgate, Reina explained. One of the most glaring of these was the elimination of the divine name.

### The Divine Name in Spanish Translations

Reina realized that God's name, Jehovah, should appear in any conscientious translation of the Bible, as it does in the original text. He refused to follow the custom of replacing the divine name with such titles as "God" or "Lord." In the preface to his translation, he explained his reasons with typical directness.

"We have preserved the name (*Iehoua*), not without the most weighty reasons. First, because wherever it may be found in our version, it is likewise found in the Hebrew text, and it seemed to us that we could not omit it or change it without committing unfaithfulness and sacrilege toward God's law, which commands that nothing be removed or added. . . . The custom [of omitting the name], perpetrated by the Devil, arose from a superstition of modern rabbis who, although claiming to revere it, in fact buried His holy name, making God's people forget that by which he wished to be distinguished from all other . . . gods."

Reina's laudable desire to magnify God's name had far-reaching consequences. Down to our day, the vast majority of Spanish translations—both Catholic and Protestant—have followed this precedent, using the divine name throughout. Largely thanks to Reina, readers of almost any Spanish translation of the Bible can readily discern that God has a personal name that distinguishes him from all other gods.

Noteworthy is the fact that Jehovah's name in Hebrew is clearly visible on the title page of Reina's Bible. Reina devoted his life to the noble cause of preserving God's Word, making it available in a language that millions could read.

## QUESTIONS FROM READERS



Earth: Based on NASA photo

**We sometimes hear brothers speak of or pray for God's Kingdom to come to the earth. Is this a correct expression?**

Strictly speaking, it is not a Scriptural way of expressing things. God's Kingdom is heavenly. Thus, the apostle Paul could write: "The Lord will deliver me from every wicked work and will save me for his heavenly kingdom. To him be the glory forever and ever. Amen." —2 Timothy 4:18; Matthew 13:44; 1 Corinthians 15:50.

The Kingdom was established in heaven in 1914, and it will never be transferred to the restored earthly Paradise or elsewhere. Jesus Christ is King of the Kingdom. As King, Jesus has authority over the angels. Hence, his proper place of rulership is at God's right hand in the heavens. Anointed Christians join him as kings and priests in heaven. —Ephesians 1:19-21; Revelation 5:9, 10; 20:6.

Does this mean, then, that we should no longer express to God the petitions found in the part of the Lord's Prayer that says: "Let your kingdom come. Let your will take place, as in heaven, also

upon earth"? (Matthew 6:10) On the contrary, that prayer is proper and is still full of meaning.

God's Kingdom will yet act in a decisive way toward this earth, and this is what we have in mind when we pray and use expressions similar to the wording of the Lord's Prayer. For example, Daniel 2:44 foretells that the Kingdom will "come" to destroy all the nations and will take over the rulership of this earth. Revelation 21:2 speaks of New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven. New Jerusalem is made up of the 144,000 anointed Christians who will be the bride of Christ. They are also joint heirs with Jesus in the Kingdom. So Revelation 21:2 describes their turning attention to the earth, with great blessings resulting to faithful mankind.—Revelation 21:3, 4.

Until these and other wonderful prophecies are fulfilled, it will continue to be proper to pray to Jehovah God in line with Jesus' words, "Let your kingdom come." But we should bear in mind that the Kingdom will not come to the planet Earth in a literal sense. The Kingdom government resides in heaven, not on earth.

# YOU WILL NOT WANT TO MISS IT!



**M**ISS what? The fast-approaching "Messengers of Godly Peace" District Convention of Jehovah's Witnesses! In most places the convention will begin at 9:30 Friday morning with a musical program. After listening to faith-strengthening interviews during the part "Hearing From Zealous Proclaimers of Peace," you will enjoy the encouraging talk "What Does God Require of Us?"

A highlight on Friday afternoon will be the stirring keynote address "Our Role as Messengers of Godly Peace." Then the part "Helping Others to Learn God's Requirements" will offer suggestions on teaching new ones. This will be followed by the timely symposium "Watch Out for the Hidden Snares of Entertainment." Friday's program will conclude with the talks "Oppose the Devil—Tolerate No Rivalry" and "Loyally Upholding the Integrity of God's Word."

Saturday morning's program will stress the importance of the disciple-making work in the three-part symposium "Messengers Bringing Good News of Peace." The session will conclude with the discourses "Cheerful Giving Within Jehovah's Organization" and "Life and Peace Through Dedication and Baptism," after which there will be opportunity for new disciples to be baptized.

At noon, the main program will begin with a series of inspiring talks. These include "The Kingdom of God—A Bright Future," "How to Live a Christian Life," "How to Study the Bible," "How to Witness Effectively," and "How to Share Your Faith with Nonbelievers."

Saturday afternoon's presentation "Consider Jehovah's Thoughts on Matters" will answer such questions as 'Are Christians sharing in a separating work today?' and 'What is the Bible's view of capital punishment?' You will also enjoy the heartwarming two-part symposium "The God of Peace Cares for You" and especially the concluding talk "Pursue Godly Peace in Family Life."

Sunday morning's program will include the three-part symposium "Identifying the Right Kind of Messengers" and the talk "Listen to and Obey God's Word." The morning program will conclude with a full-costume drama that will draw valuable lessons from the Bible account of Judge Gideon.

The convention's final session on Sunday afternoon will feature the public discourse, entitled "True Peace At Last!—From What Source?" Finally, the motivating talk "Moving Forward as Messengers of Godly Peace" will bring the convention to a close.

Make plans now to attend. To find the location nearest your home, contact the local Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses or write to the publishers of this magazine. The June 8 issue of *Awake!* will list the addresses of all convention locations in the United States, Canada, Britain, and Ireland.