



The

WATCHTOWER

Announcing
Jehovah's Kingdom

"They shall know that I am Jehovah."

-Ezekiel 35:15.

VOL. LXIX

SEMIMONTHLY

No. 12

JUNE 15, 1948

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"YE ARE MY WITNESSES, SAITH JEHOVAH, THAT I AM GOD."—Isa. 43:12.

The WATCHTOWER

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"And all thy children shall be taught of Jehovah; and great shall be the peace of thy children." - *Isaiah 54:13.*

THE BIBLE CLEARLY TEACHES

THAT JEHOVAH is the only true God, from everlasting to everlasting, and is the Maker of heaven and earth and Giver of life to his creatures; that the Word or Logos was the beginning of his creation and his active agent in creating all other things; and that the creature Lucifer rebelled against Jehovah and raised the issue of His universal sovereignty;

THAT GOD created the earth for man, made perfect man for the earth and placed him upon it; that man yielded to unfaithful Lucifer, or Satan, and willfully disobeyed God's law and was sentenced to death; that by reason of Adam's wrong act all men are born sinners and without the right to life;

THAT THE LOGOS was made human as the man Jesus and suffered death in order to produce the ransom or redemptive price for obedient men; that God raised up Christ Jesus divine and exalted him to heaven above every other creature and clothed him with all power and authority as head of God's new capital organization;

THAT GOD'S CAPITAL ORGANIZATION is a Theocracy called Zion, and that Christ Jesus is the Chief Officer thereof and is the rightful King of the new world; that the faithful anointed followers of Christ Jesus are Zion's children, members of Jehovah's organization, and are His witnesses whose duty and privilege it is to testify to Jehovah's supremacy and declare his purposes toward mankind as expressed in the Bible;

THAT THE OLD WORLD, or Satan's uninterrupted rule, ended A.D. 1914, and Christ Jesus has been placed by Jehovah upon the throne, has ousted Satan from heaven, and now proceeds to vindicate His name and establish the "new earth";

THAT THE RELIEF and blessings of the peoples can come only by Jehovah's kingdom under Christ, which has begun; that His next great act is to destroy Satan's organization and establish righteousness completely in the earth; and that under the Kingdom the people of good-will surviving Armageddon will carry out the divine mandate to "fill the earth" with righteous offspring, and that the human dead in the graves will be raised to opportunities of life on earth.

"NEIGHBOR LOVE" TESTIMONY PERIOD

The June testimony period under the above title touches each professed worshiper of God on the question of whether he loves his neighbor as himself in respect to eternal life. During June, therefore, each one who possibly can will, like the Good Samaritan, get out into the field to bring his neighbors God's provided means for them to gain eternal life. The special offer to aid them in studying the Bible will be two WATCH TOWER products, namely, the book "Let God Be True" and the booklet *The Joy of All the People*, on a contribution of 35c for the combination. Neighbor-loving Christians throughout the earth will all unite during June in special efforts to help others to eternal life. Will you be one? You can be, you who read this magazine. If necessary, write us to put you in touch with your neighbors who will be glad to have you lovingly work with them in the field. Arrange, also, to make a report at the end of June on what you accomplish.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES

Week of July 25: "Advance to Maturity or Relapse into Sin, Which?"

¶ 1-20 inclusive, *The Watchtower* June 15, 1948.

Week of August 1: "Advance to Maturity or Relapse into Sin, Which?"

¶ 21-27 inclusive, also "Abusive Speech Against the Holy Spirit Deadly,"

¶ 1-12 inclusive, *The Watchtower* June 15, 1948.

ITS MISSION

THIS journal is published for the purpose of enabling the people to know Jehovah God and his purposes as expressed in the Bible. It publishes Bible instruction specifically designed to aid Jehovah's witnesses and all people of good-will. It arranges systematic Bible study for its readers and the Society supplies other literature to aid in such studies. It publishes suitable material for radio broadcasting and for other means of public instruction in the Scriptures.

It adheres strictly to the Bible as authority for its utterances. It is entirely free and separate from all religion, parties, sects or other worldly organizations. It is wholly and without reservation for the kingdom of Jehovah God under Christ his beloved King. It is not dogmatic, but invites careful and critical examination of its contents in the light of the Scriptures. It does not indulge in controversy, and its columns are not open to personalities.

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ALL SINCERE STUDENTS OF THE BIBLE who by reason of infirmity, poverty or adversity are unable to pay the subscription price may have *The Watchtower* free upon written application to the publishers, made once each year, stating the reason for so requesting it. We are glad to thus aid the needy, but the written application once each year is required by the postal regulations.

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"PERMANENT GOVERNOR OF ALL NATIONS"

Scientific advances have shrunk the earth till nations on opposite sides of the globe are as next-door neighbors. But the work of making them good neighbors lags far behind. Men see the need of a world organization able to erase national differences. They seek to meet it with the United Nations. Christendom's clergy join hands with world politicians, bless the United Nations, and hail it as paving the way for God's kingdom. But does it? Does it hail Jehovah as universal sovereign? Or Christ as permanent governor of all nations? Can it ever draft God and Christ into roles in world politics? The Bible and physical facts answer with a resounding No!

This answer, bulwarked with abundant proof, came to large audiences in the United States, England, West Africa and South Africa when the president of the Watchtower Society delivered the lecture entitled "Permanent Governor of All Nations". Now it comes to a much larger reading public in booklet form, with a first edition of 5,000,000 to launch a world-wide distribution campaign. You will thrill as you read of Jehovah's purpose for this earth, how its inhabitants will be united under a perfect and permanent governor, and how blessings defying description will shower down unendingly. Obtain and read your personal copy of the 32-page booklet *Permanent Governor of All Nations*, on a 5c contribution. Better still, show love for your neighbor by obtaining extra copies to present to your friends. Fifteen copies are sent on a 50c contribution, 30 copies on \$1 contribution.

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ADVANCE TO MATURITY OR RELAPSE INTO SIN, WHICH?

"Let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation."—Heb. 6:1.

JEHOVAH God has much to reveal to us about his kingdom, under which his will shall be done in earth as it is done in heaven. For more than four thousand years he caused prophecies to be uttered and recorded under inspiration concerning that kingdom. Thus much that needs explanation has been spoken and written upon the subject. Much prophecy has been fulfilled in our day, and much is yet due to be fulfilled. During the thousands of years past knowledge has advanced, and it has been a question of keeping up with it. Particularly in this twentieth century it is a matter of vital importance to keep up with the fulfillment of prophecy and the unfolding of God's Word. All signs indicate we have reached the "time of the end" of the nations, which fact makes this the period when we must studiously run to and fro through the pages of the Holy Bible, that our knowledge and understanding of its contents may be increased. The divine prophecy, at Daniel 12:4, said many things would be sealed shut to human knowledge until the present "time of the end". The due time having arrived, it is now our privilege to run to and fro at the right source of information and to share in the foretold increase of knowledge. It is most advisable for us to do so, for very sad consequences are certain to follow if we willfully refuse to keep up with advancing knowledge. Not only do we get behind and become backward, but serious sins are possible by us through ignorance, especially willful ignorance. People's resistance to learning has led to enormous sin.

² Nothing is of higher importance than God's kingdom. It deserves our study, and nothing is of greater value than a clear knowledge of it. About A.D. 61 a great preacher wrote to Hebrews who had interested themselves in the latest developments regarding the Kingdom. This preacher, the apostle Paul, wrote them about the exalted Son of God who had been called and chosen of God to be the King. By an oath Jehovah God had sworn him into that royal position. He was not only a King but also a High Priest of the Most High God. In this respect he was like Melchizedek, the king of Salem in the twentieth century B.C.,

who was a priest upon his throne. Melchizedek, in fact, foreshadowed the Son of God, Jesus Christ, and so God by his sworn oath made his Son a high priest on the style of Melchizedek, or, "after the order of Melchizedek." Paul had much to say about this typical high priest and king, and there were many difficult things to be explained about him so as to understand his prophetic meaning. But the Hebrews were so backward about learning that it delayed the apostle Paul in going into an interpretation of Melchizedek to throw more light upon the kingdom of God.

³ With good reason the apostle wrote: "Melchizedek. Of whom we have many things to say, and hard of interpretation, seeing ye are become dull of hearing. For when by reason of the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need again that some one teach you the rudiments of the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of solid food. For every one that partaketh of milk is without experience of the word of righteousness; for he is a babe. But solid food is for fullgrown men, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern good and evil." (Heb. 5:10-14, *Am. Stan. Ver.*) If those Hebrews had sharpened their ears and had been more keen to learn and understand during the time they had the chance, they might have been preaching and teaching. It would not have been necessary for the apostle Paul to teach them and to use the methods that are used in instructing little children. Instead of liquid food, the solid food suitable for full-grown Christians could have been fed them by Paul from the inspired Hebrew Scriptures. Instead of being like babes, or infants that cannot speak and thus give out information to others, they would have been able to teach and explain God's righteous Word to others seeking knowledge. The trouble with them was, they were inexperienced in handling God's Word. They had not searched it and thought upon it according to the best rules of study. They had not waked their minds up and exercised their mental powers to see the sharp difference between truth and error, between good and evil.

1 How may we now increase knowledge, and why should we?
2. About what king-priest did Paul have much to say, and why?

3. How were the Hebrews to whom Paul wrote like babes, and why?

'It is not God's will for us to remain babes in knowledge. For us to stay babes in this wicked world puts us at a disadvantage. It leaves us quite unable to protect ourselves against the deceptions of the servants of the Wicked One. It leaves us quite useless for spreading the knowledge of God's Word to others. There is an urgent need for us to grow in knowledge. The Word of God was not written for babes, although persons who are babes in knowledge can be taught from his Word by patient teachers. The foundations for knowledge of the truth are in his written Word. But once we have laid the foundations of our knowledge, that is, once we have proved what these foundations are, then we should not be repeatedly laying those foundations and thereby get nowhere with building on top of them the grand structure of a full knowledge and understanding of God's purpose of salvation. If we keep on partaking only of the milk of foundation truths, it will check our mental growth and leave us babes in knowledge that can be rocked to and fro by the hands of the Devil's servants. As babes we cannot enjoy the greater portion of God's Word, which he had written for our complete instruction in what is right and for our protection against what is misleading and injurious.

'It is God's purpose that under the kingdom of his King foreshadowed by Melchizedek all those then babes and children shall grow up to full maturity in body and mind, that thus the paradise earth may be forever full of full-grown men and women, perfect in knowledge and in God's image and likeness. No less is it God's will that all those now Christians on earth shall advance in knowledge to that fullness that befits men of God able to serve him acceptably. In harmony with this the apostle goes on to say: "Wherefore leaving the doctrine of the first principles of Christ, let us press on unto perfection; not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the teaching of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this will we do, if God permit." (Heb. 6:1-3, *Am. Stan. Ver.*) Unless we do what the apostle here says, we cannot understand the perplexing situation in the world today or solve the baffling questions that meet us on every side; we cannot make decisions that are right, meeting God's approval; we cannot keep from being sidetracked into bondage to this old world.

FALLING AWAY

'If we do not advance beyond the first principles of Christ, but childishly linger with the foundation truths of repentance, faith, baptism, begetting by the spirit, resurrection, judgment, etc., there is danger. Of what? A relapse into sin.

'A person who is a babe in knowledge is to that extent weak and can easily relapse. He has some responsibility, for, although a babe in knowledge of Christ, he has received at least some enlightenment. He sees a measure of the light of God's Word and is in the way to see still more glorious things by it. To see such, he must not stand still but advance in the light as to the height of a brilliant noonday. If he refuses to make progress, it denotes a certain willfulness on his part. He does not want to take on the responsibilities that come with greater light and fuller knowledge of God's will and purpose. He is like a person that grows out of childhood but wants to hold onto the playful, carefree irresponsibility of childhood, rebelling against undertaking the heavy responsibilities and duties of manhood. Let us not be that way, but do as Paul, who said: "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I felt as a child, I thought as a child: now that I am become a man, I have put away childish things." —1 Cor. 13:9-11, *Am. Stan. Ver.*

'If we hold on childishly to part knowledge, to elementary things of God's Word, and balk against marching on to perfection of knowledge, it may result in time in something worse than standing still. Such selfish willfulness may end up in falling away. Whether a person likes it or not, he gets left farther and farther behind by the advancing light. He may thus come into a condition from which he cannot be recovered, and which means destruction for him. The apostle warns against this. Why does he say that, if God permits us to progress in knowledge by opening up the meaning of the Scriptures, we will do so? Paul answers: "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the holy [spirit], and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." (Heb. 6:4-6) That is a hopeless state in which to relapse. Why? Because it is the result of one's own choice, although one knows better and is responsible to God for what one does.

'First of all, this one has come into the light that shines from Jehovah God through Jesus Christ. He has therefore emerged from the religious darkness of this present world. In doing so he had to repent of his sinful worldly course and turn from it. In the light he sees what he is doing. He is under the obligation to do right according to the commandments of

4. 5. Why is it not God's will for us to remain babes in knowledge?
6. What is the danger if we do not go beyond first principles?

7. Why does an enlightened person refuse to advance in light?
8. Because of standing still in knowledge, what may befall us?
9. How has the enlightened one tasted of the heavenly gift?

God. He has begun to get a taste of the heavenly gift. What is this gift? Not just Jesus Christ, the beloved Son whom God gave that all believers in him might have everlasting life. It is, rather, what the apostle has in mind when saying, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift." (2 Cor. 9:15) This gift is the sum of all the goodness that God has to give us through Christ, and the repentant person that has been converted from the world has gotten a taste of it. He gets baptized in water to confess openly that he has made a full consecration of himself to God through Christ who died for him.

¹⁰ In Paul's day those who were baptized in water in the presence of any of the twelve apostles had the hands of the apostles laid upon them. They then became partakers of the holy spirit, for by the laying on of apostolic hands the gifts of the holy spirit were imparted to the baptized believers. (Acts 19:1-7; 8:14-19) This meant that God had accepted their consecration and had begotten them by his life-giving spirit and had adopted them as his spiritual children to become joint-heirs with Christ in his kingdom of the new world. God still imparts his spirit to those he accepts.

¹¹ Up till receiving a share in the holy spirit the person consecrating has fed upon God's Word, first the milk of the simple truths or first principles. Now he is ready for the solid food of more advanced truths. With the spirit he gets a penetrating understanding of God's Word. The spirit or active force of God has clarifying powers, and with it the deeper things of God are delved into and uncovered to our understanding. (1 Cor. 2:10) In this way the consecrated, spirit-begotten person tastes more richly how good God's Word is, and how superior it is to all the religious teachings and political propaganda of this old world. He tastes powers which are no part of this world and do not have their source in this world. These powers descend from God through his King Christ Jesus. The King said his kingdom did not belong to this world but was of the new world which God has promised to set up. God and his Christ are both associated with the new world, the world that comes after the present wicked world is destroyed. Therefore powers that come to the enlightened consecrated person from them are powers of the world to come. Since the Kingdom is of the world to come, then if a person is made a preaching and teaching ambassador of that kingdom by means of being anointed with God's spirit it is a power of the world to come. It is an empowering of the consecrated person to act as preacher, teacher and servant for the God and the King of the new world. Also he enjoys the organization of God's people, who are organized, not according to this world, but Theo-

cratically. In all these ways the person tastes what it will be like in the new world. But, caution! he may fall away from all these grand things.

¹² What if a person that has gone so far in his privileges does fall away? It is not for any failure on God's part to give him what he needs to advance closer to perfection. Neither does he fall away because of not knowing the foundation truths concerning faith in God and the Son of God. He knows that Jesus Christ died in order to prove worthy of the throne in the kingdom of God and also to ransom mankind from the sin and death inherited from the first man Adam. He once appreciated all these things, and by his changed course of action he confessed that they are true and right. So now by falling away from his enlightened privileges he willingly goes over to the side of those who nailed Jesus to the tree at Calvary. He falls to the side of those who rejected Jesus as King and who mocked his claim, heaped reproach upon him and exposed him to public contempt. He now assents to their vile treatment of Jesus. Thus for himself he impales Jesus and brings shame upon him. The world, marking his falling away, sees he is rejecting Christ the King whom he once endeavored to follow. This shames Christ in the eyes of the world.

¹³ When he became a Christian he repented because he had been in the darkness of this world and he saw he was a sinner for whom the Son of God died. He was not accountable for his sinful state then, because he had inherited it from Adam. He could repent of that sin and be forgiven through Christ's sacrifice. But now his sin of knowingly falling away to the world and joining in its rejection of the Son of God cannot be laid at Adam's door. It is of his own choice and preference. How, then, could he repent of it? He is not doing it blindly in the dark, but after having been enlightened. For this reason it is impossible to bring him afresh to repentance, and his sin is unforgivable because it cannot be covered by the sin-aton-ing sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Of his own decision he now nails Jesus Christ to the tree, not as a ransom sacrifice, but as the criminal which the world has branded Christ.

THE FATAL HALT

¹⁴ Back to what can the falling away of this relapser into sin be traced? To his being unwilling to continue making due progress in the light and bringing forth the fruit of light. He lets selfishness creep in little by little, and, not wanting to take on the responsibility of greater light and have to spend himself further in the reflecting of light, he halts. But he finds that the advancing light does not halt

10. How does one become a partaker of the holy spirit?
11. How does one then taste God's good Word and new-world powers?

12. Why is his falling away a willful matter?
13. Why can he not be renewed again to repentance?
14, 15. (a) Why does he become accursed, and what is his end?
(b) What hope do we want to express for the careless and indifferent?

with him. Neither do the faithful ones walking in the light halt. And so he gets left behind. It makes it harder for him to catch up again, and the forward movement of the organization of light without him tends to make him feel hurt and then bitter. As he does not want his conscience to be pricked with feelings of being responsible to God for past mercies and favors, he finds it to be more comfortable for him to associate with the world that feels no responsibility toward God. Jehovah God, Christ Jesus, and the organization of light have spent much work upon this relapser, but now he no more brings forth good fruit in response to such goodness but brings forth fruit like the rest of the world. However, he is more reprehensible than the world, for better things were due from him and to be expected from him. He is accursed. His end could be only destruction. He is like the sinner that had been given a full opportunity one hundred years long. Under God's new covenant, "the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed." He does not die as a babe in knowledge and experience.—Isa. 65: 20.

¹⁵ Farmers, who cultivate ground only to have it later bring forth thornbushes and briers, burn over such ground and scorch it with fire. The enlightened person that relapses has destruction like that awaiting him. The apostle says: "Ground that drinks in frequent showers and produces vegetation that is of use to those for whom it is cultivated receives God's blessing. But if it yields thorns and thistles, it is thought worthless and almost cursed, and it will finally be burned." If any *Watchtower* readers have grown careless and indifferent, we do not publish the above things to discourage them, but we want to express our hope of better things from them henceforth. Like the apostle, we say: "But about you, dear friends, even though we say this, we are sure of better things that promise salvation." (Heb. 6: 7-9, *An Amer. Trans.*) The thing for them to do is at once to pull themselves together, renew their efforts to move ahead in the light and its service, and not lose the good reward for all they did in the past by now relapsing.

SINNING WILLFULLY

¹⁶ Let us constantly remember we are living in the time when God's marvelous arrangement for completely abolishing sin and death from the earth is reaching its grand climax. We are living in the time of His new covenant. The old law covenant mediated by Moses passed away with the death of Jesus Christ, the high priest foreshadowed by Melchizedek and who presented himself in sacrifice for our sins. By the old Mosaic law covenant the nation of Israel was separated from the world as Jehovah's people; but now by the new covenant through the new mediator,

Jesus Christ, a people is being taken out of all nations to be a people for the name of Jehovah. (Acts 15: 14) The new covenant was put in force by reason of the blood of the sacrifice that really takes away human sins, namely, the sacrifice of the perfect human life of Jesus Christ the Mediator and High Priest. Proof that such sins were actually taken away is given in that God remembered them no more, and no repeating of the sacrifice was needed. For such reason, in the terms of the new covenant, God could say: "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."—Heb. 10: 16-18.

¹⁷ The operation of this new covenant for taking out a people for Jehovah's name comes before He sets up the new world of righteousness. When God's kingdom brings in this new world, it will never relapse into unrighteousness, because the kingdom will not permit it to do so and the people of goodwill on earth who appreciate it will not forsake the righteousness of that world. Equally so, when God takes away the sins of the people for his name by the sacrifice of the new covenant, he removes and forgets their sins, with the thought that the forgiven ones will stick to righteousness and not relapse into sin. Rightly so; for, if we did not purpose to keep on in righteousness but intended to return to the practice of sin after a while, why should we abandon the sinful course of this world at all? But since our forsaking of sin was meant to be for all time, and since we have experienced the divine forgiveness of sins through the sacrifice of our High Priest, then we should not seek to find pleasure in practicing sin again.

¹⁸ But sin is subtle, and we are surrounded by a world under the great promoter of sin, Satan the Devil. On this account we must always watch against taking up sin again as a practice or regular course in our lives. To that end we cannot afford to stand still and become backward, but must make progress in righteousness. Progress, not stopping, is the greatest counterforce against relapse.

¹⁹ We must not hinder our Christian brothers and sisters in their advance in righteousness, but, all together as one, we must march onward to the goal of perfection. We are living in the day of the Lord God, and Jesus Christ the Melchizedekian King and High Priest is gathering together the remnant of his faithful "little flock" into unity within the fold. Particularly since 1935 he is also gathering together with this remnant a great multitude of "other sheep" to enjoy everlasting life on earth under the King-

17. Why should forgiven ones not seek to practice sin again?

18. Why must we watch against sin, and how may we best do so?

19. Why must we not forsake the gathering of ourselves together?

16. Under the new covenant whose sins does God forget, and why?

dom. We should do nothing to hinder or resist this gathering work which the King is doing by means of his angels. (Matt. 24: 31; Mark 13: 27; Luke 17: 37) In Jesus' day Jerusalem resisted the gathering together of her children by him, and for this she was destroyed and her people were scattered to the ends of the earth. (Matt. 23: 37, 38) The same fate, or worse, will befall Christendom. We act wisely, therefore, if we aid in Christ's gathering work and help in the unifying work. To do this, we must lovingly consider the "sheep" whom Christ has gathered together. We must meet with them and encourage them to love God by doing his good works. We must help them to confess openly without wavering their faith and hope by ourselves going out with them in giving witness to God's kingdom.

²⁰ To this wise and faithful course there is no other alternative but to drop back into sin, and that by choice, willfully. The outcome of such a relapse will be divine vengeance against us for deserting God's righteous arrangement. His vengeance is at hand, for the day of the Lord God is here and the final battle of Armageddon is now unavoidable. The apostle exhorts us: "Let us hold the hope we avow without wavering (for we can rely on him who gave us the Promise); and let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good deeds, not ceasing to meet together, as is the habit of some, but admonishing one another—all the more so, as you see the Day drawing near. For if we sin deliberately, after receiving the knowledge of the Truth, there is no longer any sacrifice for sins left, nothing but an awful outlook of doom, of that burning wrath which will consume the foes of God. Anyone who has rejected the law of Moses dies without mercy, on the evidence of two or three witnesses. How much heavier, do you suppose, will be the punishment assigned to him who has spurned the Son of God, who has profaned the covenant-blood with which he was sanctified, who has insulted the Spirit of grace? We know who said, Vengeance is mine, I will exact a requital: and again, The Lord will pass sentence on his people. It is an awful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." —Heb. 10: 23-31, *Moffatt*.

²¹ We know what sin is. The law of Moses brought the knowledge of what sin is to human creatures, especially to the Jews; and they as well as all the rest of mankind became unmistakably guilty before God. By his commandments which pointed out what was wrong, God showed how distasteful and hateful sin is to him: "that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful." Why exceedingly sinful? Because sin is not just wrong in itself, but is a violation of God's law and displeases him. (Rom. 7: 13; 3: 19, 20) His condemnation of sin is manifested in

that he had his dear Son die as a human sacrifice to take away the sin of the world and make it possible for men and women to live in righteousness in the new world. The blood of his sacrifice sanctifies or purifies the believers from sin. This sacrifice was offered for those who inherited a sinful condition from Adam and who, to begin with, did not know what sin was, they being helplessly born in it and under its penalty of death. It was not offered for enlightened, willful sinners. It was offered for those who desired to forsake sin and to be relieved of the burden of divine condemnation of sin and its penalty, death.

²² Hence Jehovah God arranged that the blood of Jesus' sacrifice should make a new covenant valid and operative. The old Mosaic law had condemned men and shown them all up to be sinners. Moreover, the animal sacrifices offered in connection with it could not take away the sins of men who are superior to such animal victims. But now the blood of the new covenant is of sufficient power to cleanse sins away and sanctify or purify the Christian believers, and so God promises to remember the sins of the forgiven ones no more. In order to provide such sanctifying blood God did not spare his most beloved Son, Jesus Christ, but gave him to act as High Priest and Mediator of the new covenant, with a human sacrifice. In this action he manifested, indeed, the "spirit of grace". That is to say, the thing that inspired or motivated this entire provision was God's grace or undeserved loving-kindness. The entire arrangement breathed and was expressive of God's graciousness. The truth about all this we find in His written Word, from which alone we get the knowledge of all this and are enlightened.

²³ The whole purpose of God's grace is to get us away from sin and its disabilities and into His righteous service for the vindication of His name. Consequently, if anyone has gotten a knowledge of the above truth from God's Word and acts upon it in appreciation of the spirit of grace that inspired it, he sins willfully if after a while he turns back to the world and a regular practice of sin. He now takes up a course in sin of his own free choice, and not for being born in it by descent from Adam. By the blood of the new covenant he had been made free from the disabilities descending upon him from Adam's sin; and so Adam is not responsible for the willful person's new course in sin.

²⁴ The sacrifice of God's High Priest was offered for the sin and condemnation taking hold of us because of Adam's original sin. It was not offered for any willful course in sin, and its benefit could not cover such deliberate wickedness. How could it? Why, even

20. What outlook is there for one relapsing into willful sin?
21. From what are faithful believers sanctified, and by what?

22. How was the "spirit of grace" manifested, and by whom?
23. Who is responsible if one turns from such grace and sins?
24. Why does no sacrifice remain for him? and what does he insult?

the enlightened, willful sinner does not want the benefit of such sacrifice any more. He treads the sacrificed Son of God underfoot like salt that has lost its taste and is cast out as worthless, or as swine would trample under hoof precious pearls. The sinner no longer values the sanctification or purifying from sin that resulted to him through the blood of the Son of God. Now he counts it as something common, ordinary, unholy, no better than the blood of a sinful, imperfect man. Also he does not feel bound any longer by the new covenant according to which he ought to serve as Jehovah's witness, as a member of His name-people taken out and separated from the worldly nations. The grace or unmerited favor of God the deliberate sinner no longer appreciates but now thrusts away; and thus he mocks and disrespectfully insults the spirit of grace that Jehovah God has shown toward him personally. For such a contemptible sinner there is no sacrifice of a Redeemer on hand for his benefit. What is more, he does not desire or pray for redemption. He desires to continue in sin. If he has insultingly thrown back God's most gracious provision, then certainly no other arrangement, not possibly more gracious than God's, could hold an appeal for him.

"HOW MUCH SORER PUNISHMENT"

²⁵ What, then, awaits such willful chooser of sin? What alone can he fearfully expect according to his previous knowledge of God's Word? Not eternal torment in a fiery lake supervised by devilish imps, but a fiery destruction, a being consumed to nothing as by fire, and this by God who is a consuming fire against all wickedness. (Heb. 12:29) The willful sinner now has no Mediator to stand between him and God, to shield him and provide for divine clemency. He has trodden the Mediator under foot and has made light of the blood with which the Mediator validated the covenant. The benefits he once enjoyed under the new covenant were greater and more real than under Moses' typical law covenant, and therefore he is accountable for more; his insult to the God of graciousness is greater; his depth of sin is deeper. He does not deserve any mercy. His penalty should be greater than that of any violator of the Mosaic law covenant. How, then, does he get a sorer or heavier punishment? In this way, that he does not come into any human court, as under Moses' law with two or three witnesses appearing against him. Because he has rejected the "one mediator between God and men", he falls into the hands of the living God to be judged and then executed with everlasting destruction. There is no escape for him from this terrible end.

25. What may he fearfully expect, and why?

²⁶ While we shudder at such a terrible end for the willful sinner, let us bear in mind how it began. How? By his halting for some selfish reason in the course of righteousness and refusing to make further progress toward maturity and perfection. He loses the desire to take on more knowledge of God's gracious purpose. He does not care to take on further responsibility for added knowledge, or to continue shouldering responsibility for what he already knows and enjoys. He quits putting forth faith in God and loving him and the truth and righteousness for which God stands. He draws back. In the start his drawing back might be ever so small, seemingly a mere stopping, but it acquires motion and gathers speed and momentum with his persistence in this course. Finally it becomes unstoppable, and he plunges into the hopeless state under the doom of destruction. Mindful of this, how firmly ought we to determine not to make the stop with which the drawing back begins, especially now that the day of the Lord God is upon us and his Messenger of the covenant, Christ Jesus, is at the temple to execute judgment!

²⁷ As speaking for ourselves, as voicing our own fixed determination, we well repeat the apostle's life-saving words. He first quotes Jehovah's words, at Habakkuk 2:4 (*LXX*), "My righteous one shall live by faith: and if he shrink back, my soul hath no pleasure in him," and then he says to us: "But we are not of them that shrink back unto perdition, but of them that have faith unto the saving of the soul." (Heb. 10:38, 39, *Am. Stan. Ver.*) Having thus stated the need for faith and having expressed our determination to display faith, the apostle then devotes chapter eleven of his epistle to a stirring account of the feats of faith performed by men of ancient times, from Abel to John the Baptist, all of whom received witness from God that they pleased him for their faith. The apostle then immediately proceeds to exhort us with the first verse of chapter twelve, saying: "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." (Heb. 12:1) So, then, no stopping for us, with danger that a relapse into sin will follow! But, laying aside the easily besetting sin of lack of faith, and laying aside all other weights to our proper progress, let us advance to maturity. Let us press on to perfection, showing patient endurance during the long run and trying to make the best speed possible toward the prize for unwavering faith, the eternal saving of our souls in the new world.

26, 27. (a) How did his drawing back begin, and what is its end?
(b) What, then, is our determination, with what end in view?

ABUSIVE SPEECH AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT DEADLY

UNWILLINGNESS to learn more and to advance in knowledge because it shows the right way for us to go has been exhibited by sinners in all ages. Their stubborn unwillingness to attain to clearer knowledge and understanding has invariably led to greater sin. In the days of the "man Christ Jesus" on earth the religious Pharisees, Sadducees, scribes and lawyers were viewed as the learned class, as the wise men, the men with the key of knowledge. They looked down upon the Galilean fishermen, Peter and John, as being "unlearned and ignorant men". Because Jesus had not attended their rabbinical schools at Jerusalem, they did not consider him a teaching authority. They contradicted his teaching and misrepresented his works. What was the reason? This: they did not want to learn more, progressing to maturity of knowledge of the truth. And why not? Because they did not love the truth and did not want to be led to certain truthful conclusions, namely, that they were erroneous teachers of traditions of men but Jesus was the Messiah, an anointed Teacher sent from God. Just how their resistance to knowledge led to sin, and how serious their sin of this sort was, Jesus plainly declared to them.

² On one occasion Jesus said to them: "Every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the spirit shall not be forgiven. And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever shall speak against the holy spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come." (Matt. 12: 31, 32, *Am. Stan. Ver.*) How had they sinned against the holy spirit? and why could they speak against Jesus and be forgiven, and yet not speak against the holy spirit and be forgiven? Is the holy spirit greater or more holy than Jesus? How is this?

³ At other times the religious leaders had spoken against Jesus the Son of man. There could be some excuse for that, because they could be ignorant of the true facts about him that fulfilled the prophecies identifying him as the promised Messiah. The Messiah or Christ was prophesied to be born in Bethlehem-Judah, but Jesus was known as the Nazarene or "Jesus of Nazareth", and this created prejudice against him, because Nazareth was a despised town of Galilee. For this reason they might be forgiven for what they said in ignorance of the truth about Jesus' origin.

⁴ For example, Saul of Tarsus was a most earnest Pharisee and spoke and acted against the Son of man, and yet he became the apostle Paul. How could that happen? As apostle, he tells us: "I verily

thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. And this I also did in Jerusalem: and I both shut up many of the saints in prisons, having received authority from the chief priests, and when they were put to death I gave my vote against them. And punishing them oftentimes in all the synagogues, I strove to make them blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto foreign cities." (Acts 26: 9-11, *Am. Stan. Ver.*) On what basis could this great persecutor be forgiven? As apostle, he explains: "I was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: howbeit I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief; and the grace of our Lord abounded exceedingly with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." (1 Tim. 1: 13-15, *Am. Stan. Ver.*) Despite all the sins that he committed against the Son of man and that made him appear as the "chief" of sinners, the terrible persecutor was not beyond repentance.

⁵ Repentance was possible for Saul of Tarsus because he did not resist knowledge of the truth. He was willing to learn and to make progress into light. Hence he was an example of how other great sinners against Jesus Christ might be shown their wrong path and might repent and go the right way. As Paul said: "God had mercy on me in order that in my case as the foremost, Christ Jesus might display his perfect patience, as an example to those who would later believe in him and find eternal life." (1 Tim. 1: 16, *An Amer. Trans.*) The apostle Peter held out hope for repentance on the part of many Israelite sinners, saying: "And now, brethren, I know that in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." Many ignorant ones did repent on learning the truth.—Acts 3: 17, *Am. Stan. Ver.*

⁶ However, when the Pharisees said: "This man doth not cast out demons, but by Beelzebub the prince of the demons," why was this a sin and blasphemy against the holy spirit? Because Jesus had just cured a demon-possessed man that was blind and speechless, and he had done so by the power of the spirit of God. When Jesus came up out of the waters of baptism in Jordan, God had poured down the holy spirit upon Jesus, anointing him and filling him with this spirit or active force. (Luke 3: 21, 22; 4: 1) It was evident to all honest men that he was filled with a power not possessed by ordinary men, and his being filled with it was shown by the marvelous cure he performed on the demonized, blind and dumb man. It being a good deed, against the oppressive, unclean demon in the man, the proof was there that

1. To what has unwillingness to advance in knowledge led? Why?
2. What did Jesus say about blasphemy against the holy spirit?
3, 4. Why could speaking against the Son of man be forgiven?

5. What does the case of Saul of Tarsus illustrate?
6. Why was the Pharisees' sin one against the holy spirit?

the curative power within Jesus was the holy spirit, a force active for good to the glory of God. Hence Jesus told the blaspheming Pharisees: "If I by Beelzebub cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out? therefore shall they be your judges. But if I by the *spirit of God* cast out demons, then is the kingdom of God come upon you."—Matt. 12: 27, 28, *Am. Stan. Ver.*

⁷ The Pharisees believed in angels and demons and the spirit or active force of God. At times their sons cast demons out, and the Pharisees were quick to claim their sons expelled such demons by the spirit of God. But when Jesus came along and also cast them out and performed many other cures while preaching the kingdom of God, those Pharisees spoke evil of the power within Jesus and attributed it to Satan the prince of the demons. Why should they grant holy power to their sons, but not to Jesus? Why? Well, because they did not want privately or publicly to admit the truth that Jesus was the Son of God and promised Messiah. They resisted the true conclusion to which Jesus' works of which they were eyewitnesses should have led them. Too many selfish things were at stake for them.

⁸ Jesus did not insist on their believing in him just because of what he was as a man. He was willing to be talked against as the Son of man. But he did insist on their accepting the witness of God's spirit which was working in him. He said: "The works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me." "If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him." (John 5: 36; 10: 37, 38) When they refused to believe him for the works such as no other man had ever done, and when they said the power doing such unusual good works was from Beelzebub the prince of the demons, then they were sinning. Sin and blasphemy against the holy spirit are sinful and abusive, injurious speech against the open demonstration of the power of God. The religious leaders guilty of such were willfully sinning for selfish reasons, because they were sinning against the manifest facts, which they saw and knew. They voluntarily did not want to accept the testimony of the spirit of God at work in the servant of God. Stephen well said to them later on: "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the holy spirit: as your fathers did, so do ye." (Acts 7: 51, *Am. Stan. Ver.*) They resisted the display of the spirit of God, because it led to a course of thought and action which did not agree with their selfish purposes.

⁹ This willful quality in their sin was what made it unforgivable, because it made them unteachable, beyond correction, and opposed to God's provision for forgiveness. Hence they were "guilty of an eternal sin: because they said, He hath an unclean spirit". (Mark 3: 29, 30, *Am. Stan. Ver.*) Theirs was an "eternal sin", an unending one, because it remained forever against them. There was no forgiveness for it, because there was no atoning sacrifice for it, "neither in this world, neither in the world to come." This does not mean that those wicked blasphemers against the holy spirit will come up in the resurrection in the new world. If they did, they would only find that even in that world they could not be forgiven. No; those blasphemers went into the Gehenna of destruction, from which there is no resurrection, because their sin of blasphemy stands against them for all time. Evidently, then, Jesus meant that even in the new world with all its exhibition of the spirit of God in action under the Kingdom there will be men and women that will blaspheme or speak injuriously against the spirit then exercised by the King Christ Jesus. This would be especially at the end of his thousand-year reign at which time Satan the Devil will be loosed for the final test of earth's inhabitants. Those then committing the sin of blasphemy as to God's spirit will not be forgiven either in that world. Such sin is unforgivable at any time, and brings destruction.—Rev. 20: 7-10.

SIN UNTO DEATH

¹⁰ From all the foregoing it is clear that there is a distinction to be made respecting sins. The apostle John defines sin, saying, "All unrighteousness is sin," and yet he adds, "There is a sin not unto death." (1 John 5: 17) Sin is sin, but there are different qualities or aspects about sin. For instance, Romans 6: 23 says: "The wages of sin is death," and how, then, can there be a "sin not unto death"? In this way: If the sinner does not sin willfully, but repents of his sin and turns to God for the benefit of Christ's atoning sacrifice, his sin can be forgiven. He can be spared, redeemed, delivered from the death which the sin would otherwise bring upon him as the penalty. Despite this, we should not take sin lightly, because really there is a "sin unto death", and the prayers of others for persons that commit this sin will do no good for them. Writes John: "If any man see his brother sinning a sin not unto death, he shall ask, and God will give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: not concerning this do I say that he should make request. All unrighteousness is sin: and [yet] there is a sin not unto death. We know that whosoever is begotten of God

7. Why were they thus sinning willfully?

8. On what grounds did Jesus invite them to believe him? and for what reason did they refuse?

9. (a) In what way was theirs an "eternal sin"? (b) What did Jesus mean in saying it was not forgivable in the world to come?

10. Why should we make a distinction respecting sins?

sinneth not; but he that was begotten of God keepeth himself, and the evil one toucheth [or, catcheth] him not. We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in the evil one."—1 John 5:16-19, *Am. Stan. Ver.*

¹¹ Mark, everyone, that John does not say there is a sin unto purgatorial suffering or to eternal torment in unquenchable fire and brimstone. The extreme is death, here meaning the annihilation or destruction which Revelation 2:11 and 20:14 speak of as "the second death". It is willful sin for which there is no forgiveness now or in the world to come. There is no sin-atoning sacrifice provided for it, the High Priest's sacrifice covering only those sins due to our fallen, imperfect, weak estate inherited from Adam. It is sin by one's own choice after coming to the knowledge of the truth. It is sin by one who has been enlightened and tasted of God's goodness and who cannot feel any repentance and who does not crave forgiveness, well knowing what he is doing. It is sin with the eyes wide open to the undeniable operation of God's holy spirit or active force. It is unforgivable; and how can God answer the prayer for anyone to be forgiven such sin? So do not pray for anyone guilty of it. As God told Jeremiah in ancient Judah: "Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me: for I will not hear thee." (Jer. 7:16) For like reason we do not now join the religious clergy in praying for modern-day Babylon,

whose sins reach to heaven, nor for religious Christendom. Why not? Because Babylon and Christendom both reject the Kingdom message that Jehovah's witnesses have been proclaiming since A.D. 1919 by the power of God's outpoured spirit and in the face of most brutal persecution at the hands of religious leaders and fanatics. The doom of Babylon and of Christendom is sealed.—Rev. 18:1-5.

¹² For brethren who sin due to weakness but who repent, seek forgiveness, and ask our prayers that they may be helped to recover from such sin through divine mercy, we will pray. In answer to their repentance and our prayer through Jesus Christ, God will save such sinners from death. He will grant life in the case of all not sinning the sin to the second death, destruction. If we do not pursue a course of sin for the pleasure of it, but seek to do righteousness, God will keep us. The wicked one, Satan the Devil, will not be able to catch firm hold of us, though often he assault us and put temptation before us. All the world is already lying in the powerful grip of the wicked one, but we are of God and abiding in him. For this reason the wicked one would like to catch unbreakable hold of us by inducing us to turn from God's light and goodness and willfully take up the self-indulgent practice of sin. But, by divine grace, we will not relapse into sin. That would mean sin to the second death. Our determined choice is to advance steadily in truth and righteousness to glorious perfection.

11. What is the "sin unto death", and why not pray for it?

12. (a) Why may we pray for those not sinning to death? (b) For doing what will God keep us, and from whom?

NOT RANSOMED AGAINST YOUR WILL

ONE of the basic truths stated in the precious Bible is that one written at 1 Timothy 2:3-6 and which reads: "It is right to do this, and it pleases God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and to come to know the truth. For there is but one God, and one intermediary between God and men—the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men. This is what was testified to at the proper times." (According to the modern rendering of *An American Translation*) Incidentally, this grand statement of truth disproves the religious doctrine of a "trinity", because it plainly says that God is one person and Christ Jesus is another person entirely separate and distinct from him. The apostle Paul, who wrote the above-quoted words, says concerning intermediaries or mediators: "Now a mediator is not a mediator of one; but God is one." Or, in modern expression: "An intermediary implies more than one party, while God is but one." (Gal. 3:20, *A.V.* and *An Amer. Trans.*) Hence God and Christ Jesus are not one Being, one in substance, because how could God mediate for himself? But God is one person or party, and Christ Jesus is another party, separate and distinct, and it is he who acts as intermediary or mediator between God and sinful man.

Ponder those grand words: "The man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men." As you do, likely the questions will suggest themselves to you: Does not the ransom price of Jesus result to the everlasting benefit of all regardless of their will? Since the scripture says Christ Jesus gave himself as a ransom for all, is not that a guarantee that all the human race must have the full benefit of Christ's ransom sacrifice or ransom price? Our considered answer is, No; such a conclusion is not correct. Some of the human race, the offspring of the first man Adam, are willfully wicked, and such ones are not benefited by the ransom. But if any comply with God's rules concerning the ransom, these might become righteous, and then they would receive the benefit of the ransom price. Note how this view is expressed in Jesus' own words, at John 17:2, 3: "As thou [O heavenly Father] hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." At the time that Jesus prayed these words to God his heavenly Father, the Father had given him only a small remnant of faithful disciples. To these Jesus purposed to

give eternal life, and to all others whom God should yet give him.

According to the above prayer, those persons who refuse to know Jehovah God and Christ Jesus cannot receive eternal life. Many persons to whom the truth is presented and who are shown God's provision for salvation to eternal life spurn such truth. They say, in substance: 'I am not at all interested. I am satisfied with what I have.' What reason is there to expect Adam to receive life in the new world of righteousness? He was a willful and deliberate sinner in Eden, despite his perfection. Neither is there any reason to expect any of his offspring to receive life who willfully refuse to hear of God's provision for life.

To give Adam the benefit of the ransom sacrifice would mean that God would thereby show that his judgment against Adam back in Eden was not just; whereas Psalm 89:14 plainly says: 'Justice is the foundation of God's throne.' To give all of Adam's offspring the benefit of the ransom sacrifice when many of these spurn God's provision is wholly inconsistent with His purpose expressed in the Holy Scriptures. The above-quoted scripture at 1 Timothy 2:5, in saying that Christ Jesus gave himself a ransom for ALL, bears out that "God is no respecter of persons", as Peter declared to the Gentile Cornelius, at Acts 10:34. And hence the ransom is for the benefit of all who conform themselves to God's will or law. Also, because there is only one Almighty God, "whose name alone is Jehovah," there is only one mediator between him and men, namely, the one whom he has appointed, "the man Christ Jesus," because he gave his life as a ransom for all without regard to who the persons are. "All men" means all who God wills shall be saved because they comply with the requirements that God has laid down. There is no authority to say that the ransom sacrifice automatically operates for the benefit of all.

It is somewhat of a handicap to us that the original Bible was written in ancient Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. So we have to wrestle with that Greek word *agoradzo* when discussing this matter of the ransom. From our Greek-English dictionaries we learn that the above Greek word comes from *agora*, meaning "the town square" or "market", and this in turn came from the Greek verb *ageiro*, which means "to gather", as to the town square or market place. Recall how, when Paul was at the Grecian capital Athens, he used to dispute "in the *market* daily with them that met with him". (Acts 17:17) So, that Greek verb *agoradzo* literally means to go to market and hence to purchase and redeem that which is sold. For example, slaves were bought and sold at the market place, and the verb *agoradzo* is properly used concerning them. Let us now take a Scriptural usage of the word.

At Matthew 13:44 we read: "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth [*agoradzo*] that field." Many who have tried to interpret the Scriptures have said that the word *field* used in this verse symbolizes the entire human race, the wicked and all others. That is certainly wrong. Please mark this: The scripture verse says, "The kingdom of heaven is like," etc. It is the kingdom of heaven which is bought. Certainly the kingdom of heaven is not the entire human race. Nor is the kingdom of heaven hidden

within the folds of the sinful human family. The kingdom of heaven is the *hidden* treasure, and it is that which is bought. It is the treasure hidden within God's universal organization, which organization is holy and in no wise sinful. The "kingdom of heaven" is the hidden mystery spoken of at Ephesians 1:20-23 and 5:32. "Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints." (Col. 1:26) Christ Jesus, by rendering himself in full obedience to his Father's will, became the heir of all things, including the hidden mystery, the kingdom of heaven. So we read at Hebrews 1:2 and Romans 8:16, 17.

God made known to Jesus His purpose to have a capital organization over His universe, namely, His government, "the kingdom of heaven," which for ages was a mystery and which mystery was hidden from all others of God's universe until God's due time to reveal it. When Jesus learned of this, he sold his all to become the heir of it and the head of the kingdom. It was not his human life as the ransom for humanity that bought that estate of the kingdom of heaven. It was his surrender of everything, including human life, for the purpose of maintaining his integrity and faithfulness to God under the greatest pressure, even unto an ignominious death. He did this for that field and its hidden treasure. The suffering of Jesus had nothing to do with purchasing humankind. His human life was the price for them. But it was by his suffering that he learned obedience to God and proved his integrity and faithfulness to God and became God's heir of all things in the universe and at the same time heir of the kingdom of heaven.—See Hebrews 5:8, 9.

Now take another use in the Scriptures of the Greek verb *agoradzo*, which is translated "bought", namely, at Matthew 13:45, 46: "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it." This parabolic saying has the same meaning as the parable given in the preceding verse (44) quoted above. These two parables take into consideration the body of Christ's footstep followers, because these will form a part of the kingdom of heaven. Now, if the purchasing or buying that is here mentioned concerning the kingdom of heaven referred to the ransom price for humankind, the Christian members of Christ's body would have no part in it, because they do not have any part in the ransoming of the human race. That the body members of Christ have a part in the kingdom is true beyond any doubt, as a reading of Romans 8:16, 17 and Revelation 1:6 and 20:4 will prove in few words. Those who faithfully follow Christ Jesus and become a part of the kingdom of heaven are first bought by the precious blood of Christ Jesus before they can start on their way to be made a part of the kingdom. So 1 Peter 1:18, 19 assures us.

AGREEMENT TO BE BOUGHT

At 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20 it is written: "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the holy [spirit] which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body." This text refers only to the anointed Christians as the ones that are bought and make up the "body of

Christ". This text could not be construed to mean that it drags along with these Christians purchased every individual of the human family, wicked and otherwise, and that these are automatically bought. Would a slave be bought and be given his freedom who refused to obey his master? Take the case of Joseph in Egypt, and the agreement that he as prime minister made with the people. First, the people came to Joseph and asked to be bought before Joseph would buy them for the ruler Pharaoh. This is a picture of the purchase and redemption of those of the human race who come to Christ Jesus to be bought. (Gen. 47: 19-23) Those disciples who become members of the "body of Christ" first come to Jesus and agree to do whatever is his and the Father's will. Then his purchase price applies to them, and they become his and no longer belong to themselves. They are his bond servants or his slaves, from then on obligated to do his will and obey his commandments. They were NOT RANSOMED AGAINST THEIR WILL, because the fact is that they desired to be ransomed or purchased. God's rule is the same at all times in this respect.

Whether the person is called by the Lord God and granted life in the spirit in heaven or his hope is one of life on the paradise earth, the course of procedure concerning his purchase is exactly the same. On this, consider another text directed to those of the "little flock" to whom it is the heavenly Father's good pleasure to give the Kingdom: "For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant [of some man on earth], is the Lord's freeman: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant [that is, the bond servant or slave of Christ]. Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men." (1 Cor. 7: 22, 23) These persons were not called until they first surrendered themselves in consecration to do God's will, and then the purchase or ransom price operated toward them and they were bought and the Lord became their owner. Being accepted in the Lord, such ones became his bond servants, because they have willingly and voluntarily agreed to be bought on the Lord's terms. They have sold themselves to the King Christ Jesus, instead of to the Devil.—1 Ki. 21: 20, 25.

Those who are wicked are not purchased, because they do not first consent. Some who have consented to be bought afterward turn back to worldly bondage and renounce the former purchase. There will never be a repurchase of them, for Christ Jesus dies no more, and hence only destruction awaits them. The apostle Peter says: "But there were false prophets [in ancient Israel] also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you [who are Christians], who privily shall bring in damnable heresies [or, introduce destructive sects], even denying the Lord that

bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction." (2 Pet. 2: 1) Such were first bought, but afterward became wicked, denying the Lord and the value of his blood by which they had been bought when consecrating themselves to God. For such there is no further salvation. The Scriptures make that plain at Hebrews 6: 4-10 and 10: 26-29.

The Bible refers to mature and faithful Christians as elder brethren, who are bought or redeemed from among men and to life in the spirit in heaven. At Revelation 5: 9 we are told: "And they [the members of the body of Christ symbolized by the twenty-four elders] sung a new song, saying, Thou [Christ Jesus] art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." This scripture could have no application to the wicked, because they are not redeemed unto God. Its language shows conclusively that none are automatically redeemed, because the "elders" were redeemed, as it says, "out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." Not all were thus redeemed, showing that all had not met the requirements or been selected.

The members of the "body of Christ" are the ones ransomed and redeemed, as is also stated in Revelation 14: 3, 4: "And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb."

The fact that these were "redeemed from among men" argues that all men were not automatically redeemed. The members of the body of Christ, the 144,000, first consecrated themselves by agreeing to do God's will, and hence asked to be bought. The purpose and provision of God is for the redemption of men without discrimination as to nationality, color or language, but all who are redeemed must first have faith in God and in Christ Jesus and then fully consecrate themselves to do God's will. This rule applies to all who eventually gain eternal life. Others will gain such life on the paradise earth. The members of the "body of Christ" are merely the "firstfruits" unto God and to his Lamb Christ Jesus. This proves that there will be others who will see the privilege of being bought and who will avail themselves of being bought by willingly exercising faith in God and Christ and proving their faith by fully consecrating themselves to God to do His will for evermore. No one will be ransomed against his will.

PEKAH, A CONSPIRATOR AMONG CONSPIRATORS

PEKAH was a young man when Israel's 22-year kingless period ended in 789 B.C. In that year Zachariah, conspirator Jehu's great-great-grandson, had been placed on the throne of Israel. (2 Ki. 9: 14; 15: 8) Pekah and the rest of Israel could well expect a change in the ruling family of Israel after Zachariah, because everybody knew of the prophecy spoken to his ancestor Jehu: "Thy

sons shall sit on the throne of Israel unto the fourth generation." (2 Ki. 10: 30; 15: 12; Amos 7: 9) But Pekah could hardly have expected the change to come as soon as it did. "Shallum, the son of Jabesh, conspired against him [Zachariah], and attacked him in Ibleam and killed him [six months after his enthronement] and became king in his stead."—2 Ki. 14: 29; 15: 8-13, *An Amer. Trans.*

Pekah saw that Shallum's conspiracy got him nowhere, for just one month later Shallum was himself defeated and slain.—2 Ki. 15: 10, 13-15.

Shallum's slayer and successor was from Israel's ancient royal capital, Tirzah. "Menahem the son of Gadi went up from Tirzah, and came to Samaria, and smote Shallum the son of Jabesh in Samaria, and slew him, and reigned in his stead." (2 Ki. 15: 14) When the town of Tiphseh, about three and a half miles to the northwest of Tirzah, refused to open up to him, "then Menahem smote Tiphseh, and all that were therein, and the borders thereof, from Tirzah: because they opened not to him, therefore he smote it; and all the women therein that were with child he ripped up." (2 Ki. 15: 16, *Am. Stan. Ver.*) About that time Tiglath-pileser, an Assyrian official, usurped the throne of Assyria and set out to expand the Assyrian empire on every side. When he went west into Syria and turned south toward Israel, King Menahem decided to submit to him and continue his rule over Israel as a tributary of Assyria. In order to get the necessary silver for the tribute, "Menahem assessed all the wealthy men of Israel, taking nearly four hundred pounds in silver from each." The more than four hundred thousand pounds in silver that he collected he paid to the invader. "So the Assyrian king turned back, instead of remaining in the country." The Syrian kingdom of Damascus to the north of Israel also became a tributary of Assyria. Menahem died in 779 B.C., after having ruled ten years. (2 Ki. 15: 17-22, *Moffatt*) Probably by that time Pekah had already entered on a military career.

Menahem's son Pekahiah, who began to reign over Israel in Samaria in 777 B.C., made Pekah a captain in his army. After Pekahiah had reigned two years, "Pekah, the son of Remaliah, conspired against him, and, with fifty men from Gilead, struck him down in Samaria, inside the citadel of the royal palace; having killed him, Pekah reigned instead of him."—2 Ki. 15: 22-26, *Moffatt*.

Pekah continued the policy of his predecessors; "he did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith he made Israel to sin." (2 Ki. 15: 27, 28, *Am. Stan. Ver.*) That is, he worshiped the golden calves at Bethel and Dan instead of worshiping Jehovah at His temple in Jerusalem. When Pekah came to the throne, Judah to the south was prospering under the regency of Jotham, whose father, King Uzziah, was dying from leprosy; in fact, he did die in the very accession year of Pekah. In Pekah's second year Jotham began his rule alone, over Judah and subject Edom and Ammon and the Philistine cities his father Uzziah had taken. Damascus to the northeast was a strong Syrian kingdom ruled by Rezin.

In 759 Pekah learned that Jotham had associated his son Ahaz on the throne with him. Thinking that such action indicated the nearness of Jotham's death and remembering that it was by conspiracy that he (Pekah) had acquired the throne of Israel, Pekah planned to gain control of Judah by conspiracy. He invited King Rezin of Syria into the conspiracy with him. Together they plotted to set up a puppet regime in Judah, saying, "Let us go up against Judah, and throw it into a panic, and make a schism in it to our interest, and set up the son of Tabeel as king in the midst of it." (Isa. 7: 6, *An Amer. Trans.*) What did Pekah care about Jehovah's covenant with David (Ahaz's

ancestor) promising the kingdom to his descendants? He set about getting fifth columnists in Judah who would uphold his conspiracy. As soon as Jotham died the Syro-Israelite confederacy went into action.

Rezin sent an army southward to the important Judean Red sea port, Elath, took it, transferred its Judean inhabitants to Damascus as captives, and replaced them with Syrians. (2 Ki. 16: 6; 2 Chron. 28: 5) At the same time the Israelite and Syrian armies marched toward Jerusalem. The battle was joined, and "Pekah, the son of Remaliah, slew in Judah a hundred and twenty thousand in one day, all of them valiant men; because they had forsaken Jehovah, the God of their fathers. And Zichri, a mighty man of Ephraim, slew Maaseiah the king's son, and Azrikam the ruler of the house, and Elkanah that was next to the king." Moreover the Israelites captured 200,000 Israelite women and children and an immense amount of spoil. (2 Chron. 28: 6-8, *Am. Stan. Ver.*) After the battle Pekah, back in his palace, at Samaria, is glorying in the success of the confederacy's arms and is awaiting the arrival of the captives and spoil. A fast runner from the south brings him news that Ahaz's "heart trembled, and the heart of his people, as the trees of the forest tremble with the wind". (Isa. 7: 2, *Am. Stan. Ver.*) He congratulates himself, thinking, With just one or two more such victories all Judah will be under my control, but Pekah is annoyed when he realizes that the spoil is long overdue. Then the reason for the delay is reported to him: Oded, a prophet of Jehovah in Samaria, "went out to meet the host that came to Samaria, and said unto them, Behold, because Jehovah, the God of your fathers, was wroth with Judah, he hath delivered them into your hand, and ye have slain them in a rage which hath reached up unto heaven. And now ye purpose to keep under the children of Judah and Jerusalem for bondmen and bondwomen unto you: but are there not even with you trespasses of your own against Jehovah your God? Now hear me therefore, and send back the captives, that ye have taken captive of your brethren; for the fierce wrath of Jehovah is upon you. Then certain of the heads of the children of Ephraim, Azariah the son of Johanan, Berechiah the son of Meshillemoth, and Jehizkiah the son of Shallum, and Amasa the son of Hadlai, stood up against them that came from the war, and said unto them, Ye shall not bring in the captives hither: for ye purpose that which will bring upon us a trespass against Jehovah, to add unto our sins and to our trespass; for our trespass is great, and there is fierce wrath against Israel. So the armed men left the captives and the spoil before the princes and all the assembly. And the men that have been mentioned by name rose up, and took the captives, and with the spoil clothed all that were naked among them, and arrayed them, and shod them, and gave them to eat and to drink, and anointed them, and carried all the feeble of them upon asses, and brought them to Jericho, the city of palm-trees, unto their brethren: then they returned to Samaria." (2 Chron. 28: 9-15, *Am. Stan. Ver.*) Pekah was furious. To think that his own princes had sabotaged him! But he was not beaten yet; with the aid of the combined armies of Israel and Syria he felt sure the conspiracy would succeed.

Pekah was soon comforted by news that the Edomites had attacked Judah on the southeast and defeated it and carried away captives. With satisfaction he thought to himself, No

prophet of Jehovah there to interfere. Then he received more welcome news: "The Philistines also had raided the cities of the lowland [*shephelah*] and the South [*négeb*] of Judah and had captured Beth-shemesh, Aijalon, Gederoth, Soco with its towns, Timnah with its towns, and Gimzo with its towns, and were living there." (2 Chron. 28: 17, 18, *An Amer. Trans.*) Pekah gloated because Judah had been brought so low. But the next report he received from his agents in Judah made him have some misgivings. He was informed that Ahaz had taken the silver and the gold that were found in the temple at Jerusalem and in the treasuries of the royal palace, and had sent it to the king of Assyria.—2 Ki. 16: 8.

Pekah did not have to wait very long to find out why Ahaz had sent silver and gold to Tiglath-pileser. The Assyrian emperor marched his armies westward and lay siege to Damascus and also invaded Israel. The Assyrians first struck Israel at its northernmost city of Ijon; then they swept south and attacked and captured Abel-beth-maachah, Janoah, Kedesh, and Hazor. Then the enemy crossed the Jordan to the east and took all of Gilead. The victorious armies then completed their work by taking the rest of Galilee and Naphtali and the seacoast as far as Gaza in Philistia. From all the conquered territory they deported Israelites.—2 Ki. 15: 29; 1 Chron. 5: 26.

The next report he received was that Damascus had fallen and that the kingdom of Syria had been divided up into four Assyrian provinces; that the former Israelite territory beyond the Jordan had been divided into two Assyrian provinces, Hauran and Gilead (or, Beyond the Jordan),

that the Israelite territory north of Samaria had been made the Assyrian province of Galilee with headquarters at Megiddo, and that all the coastal territory of Israel was now the Assyrian province of Dor (or, Way of the Sea); and that Ahaz had gone to Damascus to meet Tiglath-pileser. Then his informer paused and, with some hesitation, told him his ally Rezin had been killed. (Ezek. 47: 16; Isa. 9: 1; 2 Ki. 16: 9, 10) Pekah hardly has time to start wondering what his own fate will be when he sees Hoshea is upon him with a drawn sword. Quickly that sword ends his thoughts forever. By his own murderous conspiracy Pekah had gained the throne; by the murderous conspiracy of another he lost it.—2 Ki. 15: 30.

Just as Pekah of Israel and Rezin of Syria entered into an international conspiracy against Jehovah's kingdom covenant with David, likewise today the worldly nations unite in a conspiracy against Jehovah's kingdom covenant with the Son of David, Jehovah's anointed King Christ Jesus. As Pekah and Rezin were both destroyed without accomplishing their ends, Jehovah's Word assures his people today that in like manner the present world conspiracy against God's kingdom under Christ will be entirely defeated and destroyed: "Say ye not, A conspiracy, concerning all whereof this people shall say, A conspiracy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be in dread thereof. Jehovah of hosts, him shall ye sanctify; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. And he shall be for a sanctuary." (Isa. 8: 12-14, *Am. Stan. Ver.*) To the conspirators He says: "Associate yourselves, O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces."—Isa. 8: 9.

AN INTERESTING LETTER

April 16, 1948

DEAR BROTHER:

Your letter of March 27, addressed to C. J. W— at our address, has been referred to us by him as being more appropriate for us. We appreciate your reading *The Watchtower* critically and bringing into play all the fund of knowledge and information at your disposal; and the suggestions offered have our respectful consideration.

The question at issue is the article in the March 15, 1948, issue of *The Watchtower*, under the title "Exodus to Temple—480 Years", and setting forth the information we had compiled of the most recent date as to source. Now is not the time to be going into a discussion of the chronological tables which you submit, but the main matter is that of numerals and the written Word of God, and hence principally of page 5 of your letter.

You call our attention to Ferrar Fenton's translation of Acts 13: 19, 20, and that here he renders the Greek preposition *metà* as "contemporary with", making it read: "Afterwards when he had conquered seven nations in the land of Canaan, he entrusted them with the possession of their country for about four hundred and fifty years; and, *contemporary with* these events, he gave them judges until the end of Samuel. And then they demanded a kingdom." It may be true, as you say, that at 346 places in the "New Testament" this preposition *metà* has been translated "with". But you must remember that the preposition *metà*

governs two cases, the genitive and the accusative; and when it governs the genitive it means "with", but when it governs the accusative it means "after". In the above text, Acts 13: 20, *metà* governs the accusative, and hence means "after", and not "corresponding with". In this verse it occurs in that familiar Greek expression *metà tauta*, which expression occurs four times in Acts, written by Luke, and five times in the gospel of Luke. In checking these instances in Fenton's translation we note in these nine instances, namely Acts 7: 7; 13: 20; 15: 16; 18: 1 and Luke 5: 27, 10: 1; 12: 4; 17: 8; 18: 4, he renders *metà* in every case "after", except in the one verse of Acts 13: 20. There he finds himself in a mental difficulty over chronology as accepted up to his time, and, accordingly, he departs from his accustomed way of translating *metà* with the accusative, in order to harmonize certain views on chronology, possibly in line with the *Syriac Version* of the verse. Fenton has no real textual basis for doing this, as this accustomed phrase, *metà tauta*, occurs also in the Greek *Septuagint Version* of the Hebrew Scriptures, where it also means "after this (or, that)"; as, for example, Exodus 5: 1, there translated "afterward". It is therefore very plain that Fenton's translation of Acts 13: 20 is extraordinary, and carries no weight in determining whether the period of the judges who once ruled Israel was 450 years in length and not less, as explained on pages 131, 132 of the book "*Equipped for Every Good Work*".

Now as to the Greek text of Revelation: It is true, as you state, that in the Greek text found in *The Emphatic Diaglott* we find Greek alphabetic letters standing for numbers at Revelation 13:18, to produce the symbolic number "666"; but, also, at Revelation 7:5-8 we find the alphabetic letters *ιβ* standing for the number 12, and occurring twelve times. However, this Greek text is not that of the ancient Vatican Manuscript 1209 of the fourth century, but, as the *Diaglott* footnote explains, its text is that of another Vatican manuscript, No. 1160, of the eleventh century. Also, in the California version of 1930 to which you refer, it shows in its superlinear readings over its Greek text that alphabetic letters were used for numerals in a Vatican manuscript containing the Revelation; but again this latter manuscript is not the Ancient Vatican MS. 1209, which does not contain Revelation, but is the manuscript No. 2066, generally registered as 046. This latter manuscript is also a late text, of the eighth century, written in somewhat sloping uncials.

What the above-mentioned *Watchtower* article said in its last paragraph regarding numbers was based on texts closer to the apostolic times than MSS. Nos. 1160 and 2066 (046). It had in mind the Vatican MS. 1209 and Sinaitic MS., both of the fourth century, and Alexandrine MS. of the fifth century, and which spell numbers out, except in the case of the symbolic number at Revelation 13:18, where alphabetic symbols are used for 666. As you know, Vatican MS. No. 1209 does not contain Revelation, but it does contain the Greek *Septuagint Version* of the ancient Hebrew Scriptures; and in this translation from the Hebrew the Greek text of Vatican MS. 1209 spells out the numbers, even in the book of Numbers with its registration data. This style throughout Vatican MS. 1209 indicates what would be the case with numerals if this MS. did contain Revelation.

J. H. Moulton's *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, of 1929, says, on page 171, that in the Beza MS. (D) of the sixth century ciphers were used, and in a footnote it adds: "The great frequency of this writing in such a MS. as D suggests the PROBABILITY that the autographs used symbols rather than words for numbers." It then refers to a papyrus fragment of the end of the third or the beginning of the fourth century, but, as Dr. F. Kenyon says of this papyrus fragment (P¹), it "is written in too rough and untrained a hand to be of much palaeographical value". (*Palaeogr. of Greek Papyri*, page 109, note) It represents the type of "New Testament" which was used by poor men in the third or fourth centuries. The papyrus fragment (P⁴) of Revelation 9:10 to 17:2 is about of the same age, and is written

with a rough type; it contains the usual contractions for the sacred names and also abbreviations for numerals. However, as Dr. J. H. Moulton's Grammar shows, the papyrus manuscripts give good support to writing or spelling out numbers, and, as he also says (page 173), "arithmetical processes are not represented in New Testament." Hence there would be no general use for ciphers required in the Christian Greek Scriptures or "New Testament". In Adolf Deissmann's *Light from the Ancient East*, he writes on the "language of the New Testament", and points out how among the words supposed to be thought not standard Greek of the day but only "Biblical" Greek were a series of numerals spelled out. (Page 77, par. 1, footnote 1)

Finally, we quote from the exhaustive work of 1,454 pages, by Dr. A. T. Robertson, of 1923, entitled "A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research". Discussing numerals it says (page 283): "As a rule in the New Testament MSS. the numbers are spelled out instead of mere signs being used."

It is true, as your letter states, that we do not know for certain whether "the apostles and their fellow disciples wrote all the numbers spelled out in full, seeing that we have no knowledge of their original writings being still in existence". But what *The Watchtower* had said was based upon the indications of such highly respected and authoritative MSS. of great age as the Vatican MS. 1209, Sinaitic and Alexandrine. So, as we see it, the situation calls for one of tolerance of opinions upon the matter, while we seek to find which way the weight of authority leans and then lean accordingly, even if it does break up previously held views.

Appreciating your frankness and intense interest, we remain

Faithfully yours in Kingdom service,

Watchtower B. & F. Society, Inc.

NOTE: There is a set of papyri known as the "John H. Scheide Biblical Papyri" and which date from the late second or early third century. They include Ezekiel 19:12 to 39:29 (with some losses), in Greek, and are now deposited at Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey. In these papyri of such early date the numerals in the text are written out in full, and ciphers are not used. The pages are the only parts that are numbered with the letters of the Greek alphabet used as numerals. This confirms what is said in the above letter concerning the commonness of writing or spelling out the numbers in full in the body of the Bible text.

FIELD EXPERIENCE

SHARING GOOD NEWS

Learning of the good news of God's kingdom makes the honest-hearted want to share it with others, as the following experience from Missouri shows:

"While in the magazine work I placed the 'Let God Be True' book with a lady. She gave me her name and address and I called on her later. Her husband was opposed, so she asked for my name and address and said she would come

and see me when she could. One Saturday morning while we were eating breakfast she knocked on our door. We asked her to have a cup of tea with us and she did. She said she had a few subscriptions that she wanted to give me for the *Awake!* for some of her friends. I was very much surprised when she handed me a slip of paper with twelve names and addresses on it. She said she had found a bankbook, had returned it, and had received a reward for it. She thought this was the best thing she could do with the money."