

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



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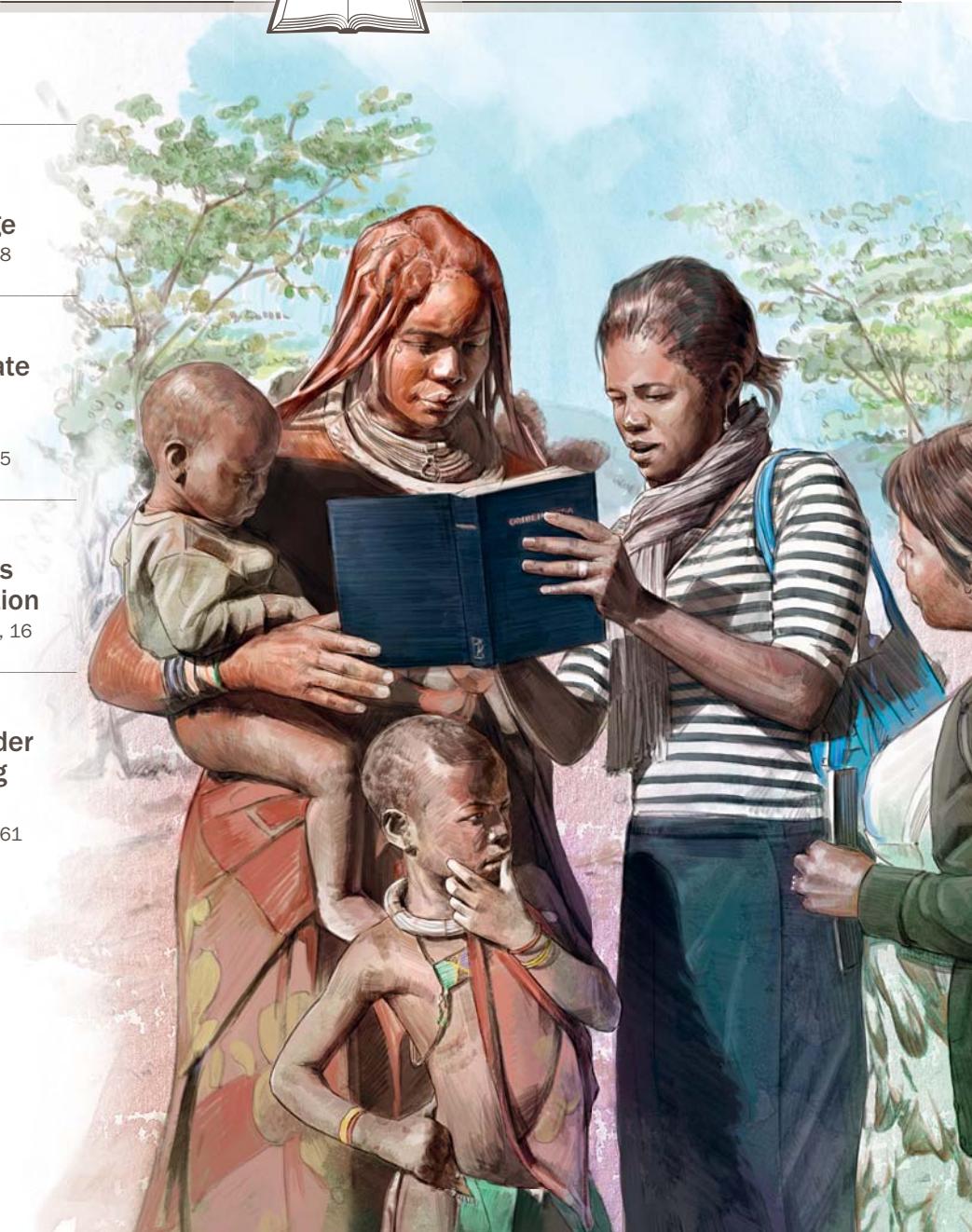
Stay in Jehovah's Valley of Protection

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NAMIBIA

COVER: A publisher in northwest Namibia witnessing to a Himba woman. Himba women, who belong to a nation of nomadic cattle herders, apply to their hair and skin a mixture that includes red ochre powder from crushed rock

POPULATION

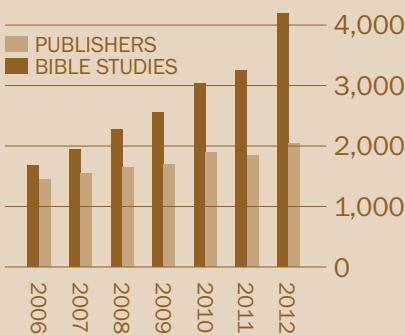
2,373,000

PUBLISHERS

2,040

BIBLE STUDIES

4,192



STUDY ARTICLES

- **This Is Our Spiritual Heritage**
- **Do You Appreciate Our Spiritual Heritage?**

Important features of the rich spiritual heritage of Jehovah's people are considered in these articles. They show how God has preserved his Word, has blessed the use of his name, and has made possible the preservation of spiritual truth that protects us from religious error.

- **Stay in Jehovah's Valley of Protection**

This article explains what the valley of protection mentioned at Zechariah 14:4 is and shows why we should stay in that valley. It also discusses what the living waters referred to at Zechariah 14:8 are and what drinking from them can mean for us.

- **Let Nothing Hinder You From Taking Hold of Glory**

This article shows how we can take hold of the glory that Jehovah confers on humans. It also explains what can hinder us from doing so and how our continuing to seek glory can help others.

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- 22 Beware of the Intentions of the Heart
- 30 She Belonged to the Family of Caiaphas
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"This is the heritage of Jehovah's servants."

—ISA. 54:17, *Byington*.

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

What has God done to preserve his written Word?

How has Jehovah's name been preserved for the use of his people?

Explain how God has preserved spiritual truth despite assaults on it.

THIS IS OUR SPIRITUAL HERITAGE

JEHOVAH, “the living and enduring God,” has preserved his life-giving message for mankind. It is sure to last, for “the saying [or, “word,” *Byington*] of Jehovah endures forever.” (1 Pet. 1:23-25) How grateful we are that Jehovah has lovingly preserved such vital information in his written Word, the Bible!

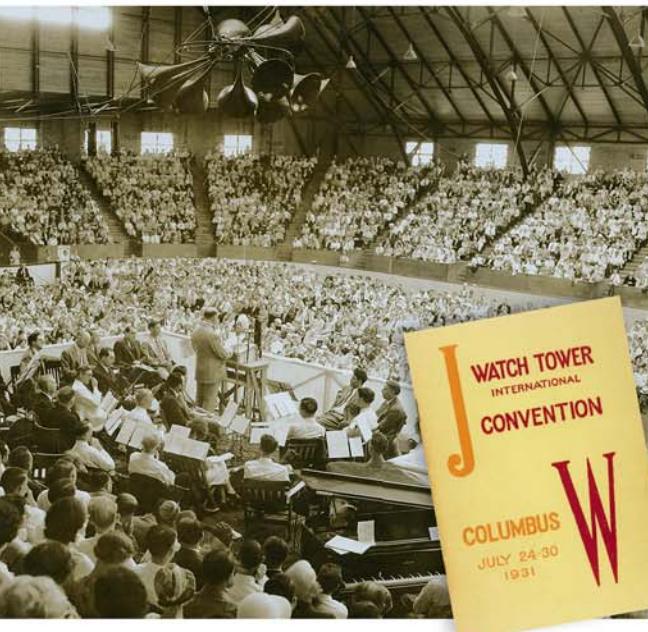
² In his Word, God has preserved for the use of his people the very name he chose for himself. The Scriptures first mention “Jehovah God” in “a history of the heavens and the earth.” (Gen. 2:4) God’s name was miraculously inscribed several times on the stone tablets bearing the Ten Commandments. For instance, the first commandment began: “I am *Jehovah* your God.” (Ex. 20:1-17) God’s name lives on because the Sovereign Lord Jehovah has preserved his Word and his name despite all satanic efforts to eliminate them.—Ps. 73:28.

³ In his Word, Jehovah has also preserved the truth. Though religious error abounds worldwide, how thankful we are that God has given us spiritual light and truth! (*Read Psalm 43:3, 4.*) Whereas the masses of mankind walk in darkness, we joyfully keep on walking in God-given spiritual light.—1 John 1:6, 7.

WE HAVE A HERITAGE TO BE CHERISHED

⁴ As Christians, we have a precious heritage. Says *Collins Cobuild English Dictionary*: “A country’s heritage is all the qualities, traditions, or features of life there that have continued over many years and have

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1. What has Jehovah lovingly preserved for the benefit of mankind?
 2. In his written Word, what has God preserved for the use of his people?
 3. Though religious error abounds, what has God preserved?
 - 4, 5. What special privilege has been ours since the year 1931?



We were delighted to accept the name Jehovah's Witnesses at our convention in 1931

been passed on from one generation to another." Our spiritual heritage includes the blessing of enjoying accurate knowledge of God's Word and a clear understanding of the truth about him and his purposes. It also involves a very special privilege.

5 That privilege became part of our spiritual legacy at our convention in Columbus, Ohio, U.S.A., in 1931. The letters "JW" appeared on the printed program. One sister said: "Speculations were made as to what JW stood for—Just Wait, Just Watch, and the correct one." We had been called Bible Students, but we adopted the name Jehovah's Witnesses by resolution on Sunday, July 26, 1931. It was a thrill to receive that Scriptural name. (*Read Isaiah 43:12.*) "I will never forget the tremendous shout and applause that vibrated through that meeting place," recalled one brother. No one else in the world wanted that name,

but God has blessed us in the use of it for over eight decades. What a special privilege it is to be Jehovah's Witnesses!

6 Our spiritual heritage includes a wealth of accurate and valuable information from the past. For example, consider Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. These patriarchs and their families must have had discussions about how to please Jehovah. So it is not surprising that upright Joseph rejected sexual immorality so as not to "sin against God." (Gen. 39:7-9) Christian traditions were also handed down orally or by example. Among these were points regarding the Lord's Evening Meal that the apostle Paul passed on to Christian congregations. (1 Cor. 11:2, 23) Today, details needed for us to worship God "with spirit and truth" are part of his written Word. (*Read John 4:23, 24.*) The Bible is for the enlightenment of all mankind, but we as Jehovah's servants especially appreciate it.

7 In part, our spiritual heritage consists of more recently published accounts proving that 'Jehovah is on our side.' (Ps. 118:7) This makes us feel secure, even when we are persecuted. A heartening part of our ever-increasing spiritual heritage is this promise: "'Any weapon whatever that will be formed against you will have no success, and any tongue at all that will rise up against you in the judgment you will condemn. This is the hereditary possession [or, "heritage," *By*] of the servants of Jehovah, and their righteousness is from me,' is the utterance of Jehovah." (Isa. 54:17) Nothing in Satan's arsenal of weapons can do us permanent harm.

6. Our spiritual heritage includes what accurate information?
7. Our legacy includes what heartening promise?

8 Satan has tried to destroy God's Word, eliminate the name Jehovah, and suppress the truth. But he certainly is no match for Jehovah, who has foiled all these efforts. In this article and in the next, we will see (1) how God has preserved his Word; (2) how Jehovah has seen to the preservation of his name; and (3) how our heavenly Father is the Source and Preserver of the truth we enjoy.

JEHOVAH HAS PRESERVED HIS WORD

9 Jehovah has preserved his Word against all odds. Says the *Enciclopedia Cattolica* (Catholic Encyclopedia): "In 1229, the Council of Toulouse prohibited laymen from using them [vernacular Bibles] in view of the fight against the Albigenses and the Waldenses . . . The assembly held in 1234 in Tarragona, Spain, under James I issued a similar prohibition. . . . The Roman See intervened in the matter for the first time in 1559, when Paul IV's Index forbade the printing and possession of vernacular B[ibles] without the permission of the Holy Office."

10 Despite various assaults on the Bible, it has been preserved. About 1382, John Wycliffe and his associates produced the first Bible translation in English. Another Bible translator was William Tyndale, who was put to death in 1536. Tied to a stake, he reportedly cried out, "Lord, open the eyes of the king of England." Then he was strangled and burned.

11 The Bible has survived in the face of opposition. In 1535, for instance, the English translation of the Bible by Miles

8. What will we consider in this article and in the next?

9-11. What examples show that the Bible has survived various assaults?

Coverdale came on the scene. Coverdale used Tyndale's rendition of the "New Testament" and of the "Old Testament" from Genesis through Chronicles. He translated other parts of the Scriptures from Latin and from Martin Luther's Bible in German. Today, the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* is appreciated for its clarity, fidelity to the Bible text, and usefulness in our ministry. We rejoice that no demonic or human power will ever block the preservation of Jehovah's Word.

JEHOVAH'S PRESERVATION OF HIS NAME

12 Jehovah God has seen to it that his name is preserved in his Word. In this regard, the *New World Translation* is playing a major role. In the introduction,

12. What role has the *New World Translation* played in the preservation of the divine name?

Such men as Tyndale gave their lives for the sake of God's Word



From Foxe's Book of Martyrs

its committee of dedicated translators wrote: “The foremost feature of this translation is the restoration of the divine name to its rightful place in the English text. It has been done, using the commonly accepted English form ‘Jehovah’ 6,973 times in the Hebrew Scriptures and 237 times in the Christian Greek Scriptures.” The *New World Translation* is now available, in whole or in part, in over 116 languages, and more than 178,545,862 copies have been printed.

13 People have known God’s name since the creation of mankind. Adam and Eve were aware of it, and they knew exactly how to pronounce it. When Ham showed disrespect for his father after the Flood, Noah said: “Blessed be Jehovah, Shem’s God, and let [Ham’s son] Canaan become a slave to him.” (Gen. 4:1; 9:26) God himself declared: “I am Jehovah. That is my name; and to no one else shall I give my own glory.” God also stated: “I am Jehovah, and there is no one else. With the exception of me there is no God.” (Isa. 42:8; 45:5) Jehovah has seen to it that his name has been preserved and made known to people around the earth. How privileged we are to use the name Jehovah and serve as his Witnesses! In effect, we cry out: “In the name of our God we shall lift our banners.”—Ps. 20:5.

14 God’s name does not appear only in the Bible. Consider the Moabite Stone, found at Dhiban (Dibon), 13 miles (21 km) east of the Dead Sea. The stone mentions Israel’s King Omri and gives Moabite King Mesha’s version of his re-

13. Why can it be said that people have known God’s name since the creation of mankind?

14. Other than in the Bible, where can God’s name be found?

volt against Israel. (1 Ki. 16:28; 2 Ki. 1:1; 3:4, 5) But the Moabite Stone is of special interest because God’s name appears on it in Tetragrammaton form. The Tetragrammaton also appears repeatedly in the Lachish Letters, earthenware fragments found in Israel.

15 Early Bible translators had a part in the preservation of the divine name. After their exile in Babylon from 607 B.C.E. to 537 B.C.E., many Jews did not return to Judah and Israel. By the third century B.C.E., Alexandria, Egypt, had become the home of numerous Jews who needed a translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek, then an international language. Completed by the second century B.C.E., that version is the *Septuagint*. Some copies of it contain the name Jehovah in its Hebrew form.

16 The divine name is found in the Bay Psalm Book, the first piece of literature published in England’s American colonies. Its original edition (printed in 1640) contains the Psalms, translated from Hebrew into the English of that day. It uses God’s name in such passages as Psalm 1:1, 2, which says that a “blessed man” does not walk in the advice of the wicked, “but in the law of Jehovah, is his longing delight.” For more information about God’s name, see the brochure *The Divine Name That Will Endure Forever*.

JEHOVAH PRESERVES SPIRITUAL TRUTH

17 We joyfully serve “Jehovah the God of truth.” (Ps. 31:5) “The truth about

15. What is the *Septuagint*, and how did it come about?

16. Give an example of the use of God’s name in a book first published in the year 1640.

17, 18. (a) How would you define the word “truth”? (b) “The truth of the good news” consists of what?

something is all the facts about it, rather than things that are imagined or invented," says *Collins Cobuild English Dictionary*. In Biblical Hebrew, the term often translated "truth" pertains to something that is true, trustworthy, faithful, or factual. The Greek word rendered "truth" denotes that which conforms to fact or to what is proper and right.

18 Jehovah has preserved spiritual truth and has made knowledge of it available to us in ever-increasing abundance. (2 John 1, 2) Our comprehension of the truth steadily becomes clearer, for "the path of the righteous ones is like the bright light that is getting lighter and lighter until the day is firmly established"! (Prov. 4:18) Of course, we fully agree with Jesus, who said in prayer to God: "Your word is truth." (John 17:17) God's written Word contains "the truth of the good news," which consists of the whole body of Christian teachings. (Gal. 2:14) In part, these include facts about Jehovah's name, his sovereignty, Jesus' ransom sacrifice, the resurrection, and the Kingdom. Let us now consider how God has preserved the truth despite Satan's attempts to suppress it.

JEHOVAH FOILS AN ASSAULT ON THE TRUTH

19 After the Flood, there was a saying: "Just like Nimrod a mighty hunter in opposition to Jehovah." (Gen. 10:9) As an opposer of Jehovah God, Nimrod in effect worshipped Satan and was like those opposers to whom Jesus said: "You are from your father the Devil, and you wish to do the desires of your father. That one . . . did not stand fast in the truth."—John 8:44.

20 Nimrod's domain included Babel

19, 20. Who was Nimrod, and what endeavor failed in his day?

and other cities between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. (Gen. 10:10) It was possibly under his direction that the building of Babel and its tower began about 2269 B.C.E. Contrary to Jehovah's will that mankind spread throughout the earth, those builders said: "Come on! Let us build ourselves a city and also a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a celebrated name for ourselves, for fear we may be scattered over all the surface of the earth." But that scheme had to be abandoned when God "confused the language of all the earth" and scattered the would-be tower builders. (Gen. 11:1-4, 8, 9) If Satan had thus planned to start one religion with everyone worshipping him, his plot was an utter failure. Throughout human history, the worship of Jehovah has prevailed and is gaining momentum with each passing day.

21 Never has false religion posed a serious threat to true worship. Why? Because our Grand Instructor has seen to the preservation of his written Word, has kept his name before mankind, and has been the limitless Source of spiritual truth. (Isa. 30:20, 21) Worshipping God in accord with the truth brings us joy, but doing so requires that we remain spiritually vigilant, relying fully on Jehovah and following the guidance of his holy spirit.

22 In the next article, we will trace the development of certain false doctrines. We will find that these crumble when tested in the light of the Scriptures. Moreover, we will see how the incomparable Preserver of truth, Jehovah, has blessed us with true teachings that we cherish as part of our spiritual heritage.

21, 22. (a) Why has false religion never posed a serious threat to true worship? (b) What will we consider in the following article?



"God . . . turned his attention to the nations to take out of them a people for his name."—ACTS 15:14.

HOW WOULD YOU RESPOND?

Specifically identify an unscriptural doctrine, and show how we have been protected from believing in it.

How have we been released from sin and death?

What is your attitude toward Jehovah's sovereignty and the related issue of integrity?

DO YOU APPRECIATE OUR SPIRITUAL HERITAGE?

DURING a milestone governing body meeting in Jerusalem in 49 C.E., the disciple James said: "Symeon [Peter] has related thoroughly how God for the first time turned his attention to the nations to take out of them a people for his name. And with this the words of the Prophets agree, just as it is written, 'After these things I shall return and rebuild the booth of David that is fallen down; and I shall rebuild its ruins and erect it again, in order that those who remain of the men may earnestly seek Jehovah, together with people of all the nations, people who are called by my name, says Jehovah, who is doing these things, known from of old.'”—Acts 15:13-18.

² "The booth [or, royal house] of David" fell when King Zedekiah was dethroned. (Amos 9:11) However, that "booth" would be rebuilt with David's descendant Jesus as the permanent King. (Ezek. 21:27; Acts 2:29-36) As James pointed out at that historic meeting, this prophecy of Amos was being fulfilled in the gathering of Kingdom heirs from both Jews and Gentiles. Today, a remnant of anointed Christians and millions of Jesus' "other sheep" are united in declaring Bible truth as servants of Jehovah.—John 10:16.

JEHOVAH'S PEOPLE MEET A CHALLENGE

³ When the Jews were taken into captivity in Babylon, it was clear that "the booth of David" had fallen. Since false religion ran rampant in Babylonia, how did God's people survive spiritually during their 70-year exile there from 607 B.C.E. to 537 B.C.E.?

1, 2. (a) What was "the booth of David," and how was it to be rebuilt? (b) Who serve together as Jehovah's servants today?

3, 4. How did Jehovah's people survive spiritually in Babylon?

The same way we survive as Jehovah's people in this world under Satan's control. (1 John 5:19) A rich spiritual heritage has helped to make such survival possible.

4 As part of our spiritual legacy, we have the written Word of God. Jewish exiles in Babylon did not have the Holy Scriptures in complete form, but they did have knowledge of the Mosaic Law, with its Ten Commandments. They knew "the songs of Zion," could recall many proverbs, and were acquainted with the exploits of earlier servants of Jehovah. Yes, those exiles wept when they remembered Zion, and they did not forget Jehovah. (*Read Psalm 137:1-6.*) That kept them alive spiritually even in Babylon, with its many false doctrines and practices.

THE TRINITY IS NOT NEW

5 The religious triad, or trinity, was a prominent feature of worship in Babylon. One Babylonian triad was composed of Sin (a moon-god), Shamash (a sun-god), and Ishtar (a goddess of fertility and war). In ancient Egypt, a god was often viewed as being married to a goddess who bore him a son, "forming a divine triad or trinity in which the father, moreover, was not always the chief, contenting himself on occasion with the role of prince consort, while the principal deity of the locality remained the goddess." (*New Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology*) One Egyptian triad consisted of the god Osiris, the goddess Isis, and their son Horus.

6 Christendom has its triad—the Trini-

ty. Clerics say that the Father, the Son, and the holy spirit are one God. But that is an assault on the sovereignty of Jehovah, making it seem that he is triune—in effect, only one third of a supposed godhead. Jehovah's people have been protected from believing such error because they agree with these inspired words: "Listen, O Israel: Jehovah our God is one Jehovah." (Deut. 6:4) Jesus quoted that statement, and would any true Christian disagree with him?—Mark 12:29.

7 The Trinity doctrine runs counter to the commission Jesus gave his followers to "make disciples of people of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy spirit." (Matt. 28:19) To be baptized as a genuine Christian and one of Jehovah's Witnesses, a person must acknowledge the supremacy of the Father, Jehovah, as well as the position and authority of God's Son, Jesus. The baptism candidate must also believe that the holy spirit is God's active force, not part of a Trinity. (Gen. 1:2) An individual who continues to believe in the Trinity cannot be baptized in symbol of a valid dedication to Jehovah God. How grateful we are that our spiritual legacy has protected us from believing this God-dishonoring teaching!

SPIRITISM REARS ITS UGLY HEAD!

8 Religious thought in Babylonia provided plenty of room for false doctrines, deities, demons, and spiritism. *The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia* states: "Next in importance to the gods in the Bab[ylonian] religion are the

5. What evidence of religious triads, or trinities, do we have from ancient Babylon and Egypt?

6. How would you define the Trinity, and how have we been protected from believing such error?

7. Why is it impossible for a person who believes in the Trinity to be baptized in symbol of a valid dedication to God?

8. What was the Babylonian view of gods and demons?

demons who had the power to afflict men with manifold diseases of body or mind. A large part of the religion seems to have been given up to an agonized struggle against these demons, and the gods were everywhere approached by prayer to assist men against these demons."

9 After their Babylonian exile, many Jews fell prey to unscriptural ideas. As Greek concepts made inroads, many Jews became vulnerable to demonic control because they adopted the view that demons could be evil or good. Our spiritual legacy protects us from the dangers of willing involvement with demons, for we know that God condemned Babylon's spiritistic practices. (Isa. 47:1, 12-15) Moreover, we are guided by God's view of spiritism.—*Read Deuteronomy 18:10-12; Revelation 21:8.*

10 Spiritism has been practiced not only by the Babylonians but also by supporters of Babylon the Great, the world empire of false religion. (Rev. 18:21-24) *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* states: "Babylon [the Great] embraces more than one empire or culture. It is defined rather by dominant idolatries than by geographical or temporal boundaries." (Vol. 1, p. 338) Riddled with spiritism, idolatry, and other sins, Babylon the Great still exists—but not for long.—*Read Revelation 18:1-5.*

11 Jehovah declared: "I cannot put up with the use of uncanny power." (Isa. 1:13) Often called spiritualism, the prac-

9. (a) After their Babylonian exile, how did many Jews fall prey to false religious ideas? (b) How are we protected from the dangers of willing involvement with the demons?

10. What can be said about the practices and beliefs of Babylon the Great?

11. What warnings have we published regarding spiritism?

tice of spiritism played a notable role in 19th-century thinking. *Zion's Watch Tower* of May 1885 therefore said: "The belief that the dead are alive in another sphere or condition of being is not new. It was part of the religion of the ancients, and was the very root of all mythology." The article added that the unscriptural idea of the dead communicating with the living "has given cover and force to the deceptions practised by 'demons' under the guise of dis-embodied spirits of men. They have eagerly availed themselves of this mode of concealing their identity, and have thus perpetuated their sway over the minds and lives of many." The early booklet *What Say the Scriptures About Spiritism?* gave similar warnings, as have our more recent publications.

ARE SOULS SUFFERING IN AN UNDERWORLD?

12 "All those . . . who have come to know the truth" can answer that question. (2 John 1) We surely agree with Solomon's words: "A live dog is better off than a dead lion. For the living are conscious that they will die; but as for the dead, they are conscious of nothing at all . . . All that your hand finds to do, do with your very power, for there is no work nor devising nor knowledge nor wisdom in Sheol [mankind's common grave], the place to which you are going."—Eccl. 9:4, 5, 10.

13 The Jews were in a position to know the truth about the dead. When Greece was divided among the generals of Alexander the Great, however, efforts were made to unite Judah with Syria by

12. Under inspiration, Solomon said what about the condition of the dead?

13. How were the Jews affected by Hellenic culture and religion?

such means as Greek religion and Hellenic culture. As a result, the Jews accepted the false teachings that the human soul is immortal and that there is an underworld place of torment. The Greeks did not originate the idea of an underworld full of suffering souls, for the Babylonians thought of "the nether world . . . as a place full of horrors, . . . presided over by gods and demons of great strength and fierceness." (*The Religion of Babylonia and Assyria*) Yes, the Babylonians believed in the immortality of the soul.

14 Although the righteous man Job did not have the Scriptures, he knew the truth about death. He also realized that Jehovah is a loving God who would have a yearning to resurrect him. (Job 14:13-15) Abraham too believed in the resurrection. (*Read Hebrews 11:17-19.*)

14. What did Job and Abraham know about death and resurrection?

Since it is impossible to resurrect someone who cannot die, those God-fearing men did not believe in the immortality of the human soul. God's spirit undoubtedly helped Job and Abraham to understand the state of the dead and to exercise faith in the resurrection. These truths are also part of our heritage.

"RELEASE BY THE RANSOM"—VITAL

15 We are grateful that God has also revealed the truth about his means to deliver us from the legacy of sin and death inherited from Adam. (Rom. 5:12) We realize that Jesus "came, not to be ministered to, but to minister and to give his soul a ransom in exchange for many." (Mark 10:45) How good it is to know about "the release by the ransom paid by Christ Jesus"!—Rom. 3:22-24.

16 First-century Jews and Gentiles

15, 16. How have we been released from sin and death?

How Have We Been Protected From False Beliefs?



"Listen, O Israel: Jehovah our God is one Jehovah."

—Deut. 6:4



"I cannot put up with the use of uncanny power."

—Isa. 1:13



"As for the dead, they are conscious of nothing at all."

—Eccl. 9:5, 10

needed to repent of their sins and to exercise faith in Jesus' ransom sacrifice. Otherwise, they could have no forgiveness. The situation is the same today. (John 3:16, 36) If a person clings to false doctrines, such as the Trinity and the immortality of the soul, he cannot benefit from the ransom. But we can. We know the truth about "the Son of [God's] love, by means of whom we have our release by ransom, the forgiveness of our sins."—Col. 1:13, 14.

PRESS ON AS THE PEOPLE FOR JEHOVAH'S NAME!

17 Much more could be said about the true teachings we embrace, our experiences as God's servants, and the spiritual and material blessings we enjoy. For decades, our *Yearbooks* have contained thrilling accounts of our activities in lands around the globe. Our history is recounted in the videos *Faith in Action*, Parts 1 and 2, and in such publications as *Jehovah's Witnesses—Proclaimers of God's Kingdom*. And our magazines often contain heartwarming first-person accounts about beloved fellow believers.

18 We benefit from balanced consideration of the history of Jehovah's organization, even as the people of Israel benefited from reflecting on how God delivered them from Egyptian bondage. (Ex. 12:26, 27) As an old man who could testify to God's wonderful acts, Moses urged the Israelites: "Remember the days of old, consider the years back from generation to generation; ask your father, and he can tell you; your old men, and they can say it to you." (Deut. 32:7)

17, 18. Where can we find helpful information about our history, and how can we benefit from learning about it?

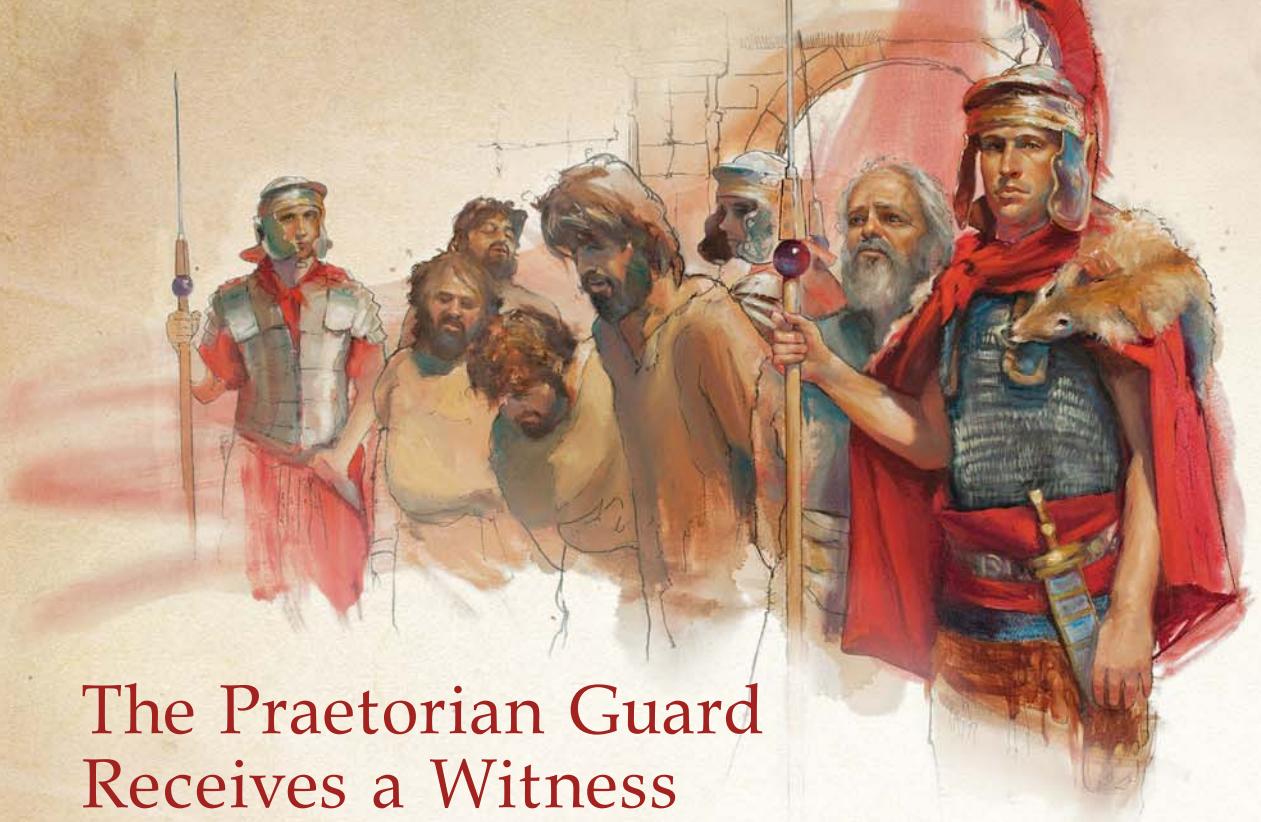
As 'Jehovah's people and the flock of his pasturage,' all of us joyously declare his praise and tell others of his mighty acts. (Ps. 79:13) Moreover, we do well to examine our history, learn from it, and plan for the future.

19 We are grateful that we do not wander in darkness but enjoy spiritual light from God. (Prov. 4:18, 19) So let us diligently study God's Word and zealously share the truth with others in the prayerful spirit of the psalmist who praised the Sovereign Lord Jehovah with the words: "I shall mention your righteousness, yours alone. O God, you have taught me from my youth on, and until now I keep telling about your wonderful works. And even until old age and gray-headedness, O God, do not leave me, until I may tell about your arm to the generation, to all those who are to come, about your mightiness."—Ps. 71:16-18.

20 As Jehovah's dedicated people, we recognize the related issues of divine sovereignty and human integrity. Indeed, we proclaim the undeniable truth that Jehovah is the Universal Sovereign, worthy of our wholehearted devotion. (Rev. 4:11) With his spirit upon us, we also declare good news to the meek, bind up the brokenhearted, and comfort those who mourn. (Isa. 61:1, 2) Despite Satan's futile attempts to dominate God's people and all mankind, we deeply appreciate our spiritual heritage and are determined to maintain our integrity to God and laud the Sovereign Lord Jehovah now and forever.—*Read Psalm 26:11; 86:12.*

19. Since we enjoy spiritual light, what should we do?

20. What related issues exist, and how do you feel about them?



The Praetorian Guard Receives a Witness

The year is 59 C.E. In the custody of travel-weary soldiers, a number of prisoners enter Rome through the Porta Capena gate. On Palatine Hill is the palace of Emperor Nero, guarded by Praetorian soldiers with swords concealed under their formal togas.* The centurion Julius marches his prisoners past the Roman Forum and up Viminal Hill. They pass a garden with many altars to Roman gods and also go by a parade ground where military maneuvers take place.

Among the prisoners is the apostle Paul. Months earlier when he was on a storm-tossed ship, an angel of God told Paul: "You must stand before Caesar." (Acts 27:24) Is Paul about to have that experience? As he turns to look out at the capital of the Roman Empire, no doubt the words that the Lord Jesus spoke to him at the Tower of Antonia in Jerusalem come to his mind. "Be of good courage!" Jesus said. "For as you have been giving a thorough witness on the things about me in Jerusalem, so you must also bear witness in Rome."—Acts 23:10, 11.

Perhaps Paul pauses to look at the Castra Praetoria—a large fortress with high red-brick walls topped with battlements and towers. The fortress houses members of the Praetorian Guard, who serve as the emperor's bodyguards, and also the city's police force. With



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A relief of Praetorian soldiers thought to be from the Arch of Claudius, built in 51 C.E.

* See the box entitled "The Praetorian Guard in Nero's Day."



Courtesy Classical
Numismatic Group,
Inc./cngcoins.com



This coin issued in the first century depicts the Praetorian camp

The Praetorian Guard in Nero's Day

The Praetorians were under oath to protect the emperor and his family. When on campaign, they carried their own standards bearing icons of the emperor as well as shields, often emblazoned with scorpions, the star sign of Tiberius Caesar. Commanded by tribunes and centurions, they also maintained order at the games and in the theaters and reinforced the fire-fighting service. Soldiers served for 16 years, instead of the 25 served in the legions, and received triple pay, abundant bonuses, and a generous retirement pay. Praetorians were also used to torture and execute prisoners. Following his second imprisonment, Paul may have been martyred at the hands of soldiers like those he endeavored to save.—2 Tim. 4:16, 17.

12 cohorts* of Praetorians and several urban cohorts stationed there, the fortress could house several thousand soldiers, including cavalry. The Castra Praetoria is a reminder of the source of imperial power. Since the Praetorian Guard is responsible for prisoners from the provinces, Julius leads his group through one of the four main gates. After a perilous journey of several months, he has finally brought his prisoners to their intended destination.—Acts 27:1-3, 43, 44.

THE APOSTLE PREACHES “WITHOUT HINDRANCE”

During the voyage, Paul received divine visions announcing that the entire crew would survive a shipwreck. The bite of a venomous snake caused him no harm. He healed sick people on the island of Malta, where the local people began saying that he was a god. News of these events may have circulated among the superstitious Praetorian Guard.

Paul has already seen brothers from Rome who ‘came to meet him at the Marketplace of Appius and Three Taverns.’ (Acts 28:15) As a prisoner, though, how could he fulfill his desire to declare the good news in Rome? (Rom. 1:14, 15) Some think that the prisoners would be delivered to the captain of the guard. If that is so, Paul was likely taken to the Praetorian Prefect Afranius Burrus, perhaps second in power only to the emperor.* In any case, rather than being guarded by centurions, Paul’s guard is now a single Praetorian soldier of the rank and file. Paul is permitted to arrange for his own accommodations and is allowed to receive visitors and preach to them “without hindrance.”—Acts 28:16, 30, 31.

PAUL WITNESSES TO THE SMALL AND THE GREAT

In the course of his judicial duties, Burrus perhaps interviews the apostle Paul, either at the palace or at the Praetorian camp, before presenting the case to Nero. Paul does not miss this unique opportunity to “witness to both small and great.” (Acts 26:19-23) Whatever may have been Burrus’ evaluation, Paul is spared the prison in the Praetorian camp.[△]

* A Roman cohort was a group of up to 1,000 soldiers.

[△] See the box entitled “Sextus Afranius Burrus.”

[△] Herod Agrippa was imprisoned here by Tiberius Caesar in 36/37 C.E. for expressing his wish that Caligula might soon become emperor. Upon his accession, Caligula rewarded Herod with a kingship.—Acts 12:1.

During Paul's captivity,
soldiers heard him
dictate letters



Paul's rented accommodations are large enough for him to receive "the principal men of the Jews" and to witness to them as well as to 'greater numbers of others who came to him in his lodging place.' He also has a captive audience in the Praetorian soldiers who hear him "bearing thorough witness" to Jews concerning both the Kingdom and Jesus, "from morning till evening." —Acts 28:17, 23.

The Praetorian cohort on duty at the palace is changed daily at the eighth hour. Paul's guard also changes regularly. During the two years of the apostle's captivity, soldiers hear him dictate letters to the Ephesian, Philippian, Colossian, and Hebrew Christians and see him write his own letter to a Christian named Philemon. While imprisoned, Paul gives personal attention to a runaway slave, Onesimus, 'to whom he became a father while in prison bonds,' and sends him back to his master. (Philem. 10) Paul no doubt also takes a personal interest in his guardians. (1 Cor. 9:22) We can just imagine him questioning a soldier on the purpose of various pieces of armor and then using the information in a fine illustration.—Eph. 6: 13-17.



Walls of the Castra Praetoria as they appear today



Musée Calvet Avignon

An inscription bearing the name of Sextus Afranius Burrus

Sextus Afranius Burrus

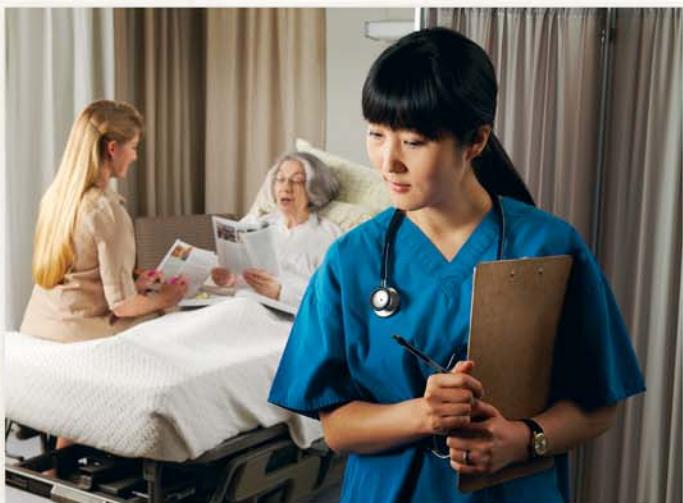
Burrus was probably born in Vaison-la-Romaine, now in southern France, where an inscription bearing his name was found in 1884 C.E. In 51 C.E., he was elevated to the position of sole Prefect of the Praetorian Guard by Agrippina the Younger, wife and niece of Claudius Caesar. Agrippina groomed her young son, Nero, for the role of emperor under the direction of two tutors. One was Burrus, a distinguished soldier who provided military training. The other was the philosopher Seneca, who developed Nero's intellect. At the opportune time, Agrippina had her husband poisoned. Before news of Claudius' death broke, Burrus escorted Nero to the Castra Praetoria and had him proclaimed emperor by the Praetorian Guard, leaving the Senate no option but to accept the choice. When Nero had his mother murdered in 59 C.E., Burrus provided a cover-up. Roman historians Suetonius and Cassius Dio claim that Burrus was poisoned by Nero in 62 C.E.

"SPEAK THE WORD OF GOD FEARLESSLY"

Paul's imprisonment contributes to "the advancement of the good news" among all the Praetorian Guard and others. (Phil. 1:12, 13) The occupants of the Castra Praetoria have connections throughout the Roman Empire, as well as to the emperor and his vast household. That household consists of family members, servants, and slaves, some of whom become Christians. (Phil. 4:22) Through Paul's bold witnessing, the brothers in Rome find the courage "to speak the word of God fearlessly." —Phil. 1:14.

Paul's witnessing in Rome is also a source of encouragement to us as we 'preach the word in favorable season and troublesome season.' (2 Tim. 4:2) Some of us are housebound, in nursing homes or hospitals, or even imprisoned for our faith. Whatever our circumstances, we may find an audience in those who come to us, perhaps to make house calls or to provide us with various services. When we courageously witness on every occasion, we see firsthand that 'the word of God cannot be bound.' —2 Tim. 2:8, 9.

Whatever our circumstances, we may find an audience in those who provide us with various services





"Jehovah will . . . war against those nations as in the day of his warring, in the day of fight."—ZECH. 14:3.

CAN YOU EXPLAIN?

What is symbolized by the splitting of “the mountain of the olive trees”?

What does the “very great valley” represent, and how can we stay there?

What are the “living waters,” and who will benefit from drinking them?

STAY IN JEHOVAH'S VALLEY OF PROTECTION

ON October 30, 1938, millions of people in the United States were listening to a popular radio program that featured theatrical plays. The performance that evening was an adaptation of the science fiction novel *The War of the Worlds*. Actors portraying news announcers described the landing of an invasion force from Mars that would cause widespread destruction on Earth. Although it had been announced that the radio program was a play, many listeners thought that the attack was real and became frightened. Some even took certain measures in an attempt to protect themselves from imaginary aliens.

² Today there is a real war looming on the horizon. However, people are failing to respond to its approach. This war is foretold, not in a science fiction novel, but in God’s inspired Word, the Bible. It is the war of Armageddon—God’s war against this wicked system of things. (Rev. 16:14-16) In this war, God’s servants on earth will not need to defend themselves against aliens from another planet. Still, they will be awestruck by astonishing events and by the fear-inspiring display of God’s power.

³ A Bible prophecy recorded in Zechariah chapter 14 has a direct bearing on the war of Armageddon. Though recorded some 2,500 years ago, this prophecy touches our very lives. (Rom. 15:4) Much of what is stated there relates both to situations affecting God’s people since the Messianic Kingdom was established in heaven in 1914 and to

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- 1, 2. What real war looms on the horizon, and what will God’s servants not need to do in this war?
 3. What prophecy will we consider, and why is it of interest to us?

exciting events that will unfold in the very near future. The salient features of the prophecy include the formation of "a very great valley" and the going forth of "living waters." (Zech. 14:4, 8) This valley plays a vital role in providing protection for Jehovah's worshippers. And when we understand what the living waters can mean for us, not only will we see the need to partake of them but we will also *want* to drink them. It is to our benefit, then, to pay close attention to this prophecy.—2 Pet. 1:19, 20.

'A DAY BELONGING TO JEHOVAH' BEGINS

4 The 14th chapter of Zechariah opens with a reference to 'a day belonging to Jehovah.' (*Read Zechariah 14: 1, 2.*) What is this day? It is "the Lord's day," which began when "the kingdom of the world" became "the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ." (Rev. 1: 10; 11:15) That day started in 1914 with the birth of the Messianic Kingdom in the heavens. Decades before 1914, Jehovah's worshippers declared to the nations that the end of "the appointed times of the nations" would come in that year and that the world would enter into an unequaled period of trouble. (Luke 21:24) How did the nations respond? Instead of paying heed to that timely warning, political and religious leaders scorned and persecuted those zealous anointed evangelizers. In doing so, these world leaders mocked Almighty God himself, for anointed Kingdom ambassadors represent "heavenly Jerusalem"—the Messianic King-

4. (a) When did the 'day belonging to Jehovah' begin? (b) Decades before 1914, what were Jehovah's worshippers declaring, and how did world leaders respond?

dom—of which they are a part.—Heb. 12: 22, 28.

5 Zechariah foretold what action the nations would take, saying: "The city [Jerusalem] will actually be captured." "The city" is symbolic of God's Messianic Kingdom. It is represented on earth by its 'citizens,' the remnant of anointed Christians. (Phil. 3:20) During World War I, prominent members within the earthly part of Jehovah's organization were "captured," or arrested, and sent off to a prison in Atlanta, Georgia, U.S.A. 'The houses were pillaged' in that injustices and brutality were heaped upon these and other innocent integrity keepers. The attackers plundered the wealth of influence that the remnant exercised by banning their literature and restricting their activities as Kingdom proclaimers.

6 Although God's people were outnumbered, misrepresented, opposed, and persecuted at the hands of the attackers, true worship could not be crushed out of existence. There were "the remaining ones of the people," that is, the anointed remnant who loyally refused to be "cut off from the city."

7 Was this prophecy completely fulfilled by the end of World War I? No. More attacks by the nations were to come against the anointed remnant and their loyal companions with an earthly hope. (Rev. 12:17) World War II is a proof of that. The integrity-keeping course of God's faithful anointed Wit-

5, 6. (a) What foretold action did the nations take against "the city" and its 'citizens'? (b) Who were "the remaining ones of the people"?

7. The course of Jehovah's anointed Witnesses sets what example for all true worshippers today?

nesses spurs on God's servants today to endure whatever trials come their way, including opposition from unbelieving relatives, workmates, or schoolmates who ridicule them for their faith. (1 Pet. 1:6, 7) No matter where they live, true worshippers are more determined than ever to 'stand firm in one spirit,' not being 'frightened by their opponents.' (Phil. 1:27, 28) Where, though, will Jehovah's people find safety in a world that hates them?—John 15:17-19.

JEHOVAH FORMS “A VERY GREAT VALLEY”

8 Since Jerusalem—"the city"—is symbolic of heavenly Jerusalem, "the mountain of the olive trees, which is in front of Jerusalem," must also be taken symbolically. What does that mountain represent? How will it be "split at its middle" and become two mountains? Why does Jehovah refer to them as "my mountains"? (*Read Zechariah 14:3-5.*) In the Bible, mountains can represent kingdoms, or governments. Also, blessings and protection are associated with God's mountain. (Ps. 72:3; Isa. 25:6, 7) Thus, the mountain of the olive trees on which God stands to the east of earthly Jerusalem represents Jehovah's universal sovereignty, his supreme rulership.

9 What is indicated by the division of the mountain of the olive trees? The mountain, which is to the east of Jerusalem, splits in the sense that Jehovah establishes another rulership, a subsidiary one. This secondary rulership is the Messianic Kingdom in the hands of Jesus Christ. That is why Jehovah speaks

8. (a) What can mountains symbolize in the Bible? (b) What does "the mountain of the olive trees" represent?

9. In what sense does "the Mount of Olives" split?

of the two mountains that result from the splitting of "the Mount of Olives" as being "my mountains." (Zech. 14:4, ftn.) Both of them are his.

10 When the symbolic mountain splits, half to the north and half to the south, Jehovah's feet remain set upon both mountains. "A very great valley" comes into existence beneath Jehovah's feet. This symbolic valley represents divine protection, by which Jehovah's servants find safety under his universal sovereignty and his Son's Messianic Kingdom. Jehovah will make sure that pure worship will never be snuffed out. When did this division of the mountain of the olive trees take place? It occurred when the Messianic Kingdom was established at the end of the Gentile Times in 1914. When did the flight of true worshippers to the symbolic valley begin?

THE FLIGHT TO THE VALLEY BEGINS!

11 Jesus warned his followers: "You will be objects of hatred by all the nations on account of my name." (Matt. 24:9) During the last days of this system of things, since 1914, that hatred has become especially intense. In spite of the vicious attack launched against the anointed remnant by their enemies during World War I, those of this faithful group were not killed off. In 1919 they were liberated from the clutches of Babylon the Great—the world empire of false religion. (Rev. 11:11, 12)* That is

* See *Revelation—Its Grand Climax at Hand!* pages 169-170.

10. What does the "very great valley" between the two mountains represent?

11, 12. (a) When did the flight to the symbolic valley begin? (b) What proves that Jehovah's strong arm is with his people?

when the flight to the valley of Jehovah's mountains began.

12 Since 1919 the valley of divine protection continues to protect true worshippers earth wide. Over the decades, in many parts of the world, there have been bans and restrictions on the field ministry and the Bible literature of Jehovah's Witnesses. Such restrictions still exist in certain lands. Try as the nations may, however, they will never succeed in stamping out true worship! Jehovah's powerful arm will prove to be with his people.—Deut. 11:2.

13 If we stick to Jehovah and stand firm in the truth, he and his Son, Jesus Christ, will do their part, and God will not allow anyone or anything to 'snatch us out of His hand.' (John 10:28, 29) Jehovah is ready to extend whatever help is needed so that we may obey him as the Universal Sovereign and remain loyal subjects of the Messianic Kingdom. It is imperative that we remain in the valley of protection, for that valley will take on even greater meaning for true worshippers during the fast-approaching great tribulation.

'THE DAY OF WARRING' ARRIVES

14 As the end of this system of things draws closer, Satan will intensify his attacks upon Jehovah's servants. Then will come "the day of [God's] warring" against his enemies. Jehovah will make sure that one of Satan's attacks will prove to be his last. On that day, the Sovereign of the universe will distinguish himself as a Warrior more glori-

13. How do we stay in Jehovah's protective valley, and why is it now more important than ever to do so?

14, 15. On "the day of [God's] warring" against his enemies, what will be the situation of those outside the valley?

ously than he has during any previous "day of fight."—Zech. 14:3.

15 On the day of God's warring, what will be the situation of those outside the "great valley" of protection? They will have "no precious light" of divine favor shining upon them. In that coming day of fight, "the horse, the mule, the camel, and the male ass, and every sort of domestic animal"—symbols of the nations' military equipment—will be affected. Such equipment will be "congealed," put out of operation as if stiffened by cold. Jehovah will also use pestilence and "the scourge." Whether literal or not, the scourge will silence terrifying threats. On that day, "one's very eyes . . . and tongue will rot away" in that the attackers will be able to strike out only blindly and their defiant speech will be silenced. (Zech. 14:6, 7, 12, 15) No section of the earth will escape destruction. The forces lined up on Satan's side in the battle will be tremendous. (Rev. 19:19-21) "Those slain by Jehovah will certainly come to be in that day from one end of the earth clear to the other end."—Jer. 25:32, 33.

16 Warfare always brings suffering, even to the eventual victors. Food may run short. Property may be lost. Standards of living may drop. Personal freedoms may be curtailed. If such hardships befall us, how will we react? Will we panic? Will we renounce our faith under pressure? Will we lose hope and sink into despondency? How vital it will be during the great tribulation to maintain our faith in Jehovah's saving power and to remain in Jehovah's valley of protection!—*Read Habakkuk 3:17, 18.*

16. In view of the approaching day of God's warring, what questions should we contemplate, and what will we need to do?

"LIVING WATERS WILL GO FORTH"

17 Following Armageddon, "living waters" will flow continuously from the seat of the Messianic Kingdom. These "living waters" are Jehovah's provisions for life. "The eastern sea" refers to the Dead Sea, and "the western sea" to the Mediterranean Sea. Both are used with reference to people. The Dead Sea would well represent those who are in the common grave of all mankind. Since the Mediterranean Sea teems with life, it would aptly depict

17, 18. (a) What are the "living waters"? (b) What do "the eastern sea" and "the western sea" represent? (c) As you look ahead to the future, what is your determination?

the "great crowd" of Armageddon survivors. (*Read Zechariah 14:8, 9; Rev. 7:9-15*) Thus, both groups will benefit by being released from the condemnation of Adamic death as they keep quenching their thirst with the symbolic living waters, or "river of water of life."—Rev. 22:1, 2.

18 Under Jehovah's protection, we will survive the end of this wicked system of things and enter into God's righteous new world. Though we are objects of hatred by all the nations, let us be resolved to remain loyal subjects of God's Kingdom, ever determined to stay in Jehovah's valley of protection.

**Be determined
to stay in Jehovah's
valley of protection**





Beware of the Intentions of the

Heart

"The heart is more treacherous than anything else and is desperate," states the Bible. (Jer. 17:9) When our heart intensely desires something, do we not find reasons for carrying out its intentions?



The Scriptures warn us: "Out of the heart come wicked reasonings, murders, adulteries, fornications, thieveries, false testimonies, blasphemies." (Matt. 15:19) Our figurative heart can betray us and lead us to justify a course of action that is contrary to God's will. And we may not realize what has happened until after we have acted unwisely. What can help us to identify the intentions of our heart before we take a wrong course?

IDENTIFY YOUR INTENTIONS—HOW?

Read the Bible daily and meditate on what it says. "The word of God is alive and exerts power and is sharper than any two-edged sword and

pierces even to the dividing of soul and spirit," wrote the apostle Paul. God's message found in the Bible "is able to discern thoughts and intentions of the heart." (Heb. 4:12) Seeing ourselves in the light of what the Scriptures say can indeed be a powerful aid in identifying the intentions of the heart. How vital that we read God's Word daily and meditate on what it says, thus absorbing Jehovah's thoughts and views!

Accepting Scriptural counsel and applying Bible principles will have an effect on our conscience—the inner faculty that "bears witness." (Rom. 9:1) The voice of our conscience can prevent us from justifying a wrong course. Addition-

ally, the Bible contains examples that can serve as “a warning to us.” (1 Cor. 10:11) Learning from them can prevent us from taking a step in the wrong direction. What should each of us do?

Pray to God to help you identify the intentions of your heart. Jehovah is “an examiner of the heart.” (1 Chron. 29:17) He “is greater than our hearts and knows all things.” (1 John 3:20) God cannot be deceived. If we openly express our concerns, feelings, and desires in prayer, Jehovah can help us to discern the intentions of our heart. We can even ask God to ‘create in us a pure heart.’ (Ps. 51:10) In identifying the leanings of our heart, therefore, the provision of prayer is not to be overlooked.

Be attentive during Christian meetings. Our being attentive to what is presented at Christian meetings can help us to take an honest look at our inner person—our heart. Although we may not receive new information at every meeting, by being present we get a better understanding of Bible principles as well as valuable reminders that help us to analyze the intentions of the heart. In refining our inner person, the comments of our brothers and sisters are also valuable. (Prov. 27:17) Isolating ourselves instead of enjoying regular Christian fellowship at meetings can be damaging to us. It can lead to our ‘seeking our own selfish longings.’ (Prov. 18:1) So we are wise to ask ourselves, ‘Is it my custom to attend all the meetings and benefit from them?’—Heb. 10:24, 25.

WHERE WILL OUR HEART LEAD US?

Our treacherous heart can lead us astray in many areas of life. Let us examine four: the pursuit of material things, the use of alcoholic beverages, our choice of associates, and what we do for recreation.

The pursuit of material things. The desire to satisfy our physical needs is natural. However, Jesus gave a warning example concerning attaching undue importance to material things. In one of his illustrations, Jesus invites us to consider the case of a rich man whose storehouses were full. Therefore, he had no place to store produce from another good harvest. The man intended to tear down his storehouses and build larger ones. He reasoned: “There I will gather all my grain and all my good things; and I will say to my soul: ‘Soul, you have many good things laid up for many years; take your ease, eat, drink, enjoy yourself.’” However, this rich man failed to take into account an inevitable fact: His life could end that very night.—Luke 12:16-20.

As we grow older, we may become so concerned about arranging for material security for our old age that we could begin to justify working overtime on meeting nights or begin to neglect our Christian responsibilities in some way. Should we not guard against such an inclination? Or we may be in our youthful years and realize that there is



How does daily Bible reading affect our figurative heart?



Our prayers help us to know the inner person



Christian meetings help us to discern the intentions of our heart

no better career than full-time service. Still, do we put off pioneering, reasoning that we should first become financially secure? Should we not do our best now to be rich toward God? Who knows whether we will be alive tomorrow?

The use of alcoholic beverages. “Do not come to be among heavy drinkers of wine,” states Proverbs 23:20. If a person has a strong desire for alcoholic beverages, he might justify regular drinking. He may say that he drinks to relax, not to get drunk. If we need alcohol to relax, it may be time to make an honest evaluation of the inclination of our heart.

Our choice of associates. Of course, some contact with unbelievers—such as at school, at work, and when sharing in the ministry—is unavoidable. It is quite another matter, though, to socialize with them, even cultivating close friendships with them. Do we justify such association by saying that they have many good qualities? “Do not be misled,” warns the Bible. “Bad associations spoil useful habits.” (1 Cor. 15:33) Just as a small amount of pollution can contaminate clean water, friendship with those who do not practice godly devotion can contaminate our spirituality and lead us into adopting worldly viewpoints, dress, speech, and conduct.

What we do for recreation. Modern technology puts at our fingertips all sorts of entertainment, much of which is questionable or improper for a Christian. ‘Let uncleanness of every sort not even be mentioned among you,’ wrote Paul. (Eph. 5:3) What if our heart is attracted to viewing or listening to something unclean? We might reason that everyone needs a little relaxation or recreation, and how an individual gets it is a personal matter. But let us take to heart Paul’s counsel and not allow uncleanness to enter our eyes or ears.

WE CAN MAKE CHANGES

If we have fallen victim to the leanings of a treacherous heart and have become accustomed to justifying wrong behavior, we can make changes. (Eph. 4:22-24) Consider two modern-day examples.

Miguel* had to adjust his thinking about material things. He states: “My wife, son, and I are from a country where obtaining the latest and the best in technology and comfort is considered very important. At one point, I devoted myself to obtaining all I could from the world, thinking that I could do this without becoming materialistic. Soon I came to realize that going after material goods was a road without end. I prayed to Jehovah about my viewpoints and the intentions of my heart. I made it known to him that as a family, we wanted to serve him fully. We were able to make a decision to simplify our lives and move to where the need was greater. Soon we were able to pioneer. We have come to see that we do not need much materially in order to have a full and happy life.”

Lee’s experience shows how an honest self-examination helped him to abandon bad association. “Because of my work,” says Lee, “I regularly associated with foreign suppliers. I knew that there would be excessive drinking at those meetings, but attending them was exciting to me. Many times I came close to drunkenness, but afterward I felt regret. I had to make an honest evaluation of my heart. The counsel of God’s Word and suggestions of the elders helped me to realize that what I was really seeking was association with people who do not love Jehovah. Now I handle my business by telephone as much as possible and keep my contact with suppliers to a minimum.”

We need to be honest with ourselves and identify the intentions of our heart. As we do so, we should seek Jehovah’s help in prayer, remembering that “he is aware of the secrets of the heart.” (Ps. 44:21) God has also provided his Word, which can serve as a mirror for us. (Jas. 1:22-25) Valuable too are the reminders and counsel we receive by means of Christian publications and our meetings! With such provisions, we can guard our heart and keep walking in the pathways of righteousness.

* Names have been changed.



"He that is humble in spirit will take hold of glory."—PROV. 29:23.

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

What glory may we receive from God?

What could hinder us from taking hold of glory?

In what sense can our endurance mean glory for others?

LET NOTHING HINDER YOU FROM TAKING HOLD OF GLORY

WHEN you hear the word “glory,” what comes to your mind? The radiant splendor of creation? (Ps. 19:1) The praise and glory given to humans having exceptional wealth, wisdom, or accomplishments? In the Scriptures, the original-language words for “glory” convey the sense of heaviness. In ancient times—when money was made of precious metals—the heavier the coin, the greater its value. Words used to express the idea of weightiness came to be understood figuratively to mean that which is treasured, magnificent, or impressive.

² While we may be impressed with the power, position, or reputation of another person, what does God look for in humans? The Scriptures actually speak of a glory that God confers on humans. For example, Proverbs 22:4 states: “The result of humility and the fear of Jehovah is riches and glory and life.” And the disciple James wrote: “Humble yourselves in the eyes of Jehovah, and he will exalt you.” (Jas. 4:10) What is the glory that Jehovah bestows upon humans? What can hinder us from taking hold of it? And how can we help others to take hold of this glory?

³ The psalmist expressed confidence that Jehovah would take hold of him by the right hand and lead him to genuine glory. (*Read Psalm 73:23, 24.*) How does Jehovah do this? Jehovah leads his humble servants to glory by honoring them in numerous ways. He blesses them with an understanding of his will. (1 Cor. 2:7) He bestows upon those who listen to his word and obey him the honor of a close personal relationship with him.—Jas. 4:8.

1, 2. (a) What is the significance of the original-language words for “glory”? (b) What questions will we consider in this article?

3-5. To what glory may Jehovah lead us?

⁴ Jehovah also entrusts his servants with the glorious treasure of the Christian ministry. (2 Cor. 4:1, 7) And this ministry leads to glory. To those who use their privilege of service to his praise and to the benefit of others, Jehovah promises: “Those honoring me I shall honor.” (1 Sam. 2:30) Such ones are honored with a good name with Jehovah, and they are likely to be well spoken of by other servants of God.—Prov. 11:16; 22:1.

⁵ What about the future of those who “hope in Jehovah and keep his way”? They are promised: “He [Jehovah] will exalt you to take possession of the earth. When the wicked ones are cut off, you will see it.” (Ps. 37:34) They look forward to experiencing the incomparable honor of receiving everlasting life.—Ps. 37:29.

“I DO NOT ACCEPT GLORY FROM MEN”

⁶ What could hinder us from receiving the glory that Jehovah is willing to confer on us? One factor is giving too much weight to the opinions of those who have no standing with God. Consider what the apostle John wrote concerning certain ones in authority in Jesus’ day: “Many even of the rulers actually put faith in [Jesus], but because of the Pharisees they would not confess him, in order not to be expelled from the synagogue; for they loved the glory of men more than even the glory of God.” (John 12:42, 43) How much better it would have been for those rulers had they not given so much importance to what the Pharisees thought.

⁷ Earlier in his ministry, Jesus had clearly identified why many would not receive him and put faith in him. (*Read John 5:39-44.*) The nation of Israel had

6, 7. Why were many unwilling to put faith in Jesus?

been anticipating the arrival of the Messiah for centuries. When Jesus began teaching, some individuals may have discerned from Daniel’s prophecy that the appointed time for Christ’s appearance had arrived. Months earlier when John the Baptizer came preaching, many were saying: “May he perhaps be the Christ?” (Luke 3:15) Now the long-awaited Messiah was in their midst teaching. But those versed in the Law failed to accept him. Pinpointing the reason, Jesus asked them: “How can you believe, when you are accepting glory from one another and you are not seeking the glory that is from the only God?”

⁸ How human glory can obscure divine glory can be illustrated by comparing glory to light. Our brilliant universe is abundantly glorious. Do you remember when you last looked into the sky on a clear night and found yourself encompassed by thousands of stars? “The glory of the stars” is awe-inspiring. (1 Cor. 15: 40, 41) When viewed from the street of a well-lit city, though, how does the same sky appear? Why, city lights make it almost impossible for us to see the light emanating from distant stars! Is this so because the lights from roads, stadiums, and buildings are stronger or more beautiful than starlight? No! This happens because city lights are closer to us and they interfere with what we can perceive of Jehovah’s creation. To witness the wonders of the night sky, we must somehow block out or avoid the interference from artificial light.

⁹ Similarly, if the wrong kind of glory were too close to our hearts, it could prevent us from appreciating and seeking the enduring glory that Jehovah is willing to bestow. Many fail to accept

8, 9. Using the illustration of light, show how human glory can obscure divine glory.

the Kingdom message because they are afraid of what acquaintances or family members might think of them. But could the desire to receive glory from humans affect even dedicated servants of God? Suppose a young man is assigned to preach in an area where he is fairly well-known in the community but is not yet known as one of Jehovah's Witnesses. Will he shrink back in fear? Or what if someone is ridiculed for his pursuit of theocratic goals? Will he allow those without clear spiritual vision to influence his choices in life? Or perhaps a Christian has committed a serious sin. Will he hide his wrongdoing because he is afraid of losing his standing in the congregation or because he does not want to disappoint loved ones? In the latter case, if his foremost thought is to repair his relationship with Jehovah, he will "call the older men of the congregation" and seek their help.—*Read James 5:14-16.*

10 It may be that we are progressing toward Christian maturity but a fellow believer counsels us. His honest observations could help us if we do not raise a defensive shield because of pride, the desire to save face, or the temptation to justify our course. Or suppose you are working on a project with a fellow believer. Will your collaboration be influenced by concern over who gets the credit for your good ideas and hard work? If you find yourself in any of these situations, be assured that "he that is humble in spirit will take hold of glory."—Prov. 29:23.

11 Overseers and those "reaching out" for such an office should likewise be-

10. (a) How may excessive concern about how others view us cloud our judgment? (b) Of what are we assured if we act with humility?

11. What should be our inner response to commendation, and why?

ware of seeking praise from men. (1 Tim. 3:1; 1 Thess. 2:6) How should a brother respond when he receives sincere commendation for a job well done? Likely he will not erect a monument to himself, as King Saul did. (1 Sam. 15:12) However, does he readily recognize that his achievement was possible only by Jehovah's undeserved kindness and that any hope for future success still depends on God's blessing and help? (1 Pet. 4:11) Our inner response to praise reveals which sort of glory we are seeking.—Prov. 27:21.

"YOU WISH TO DO THE DESIRES OF YOUR FATHER"

12 Another factor that can hinder us from taking hold of glory from God is our desires. Wrong desires can prevent us from hearing the truth at all. (*Read John 8:43-47.*) Jesus told certain Jews that they did not listen to his message because 'they wished to do the desires of their father the Devil.'

13 What we desire influences how we hear. (2 Pet. 3:5) Jehovah designed us with the remarkable ability to shut out unwanted noise. Pause for a moment and concentrate on how many distinct sounds you can detect right now. Likely you were not conscious of many of them a moment ago. The limbic system of your brain was helping you to focus on one thing while sustaining your ability to hear a variety of sounds. But researchers have found that the task of simultaneously differentiating between many sounds becomes increasingly difficult when it involves listening to human

12. What prevented certain Jews from listening to Jesus?

13, 14. (a) What do researchers say about the way our brains process human speech? (b) What determines to whom we listen?

speech. This means that when you hear two voices at the same time, you have to choose which one you will focus on. Your selection will depend on which one you *want* to listen to. The Jews who wished to do the desires of their father, the Devil, did not listen to Jesus.

14 We receive messages from ‘the house of wisdom’ and from ‘the house of stupidity.’ (Prov. 9:1-5, 13-17) Both wisdom and stupidity keep crying out to us, as it were, and that presents us with a choice. Whose invitation will we accept? The answer depends on whose will we wish to do. Jesus’ sheep listen to his voice and follow him. (John 10:16, 27) They are “on the side of the truth.” (John 18:37) “They do not know the voice of strangers.” (John 10:5) Such humble ones take hold of glory.—Prov. 3:13, 16; 8:1, 18.

“THESE MEAN GLORY FOR YOU”

15 Our perseverance in doing Jehovah’s will helps others to take hold of glory. To the congregation in Ephesus, Paul wrote: “I ask you not to give up on account of these tribulations of mine in your behalf, for these mean glory for you.” (Eph. 3:13) In what sense did Paul’s tribulations “mean glory” for the Ephesians? Paul’s readiness to continue ministering to them despite trials demonstrated to the Ephesians that the privileges they enjoyed as Christians were weighty and of the highest conceivable value. Had Paul given up under tribulation, would that not have conveyed the message that their relationship with Jehovah, their ministry, and their hope were not valuable? Paul’s endurance exalted Christianity and demonstrated that discipleship is worth any sacrifice.

15. How could Paul’s tribulations “mean glory” for others?



16 Think of the effect that Paul’s zeal and endurance had. Acts 14:19, 20 reports: “Jews arrived from Antioch and Iconium and persuaded the crowds, and they stoned Paul and dragged him outside the city [of Lystra], imagining he was dead. However, when the disciples surrounded him, he rose up and entered into the city. And on the next day he left with Barnabas for Derbe.” Imagine being left for dead one day and making a 60-mile (100 km) journey the next, and that without modern transportation!

17 Was Timothy one of “the disciples” that rallied to Paul’s assistance? The ac-

16. What tribulation did Paul experience in Lystra?

17, 18. (a) In what sense could Timothy have closely followed Paul’s suffering in Lystra? (b) What effect did Paul’s endurance have on Timothy?

count in the book of Acts does not explicitly say so, but it is possible. Consider what Paul wrote in his second letter to Timothy: "You have closely followed my teaching, my course of life, . . . the sort of things that happened to me in Antioch [expulsion from the city], in Iconium [the attempted pelting with stones], in Lystra [the stoning], the sort of persecutions I have borne; and yet out of them all the Lord delivered me."—2 Tim. 3:10, 11; Acts 13:50; 14:5, 19.

18 Timothy "closely followed" those events and was thoroughly aware of Paul's endurance. This made a deep impression on Timothy's mind. When Paul visited Lystra, he found Timothy to be an exemplary Christian, "well reported on by the brothers in Lystra and Iconium." (Acts 16:1, 2) In time, Timothy qualified to take on weighty responsibilities.—Phil. 2:19, 20; 1 Tim. 1:3.

19 Our persevering in doing God's will can have a similar effect on others—es-

19. What effect can our endurance have on others?

pecially on young ones, many of whom will grow up to be very valuable servants of God. Young disciples not only observe us and learn speech qualities and skills from us in the field ministry but also benefit from seeing how we deal with the indignities of life. Paul 'went on enduring all things' so that all who remain faithful 'may obtain salvation along with everlasting glory.'—2 Tim. 2:10.

20 Should we not, then, continue "seeking the glory that is from the only God"? (John 5:44; 7:18) By all means! (*Read Romans 2:6, 7.*) Jehovah gives "everlasting life to those who are seeking glory." Moreover, our "endurance in work that is good" incites others to remain steadfast, to their everlasting benefit. Therefore, let nothing hinder you from taking hold of the glory that God gives.

20. Why should we continue to seek the glory that is from God?



Younger ones
appreciate the
perseverance of
elderly Christians



Boaz Zissu, Bar-Ilan University, Israel



Todd Bolen/BiblePlaces.com

She Belonged to the Family of Caiaphas

At times, an archaeological discovery directly or indirectly confirms the existence of a Bible character. In 2011, for instance, Israeli scholars published information regarding a find that does so. It is a 2,000-year-old burial ossuary—a decorated limestone chest into which the bones of a deceased person were placed after the flesh had decomposed.

This particular ossuary bears the inscription: “Miriam daughter of Yeshua son of Caiaphas, priest of Ma’aziah from Beth ‘Imri.” The Jewish high priest involved in Jesus’ trial and execution was Caiaphas. (John 11:48-50) Historian Flavius Josephus refers to him as “Joseph, who was called Caiaphas.” This ossuary evidently belonged to one of his relatives. Since the inscription on a previously found ossuary thought to belong to the high priest himself calls him Yehosef bar Caiapha, or Joseph, son of Caiaphas,* Miriam was related to Caiaphas in some way.

According to information provided by the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA), Miriam’s ossuary was seized from thieves who had plundered an ancient tomb. Analysis of this artifact and its inscription confirms its authenticity.

The ossuary also tells us something new. It refers to “Ma’aziah,” which was the last of the 24 priestly divisions, or courses, serving in rotation at Jerusalem’s temple. (1 Chron. 24:18) The inscription on this ossuary reveals that “the Caiaphas family was related to the Ma’aziah course,” says the IAA.

The inscription also mentions Beth ‘Imri. There are two possible interpretations of this part of the inscription. “The first possibility is that Beth ‘Imri is the name of a priestly family—the sons of ‘Immer (Ezra 2:36-37; Nehemiah 7:39-42) whose descendants include members of the Ma’aziah course,” says the IAA. “The second possibility is [that Beth ‘Imri is] the place of origin of the deceased or of her entire family.” In any case, Miriam’s ossuary provides evidence that the Bible speaks of real people who belonged to real families.

Background:
A typical repository where ossuaries were placed

* Regarding the ossuary of Caiaphas, see the article entitled “The High Priest Who Condemned Jesus,” in *The Watchtower* of January 15, 2006, pages 10-13.

The “Unforgettable” Came Just in Time

“UNFORGETTABLE!” That is how many described the “Creation Drama.” It came just in time and made an indelible impression on the mind of those who saw it. Indeed, the “Creation Drama” gave a great witness to Jehovah’s praise shortly before the Hitler regime unleashed fierce persecution upon His people in Europe. But what was the “Creation Drama”?

In 1914 the headquarters of Jehovah’s people in Brooklyn, New York, U.S.A., released the “Photo-Drama of Creation.” It was an eight-hour photographic slide and motion picture production, complete with color and sound. The “Photo-Drama” was viewed by millions of people worldwide. A shorter version—the “Eureka Drama”—was also released in 1914. But by the 1920’s, the slides, films, and projection equipment had become badly worn. Yet, there was a demand for “Photo-Drama” presentations. For instance, residents of Ludwigsburg, Germany, asked, “When will the ‘Photo-Drama’ be shown again?” What could be done?

To meet the need for further presentations of the Drama, in the 1920’s representatives of the Bethel family in Magdeburg, Germany, bought films from a news agency in Paris, France, and slides from graphics companies in Leipzig and Dresden. These were put together with some old “Photo-Drama” slides that were still usable.

Brother Erich Frost, a gifted musician, composed music to accompany the films and slides. The narration was taken in part from our book *Creation*. That is why the revised version of the “Photo-Drama” was given a new name—“Creation Drama.”

The new Drama was the same length as the “Photo-Drama”—eight hours—and was shown in several installments on consecutive evenings. It presented gripping details about the days of creation, reviewed Biblical and secular history, and pointed out that false religion had failed mankind. The “Creation Drama” was shown in Austria, Germany, Luxemburg, and Switzerland, and to German-speaking audiences elsewhere.

Erich Frost explained: “At the Drama presentations, I encouraged my colleagues, particularly those in the orchestra, to



▲ This poster advertised the “Creation Drama” in 1932



▲ The book *Schöpfung* (*Creation*) lent its name to the new drama

use the intermission to go from row to row and offer the audience our wonderful books and booklets. We placed more literature this way than was possible from house to house." Johannes Rauthe, who organized presentations in Poland and the present-day Czech Republic, remembers that many people in attendance left their addresses so as to be called on. Those addresses were the basis for productive return visits.

Into the 1930's, the "Creation Drama" played to packed halls, and Jehovah's Witnesses were the talk of the town. By 1933, almost one million people had attended the presentations organized by our branch office in Germany. "Just to see the Drama," Käthe Krauss recalls, "on each of the five days, we walked six miles (10 km) each way, through woods and up and down hills and dales." "The 'Creation Drama' laid the foundation for my love of the truth," says Else Billharz.

Alfred Almendinger relates that when his mother attended the Drama, she "was so thrilled that she bought a Bible and searched for the word 'purgatory.'" Since she could not find it in the Bible, she stopped attending church and got baptized. "Countless people came into the truth through the 'Creation Drama,'" recalled Erich Frost.—3 John 1:3.

No sooner had the "Creation Drama" exhibitions reached their peak than Europe was engulfed in the storm of Nazism. Beginning in 1933, the activities of the Witnesses in Germany came under ban. From that time onward and until the end of the second world war in 1945, Jehovah's servants in Europe suffered intense persecution. Erich Frost spent about eight years in captivity. But he survived and later served at Bethel in Wiesbaden, Germany. How good it was that the unforgettable "Creation Drama" came just in time to bolster the courage of so many Christians about to face tests of faith during World War II!—From our archives in Germany.



Erich Frost and his music notes for the "Creation Drama"

