



The WATCHTOWER

Announcing
Jehovah's Kingdom

"They shall know that I am Jehovah."

- Ezekiel 35:15.

VOL. LXIX

SEMIMONTHLY

No. 23

DECEMBER 1, 1948

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

The WATCHTOWER

PUBLISHED SEMIMONTHLY BY

WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY
117 Adams Street - - Brooklyn 1, N.Y., U.S.A.

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N. H. KNORR, *President*

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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.

"SETTING THE MARK" TESTIMONY PERIOD

Humane persons interested in the eternal life of people of good-will in God's righteous new world will want to make an indelible mark in their intellect by means of the Kingdom truth. That is why the month of December has been set aside as a testimony period of special effort, as indicated by the above-given name. To help in setting the mark upon good-will foreheads, as foretold in Ezekiel, chapter 9, the offer that Jehovah's witnesses will popularize during this closing month of 1948 will be the latest book, "*Let God Be True*," and the booklet *Permanent Governor of All Nations* (or *The Joy of All the People*) to all contributors of 35c for the combination. Every reader of *The Watchtower* can actively associate himself with this marking work which leads to our being spared by God's executioners during the oncoming battle of Armageddon. We welcome the co-operation of all, and assure you of our best services in helping to establish your contact with experienced Kingdom publishers. Your report filled out on the form supplied by the Society will greatly interest us at the end of December's work.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES

Week of January 2: "Not a Slow God."

¶ 1-7 inclusive, also "Divine Patience Means Salvation",

¶ 1-9 inclusive, *The Watchtower* December 1, 1948.

Week of January 9: "Divine Patience Means Salvation,"

¶ 10-23 inclusive, *The Watchtower* December 1, 1948.

Week of January 16: "Divine Patience Means Salvation,"

¶ 24-32 inclusive, also "Hastening the Coming of the Day of God,"

¶ 1-10 inclusive, *The Watchtower* December 1, 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.

Notice to Subscribers: Remittances should be sent to office in your country in compliance with regulations to guarantee safe delivery of money. Remittances are accepted at Brooklyn from countries where no office is located, by international money order only. Subscription rates in different countries are stated below in local currency. Notice of expiration (with renewal blank) is sent at least two issues before subscription expires. Change of address when sent to our office may be expected effective within one month. Send your old as well as new address.

Please address the Watch Tower Society in every case.

Offices	Yearly Subscription Rate
America (U.S.), 117 Adams St., Brooklyn 1, N. Y.	\$1 00
Australia, 7 Daresford Rd., Strathfeld, N. S. W.	6s
British West Indies, 21 Taylor St., Woodbrook, Port of Spain, Trinidad	\$1 25
Burma, 39 Signal Pagoda Road, Rangoon	Rs 3/8
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South Africa, 623 Boston House, Cape Town	5s
T. Hawaii, 1223 Pensacola St., Honolulu 14	\$1 00
West Africa, P.O. Box 655, Lagos, Nigeria	5s

Translations of this journal appear in many languages.

ALL SINCE 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 publisher, 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.

Printed in the United States of America

Entered as second-class matter at the post office at Brooklyn, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

1949 YEARBOOK OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

With gratitude to God for accomplishing through his servants the greatest service achievement during this past year, the Society now releases the 1949 *Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses*. It will be really a stirring experience, and not a dull review of data and figures, for you to read the president's report at length on the year's activities of Jehovah's witnesses in more than ninety lands. Also, introduced by his own special comment on the 1949 year-text, the texts and comments drawn from the latest *Watchtower* issues provide you with a choice thought for each day of the year. Orders for copies of the 1949 *Yearbook*, bound in peach-color cloth, with more than 350 pages, should be accompanied by remittances at 50c a copy. Companies should send in combined orders to minimize our work of handling and shipping.

1949 CALENDAR

Again the Lord provides us with a new service calendar, for the year 1949, the text for which is, "I . . . will yet praise thee more and more." (Ps. 71:14) The picture embellishing it steps into the field of realism by exhibiting under the year's text a bird's-eye view of that now world-famous missionary school, Gilead, in its environs, in four colors, and which is mightily aiding today in praising Jehovah more and more. Under the picture the date pad presents the six special testimony periods of 1949 and the alternate months, together with the service theme for each such month. Orders may now be sent in, with remittance to cover, at 25c a calendar, or \$1.00 for five mailed to one address.

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NOT A SLOW GOD

"The Lord is not slow about his promise, in the sense that some men think."

—2 Pet. 3: 9, An Amer. Trans.

JEHOVAH God is not slow. The impatience of short-lived men makes them think He is. He sets his good purposes and accurately times them, and then proceeds to accomplish them without loss of time, effort or motion. But how few men realize that fact and try to harmonize their course in life with the times and seasons of God's purposes! His prophet wrote: "For everything there is a season, and a time for every pursuit under the heavens: I looked at the employment which God hath given to the sons of men to work therein: Everything hath he made beautiful in its own time, also intelligence hath he put in their heart, without which men could not find out the work which God hath wrought from the beginning even unto the end." (Eccl. 3: 1, 10, 11, *Rotherham*) We find that first in all his purposes comes the work of vindicating his sovereign power over all the universe which he created. This vindication will be beautiful in its time, because it will reveal Jehovah to all intelligent creation in his rightful place as the one God and Supreme Ruler over all the universe. Dependent upon that vindication, and so in second place to it, is his purpose to save men and women of good-will to lasting peace, plenty and joy in a new world. This salvation is also something beautiful to contemplate now, while we wait in hope of its early realization.

² Jehovah's purposes take all nations under consideration, and there is not a nation that he has shut out of his purpose of salvation. "He himself gives all men life and breath and everything. From one forefather he has created every nation of mankind, and made them live all over the face of the earth, fixing their appointed times and the limits of their lands, so that they might search for God, and perhaps grope for him and find him, though he is never far from any of us."—Acts 17: 25-27, *An Amer. Trans.*

³ In the thousands of years of their troubled existence the nations have provided no salvation for the masses of mankind. The perplexing situation of all nations today proves they cannot provide us salvation, but that the only hope for lovers of life and

happiness is the salvation that the Almighty God provides. He appointed the times of the nations. They have now had their day. They are on their way out! The efforts of leading men of the world to maintain a United Nations organization or to form a world federation of nations with a central government in order to change God's times and seasons and to block his purposes will fail. Before giving the prophecy telling how all these nations will be broken to pieces by God's promised Government for mankind, the prophet Daniel said: "Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his: and he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding: he revealeth the deep and secret things." (Dan. 2: 20-22, 44, 45) The nations will never be able to take the credit for the salvation that He brings mankind by his kingdom. Because it is his time for a change, he will remove the unsatisfactory rulers of this world and set up his perfect Ruler of a brand-new world.

⁴ Nearly six thousand years have passed since our first parents were driven from the paradise garden of Eden out into a wild earth. Think of the selfish course that the offspring of Adam and Eve have taken to this day. This has meant sixty centuries (a long time indeed to our thinking) for Jehovah God to exercise long-suffering and patience toward self-willed mankind. As Judge in Eden he might at once have executed that pair of willful sinners upon whom his death sentence justly fell. More than that: sixteen centuries later, when their offspring had greatly multiplied and filled the earth with violence and corruption, he might have wiped out every last one. Instead, he gave mankind a new start through eight survivors of the Flood. In either of those cases, where would we have been today except for his long-suffering and patience? Nowhere!

⁵ It is now more than forty-three centuries since the Flood, and human existence becomes ever more perilous. Human selfishness increases to the point

1. What main purpose and dependent one will be beautiful when due?
2, 3. How many nations come under salvation? With credit to whom?

4, 5. How has God been long-suffering till now, and for what good?

where practically every man's hand is against his neighbor. What is the divine purpose in all the unusual patience and long-suffering that the God of righteousness keeps showing to our sinner race? Nothing else than the work that he set before himself at the beginning. What? To vindicate his own universal sovereignty and to save men and women who are unbreakably devoted to the sovereignty of God their Creator. It was originally his expressed purpose that the human creatures springing from Adam and Eve should live forever in a paradise garden enveloping a completely subdued earth. God has not changed from his purpose. Hence his patience with the sinful offspring of Adam and Eve has been with the aim of saving an unnumbered multitude of them to everlasting life on a peaceful earth in a restored world of righteousness. Almighty God will vindicate his patience and his purpose by successfully accomplishing that very thing.

⁶ Since man's expulsion from Eden it has been almost six thousand years. It will be at least another thousand years before the salvation of those who prove worthy of mankind will be effected. Because mankind's life-span has been reduced from a once possible eternity to "threescore years and ten", or in

6 Why does the time seem long and slow to us, but not to God?

some cases "fourscore years" with labor and sorrow, those thousands of years in the divine process of bringing complete salvation seem to us as a long time, and we seem to have been slow in getting there. But, when measured by the divine time-unit, it is not so. To the eternal God the six thousand years till now are as but six of man's weekdays; so that the prophet Moses said to Him: "From everlasting to everlasting, thou art God. For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night"; and the ancient Jews divided a single night into three watches of four hours each.—Ps. 90: 2, 4, 10.

⁷ It is God's arrangement that those who share in His salvation shall take some part in His vindication by displaying their integrity to him. The testing of their integrity takes time. Thus the thousands of years in which he has exercised patience toward human sinners has allowed time for children to be born and to grow up that they might prove their integrity to God and have a share in vindicating him, for this means everlasting life to them. It has not been wasted time at all with God, but blessed are all those persons who have taken advantage of the opportunity granted them.

7. For what vital reason has it not been wasted time with God?

DIVINE PATIENCE MEANS SALVATION

A. D. 1914 marked the end of the "seven times" that God appointed to the Gentile nations as their opportunity to dominate the earth. That generous allotment of 2,520 years began at Jerusalem's destruction in 607 B.C. and should have let the nations gain much political experience and make correct observations as to their ability to rule the earth. But the fruitage of their political growth of 2,520 years proved to be, not international brotherhood, peace and prosperity, but World War I, which began exactly in the year that the "seven times" ended, to be followed in 1939 by a second and more costly, more deadly global war. As far back as its issue of March, 1880, *The Watch Tower* notified its readers that the "times of the Gentiles" would end A.D. 1914. After the close of World War I, and particularly from and after 1921,* Jehovah's witnesses have raised the cry world-wide: "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." They have continued to point out that the Kingdom was established A.D. 1914.

² During the years since then lovers of peace, truth and righteousness have yearned for God's kingdom to fight the final battle of Armageddon and break the Gentile nations to pieces, thus clearing our globe for the blessed reign of a thousand years by Christ

* See *The Watch Tower* November 15, 1921, page 342.

1. When did the Gentile times end, and with what fruitage?
2. Why have some grown impatient? and with what sad result?

Jesus. They see the oppression by the Devil's organization increasing upon the people. They undergo continuous persecution and meet up with bitter opposition while preaching the Kingdom gospel to all the nations. And so they have felt something of the impatience of James and John when the Samaritan villagers refused Jesus hospitality. "And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we bid fire to come down from heaven, and consume them? But he turned, and rebuked them. And they went to another village." (Luke 9: 51-56, *Am. Stan. Ver.*) Indeed, some Christians have grown weary at God's seeming slowness in bringing on the battle of Armageddon and destroying all the enemies and bringing in the millennium of peace and righteousness. So they have fallen away from actively serving Jehovah God and proclaiming the message of his kingdom. In the above cases there has been a lack of appreciation of the purpose behind Jehovah's seeming slowness. But if we discern the loving ends that he has in view in this apparent slowness, we will be glad for it and will take full benefit of it.

³ We do not want to be like many people at this end of the world who are willfully ignorant about God's works and purposes for this momentous time.

3. 4 How do some fool and hurt themselves, fulfilling 2 Peter 3: 1-9?

Because of ignorance they are not taking advantage of the patience that a merciful God is exercising toward them, but they are wasting their opportunity in this day when human destinies are being shaped and fixed. For decades now they have heard Jehovah's witnesses preaching that Christ Jesus came into power in 1914 when Jehovah God enthroned him, thus setting up the Kingdom. But they keep on scoffing at the message and do not seriously consider the evidence to which Jehovah's witnesses call attention. Hence they keep on in their hatred and antagonism to the witnesses. They accept every other explanation for the world's situation than the Bible's explanation for it. In thus conducting themselves they furnish one more strong proof that we have reached the world's end, because they are fulfilling the prophecy uttered by the apostle Peter respecting the end of the world.

* Writing to those of us who believe, Peter says: "This is the second letter, dear friends, that I have now written to you, in the effort to arouse your unsullied minds to remember the things foretold by the holy prophets, and the command of the Lord and Savior through your apostles. First of all, you must understand this, that in the last days mockers will come with their mockeries, going where their passions lead and saying, 'Where is his promised coming? For ever since our forefathers fell asleep everything has remained as it was from the beginning of creation!' For they wilfully ignore the fact that long ago there existed heavens and an earth which had been formed at God's command out of water and by water, by which also that world was destroyed, through being flooded with water. But by the same command the present heavens and earth are stored up for fire, and are kept for the day when godless men are to be judged and destroyed. But do not overlook this one fact, dear friends, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years and a thousand years are like one day. The Lord is not slow about his promise, in the sense that some men think; he is really showing his patience with you, because he does not want any to perish, but wishes all men to be brought to repentance."—2 Pet. 3:1-9, *An Amer. Trans.*

* Not informing themselves upon God's important purposes at this end of the world, those wilfully ignorant mockers persuade themselves that God is slow. They guide themselves, not by God's Word and its sound principles, but by their selfish passions. Desiring to satisfy these for as long as they can, they postpone in their minds the coming of the Lord's kingdom and the coming of the full end of this world in a global catastrophe. They refuse to see in the happenings since A.D. 1914 any evidence that God's

kingdom has come and that Christ Jesus has been enthroned in the heavens and is now ruling amidst his enemies, preparatory to breaking all the nations to pieces with the iron rod of Armageddon. Because thirty-four years have now passed since 1914 they think the meaning of world events as explained by Jehovah's witnesses is proved untrue. For them Armageddon is yet a long way off; it will not come in their day. They do not reason that we are that many years nearer Armageddon and that all those years of God's extended patience with men were a merciful opportunity for them to lay hold on his salvation and that that much less time now remains. In place of taking the benefit of God's seeming slowness for availing themselves of his salvation, they presume upon it to follow the selfish course of their passions. Consequently they willfully choose destruction for themselves, with the Gentile nations. They fail to appreciate that the wilful ignorance of the people in Noah's day at the end of the pre-flood world prophetically pictured their own wilful ignorance at the end of this present evil world.

CHOICE BETWEEN TWO DESTINIES

* Destruction and salvation, these are the two destinies between which men and nations must choose today. That Almighty God would destroy nations, yes, that he would destroy the wicked world-organization from the face of the earth, seems too colossal for people today with an intense nationalistic spirit, especially in Christendom. But God is within his right and power to destroy all the nations of this world. Why? Because they all stem from the one common forefather whom God created and, as the Creator who mercifully let them come into existence, he can rightfully destroy them if they do not act according to the purpose of God's mercy with them. Nations are of small consequence to God. "Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles [whether the British Isles, the Japanese islands, or the island continent of Australia] as a very little thing. All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity." (Isa. 40:15, 17) When worldly nations fight against God's kingdom, they are less than nothing. They are worse than nothing, for nothing gives no interference to His purposes and works. Since 607 B.C. he has given them "seven times" (2,520 years) and uninterrupted domination of the earth; and now, for their antichristian resistance to his established kingdom, he has appointed all the nations to destruction. He will vindicate his supremacy by annihilating them.

* The nations, particularly the ruling powers of

5. How do they show wilful ignorance and so fail of what benefit?

6. Why is it God's right and of little concern to destroy nations?
7. Who are the "higher powers", and with what right to destroy?

Christendom, claim to be the "higher powers". The religious clergy tell all souls to be subject to these political states in their decrees, even if it means the violation of a Christian's conscience. (Rom. 13: 1, 2) But there are Powers higher than even the government of the United Nations; namely, Jehovah God, the Supreme Ruler, to whom we must first render the things that are due him, and also his now installed King, Christ Jesus, the Chief One in God's capital organization over the universe. Jehovah God has the power and right to destroy all nations at Armageddon by his King, Christ Jesus, with the "iron rod", and this fact he illustrated through his prophet Jeremiah shortly before Jerusalem was destroyed in 607 B.C.

* "The word which came to Jeremiah from Jehovah, saying, Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words. Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he was making a work on the wheels. And when the vessel that he made of the clay was marred in the hand of the potter, he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it. Then the word of Jehovah came to me, saying, O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith Jehovah. Behold, as the clay in the potter's hand, so are ye in my hand, O house of Israel. At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up and to break down and to destroy it; if that nation, concerning which I have spoken, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; if they do that which is evil in my sight, that they obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them.

* "Now therefore, speak to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith Jehovah: Behold, I frame evil against you, and devise a device against you: return ye now every one from his evil way, and amend your ways and your doings. But they say, It is in vain; for we will walk after our own devices, and we will do every one after the stubbornness of his evil heart. Therefore thus saith Jehovah: . . . I will scatter them as with an east wind before the enemy; I will show them the back, and not the face in the day of their calamity." —Jer. 18: 1-17, *Am. Stan. Ver.*

¹⁰ God the Creator classes the nations as a potter's vessel, for all of them are made up of creatures "of the earth, earthy". He forewarned that he would give all the enemy nations to his anointed King, Christ Jesus, for destruction, saying to him: "Ask of me, and I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance,

and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." (Ps. 2: 8, 9, *Am. Stan. Ver.*) At 1914 God did give the nations to his then enthroned Son to break to pieces, as when an iron rod strikes a frail earthen vessel. He foreknew that the nations, under the spiritual guidance of the blind religious leaders of Christendom, would oppose his kingdom and fight against his sovereignty over all the universe, including our earth. In all the prophecies and the historical types he foretold this. Hence he foreordained them all to be destroyed, and with full foreknowledge of their final outcome he let them come into existence and run their course. He shows he has a just right to foreordain them to destruction and to dispose of them accordingly, in the argument of the apostle Paul. At Romans 9: 14-24 Paul writes:

¹¹ "What do we conclude? That God is guilty of injustice? By no means. He said to Moses, 'I will have mercy on the man on whom I choose to have mercy, and take pity on the man on whom I choose to take pity.' So it depends not on human will or exertion, but on the mercy of God. The Scripture says to Pharaoh, 'I have raised you to your position for the very purpose of displaying my power in dealing with you, and making my name known all over the world.' So he has mercy on anyone he pleases, and hardens the heart of anyone he pleases. 'Why, then,' you will ask, 'does he still find fault? For who can resist his will?' On the contrary, who are you, my friend, to answer back to God? Can something a man shapes say to the man who shaped it, 'Why did you make me like this?' Has not the potter with his clay the right to make from the same lump one thing for exalted uses and another for menial ones? Then what if God, though he wanted to display his anger and show his power, has shown great patience toward the objects of his anger, already ripe for destruction, so as to show all the wealth of his glory in dealing with the objects of his mercy, whom he has prepared from the beginning to share his glory, including us whom he has called not only from among the Jews but from among the heathen?"—*An Amer. Trans.*

¹² Paul justifies God's right to destroy some creatures and to mercifully save others on the grounds of his right as a Creator. God mercifully let all men come into existence from one original man despite the imperfection and sin which they would inherit. He thus made all mankind of the same human lump. It is a mercy by him to let us come into existence. No man tasting this mercy can complain against the Creator because of the condition in which he was born or because of the opportunities either denied him or set before him. God owes no creature any-

S. D. How was Jehovah's right to destroy illustrated to Jeremiah? 10. To what destiny did God foreordain the nations, and why?

11, 12. How does Paul justify God in thus dealing with the nations?

thing. He can dispose of any creature the way he wants in harmony with his own justice. With relation to God, is any man superior to the lump of clay in the hands of the potter? Does he have any more right than that lump of clay to demand that he be fashioned this way or that? No! And as a potter dashes to pieces a vessel that does not please him, in the same way Jehovah God the Creator can dash to pieces all those nations and organizations that do not please him after they have been given fair warning and full opportunity.

NOT SUBVERSIVE

¹³ Although we declare that the worldly nations will all be destroyed by the "iron rod" of Jehovah's King at Armageddon, we are not nihilists and anarchists. We are not teaching lawlessness and rebelliousness against constituted order and governments, any more than the prophet Jeremiah was guilty of such by foretelling Jerusalem's destruction and the overthrow of the nation of Judah in 607 B.C. We are exalting the right and supremacy of Jehovah God of hosts and are sounding to the nations the warning that he gives us to sound forth. We do not teach men to disrespect the man-made governments that have assumed the responsibility for law and order over various territories of the earth. But at the same time we are forbidden by God's Word to teach men to worship the political institutions or to give them what belongs to God. We cannot bring worldly politics into our prayers to God and pray him to prosper and preserve the nations that he has foreordained to destruction. No, but we pray the prayer of Jesus' sermon on the mount: "Our Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." (Matt. 6:9,10) In harmony with that prayer, we now preach since A.D. 1914 "this gospel of the kingdom" in all the world, in fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy of the signs that would precede the final end of the world and of all its nations.

¹⁴ To show our intentions are peaceful and beneficial to the nations and are not subversive, Jehovah God has sent us as his ambassadors to the nations. We remind our readers that in Bible times ambassadors served a different purpose from what they do today. In modern times ambassadors and other diplomatic ministers are exchanged between nations in times of peace for cultivating and strengthening cordial relations between nations. Only in times of war and when disagreements are such that relations are ruptured are they recalled. However, in the times of Christ and his apostles ambassadors were sent by one nation to another when war threatened or had broken out and one nation was menaced with defeat

and destruction by another. After centuries of exclusive favor from God the ancient nation of Israel turned to enmity against him, whereas the Gentile nations were always at enmity with God. They have always been "without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world". They were God's 'enemies in their minds by wicked works'. (Eph. 2:12; Col. 1:21) It was in view of such enmity toward him that Jehovah God sent his witnesses as his ambassadors on a good-will mission and on an errand of divine mercy. This is described by the apostle Paul, when he writes:

¹⁵ "All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain."—2 Cor. 5:18 to 6:1.

¹⁶ As his witnesses and ambassadors acting for Christ, Jehovah God has given us a ministry of reconciliation to God, and not one of subversion to promote political rebellion or to undermine the constitutions and framework of worldly governments. Under this responsibility we do not go only to the people by bearing the Kingdom message from house to house. (Acts 20:20) We go also to the world rulers, either willingly or under constraint. In a prophecy on the end of this world Jesus forewarned those who would be his faithful followers after World War I: "But take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten: and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them. And the gospel must first be published among all nations." (Mark 13:8-10) For this reason, when we are before rulers and judges who are ignorant of the coming day of Jehovah's vengeance and who are endangering themselves by fighting against Him and his King, we are charged to deliver this friendly warning: "Now therefore be wise, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve Jehovah with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the son, lest he be angry, and ye perish in the way. for his wrath will soon be kindled. Blessed are all they that take refuge in him." (Ps. 2:10-12, *Am. Stan. Ver.*) Hence our mission is a peaceful one, a godly one. It spells salvation to all who hear the

¹³. Though we thus teach, why are we still not subversive?
¹⁴, ¹⁵. By what mission do we show our intentions peaceful to men?

¹⁶. How, therefore, do we address ourselves to people and rulers?

divine word of reconciliation through Christ. We exhort rulers, rather than subvert their earthly organizations.

¹⁷ A.D. 1914 the "seven times" of permitted Gentile domination of the earth expired. Since then the nations have no further assurance from God that he will not interrupt their control of this planet and destroy them at some unrevealed time. That day of destruction is so concealed from the nations that its arrival will be like that of a thief in the night. Yes, "when people say, 'What peace and security!' then suddenly destruction will be upon them, like birth-pains upon a woman about to give birth to a child, and there will be no escape."—1 Thess. 5:1-3, *Am. Trans.*

¹⁸ Mark again God's patience, a patience which those who are wise may take advantage of to their salvation: When the Gentile times ended, in 1914, the Universal Sovereign enthroned his King, his Son Jesus Christ, upon the throne in the heavens. He gave him all the nations for his inheritance and the extremities of the earth for his possession, so that now all the earth belongs to him. Although some Christians expected all Gentile nations to be completely destroyed at that date, Christ Jesus did not then wield the iron rod and crack such nations to pieces with weapons worse than atomic warfare. True, he let them cripple themselves in a global war for world domination; but he did not himself interfere and destroy them. He did start war up in heaven against Satan the Devil and all his demons, and he won the fight and forced that invisible enemy organization down to this earth. But he did not then destroy Satan the Devil, neither did he destroy the nations of this world of which Satan is the god and prince.—Rev. 12:1-12; 2 Cor. 4:4; John 14:30.

¹⁹ Evidently by A.D. 1918 Christ Jesus had Satan and all his organization, visible and invisible, down at this earth, which is his footstool, but he did not keep on pressing the battle. He did not force the final war of Armageddon and make a complete end of the old world in that year, but let World War I give way to a shaky peace. It is now thirty years since that year, and, after having survived a second world war, the nations are still going concerns. Though no longer permitted up in heaven, Satan the Devil and his demon hosts still continue active about our earth, bringing indescribable woe to the earth and sea in his great wrath. All these wicked forces Jehovah and his King have permitted to survive till now, even though they knew that Satan and his demons would line up all the nations in opposition to God's kingdom, would cruelly persecute His witnesses and would form an international organization

to perpetuate their selfish, oppressive control of the earth and its inhabitants.

²⁰ During all the years since 1918 Jehovah's witnesses have obeyed him. They have cried out to warn of impending destruction for the nations at Armageddon. But the nations of Christendom have heard the cry so repeatedly that they attach no value to it and credit it with no truthfulness. They say God is slow and will never do it in their generation. Some impatient Christians, feeling deeply the reproaches against God's name and grieving at all the abominable things being done in the earth, especially in Christendom, are inclined to grow weary and to say: "Why is God so slow about bringing an end to this miserable state of the world? Why has he not wiped out the wicked world organization before now?"

²¹ The reason why is this: God is exercising still further patience with the nations in order that he might save his anointed remnant and all the people of good-will that are to be found among the nations. Many persons have become consecrated Christians since 1918. Let these reflect on where they would have been if Christ Jesus the King had then and there applied the iron rod and dashed all nations to shivers. Since 1918, also a younger generation has grown up. Many of these have accepted "this gospel of the kingdom". But where would they be in this day if Almighty God had ordered Christ Jesus into the final battle of Armageddon at 1918? Certainly the eternal salvation of all these would not have been possible in that case. Back in 1918 the remnant of anointed witnesses of Jehovah in all the earth numbered but a few thousand. Today the remnant and all the consecrated people of good-will now associated with them number more than 260,756 active throughout the world.* No, not many, in comparison with the more than two billion of the world population; but neither were the eight flood-survivors in Noah's ark very numerous in comparison with the population of that old world of the ungodly. Nevertheless, God's patience and long-suffering toward the nations with all their aggravated godlessness since 1918 have meant the salvation of all these hundreds of thousands. If this has been the gratifying result of God's forbearance and patience up till now, what will his further extended patience mean but the salvation of other thousands?

STUBBORNNESS AND RESPONSIVENESS

²² Although God continues patient with the nations despite their hostility to his kingdom by Christ, the result is that the stubbornness of the world rulers, political, commercial and religious, becomes more

* See the 1949 *Yearbook of Jehovah's witnesses*, page 22

17. Gentiles times over, how will destruction come upon nations?

18 19 How did God show patience to nations in 1914? In 1918?

20 How does Christendom treat our warning of Armageddon?

21 Why since 1918 has God not yet destroyed this old world?

22 Why is God's patience justified though many harden themselves?

pronounced, portending their certain destruction at Armageddon. But what is wrong with that? Jehovah the Creator has the sovereign right to let all such human creatures harden themselves against him to their own destruction. As the great Potter he can justly and rightfully destroy all those human vessels that turn unsatisfactory. God's merciful patience and goodness are not designed to harden them, but the hardening of the opposers is the result of their own pride and selfishness. Unmerciful persons want to see the instant destruction of others; and Paul says to them: "And do you suppose, when you sit in judgment upon those who do such things and yet do them yourself, that you will escape the judgment of God? Do you think so lightly of his wealth of kindness, forbearance, and patience, and fail to see that God's kindness ought to induce you to repent? But in your obstinacy and impenitence you are storing up wrath for yourself on the Day of Wrath, when the justice of God will burst forth." (Rom. 2:3-5, *An Amer. Trans.*) While some abuse God's patience and harden themselves, others take advantage of his mercy and yield themselves to his arrangements for salvation, and receive his mercy. Who, then, can complain or find fault? Because of these who accept his mercy, his patience is not wasted or in vain, even if the vast majority harden themselves for destruction.

²³ Thus it is that "he has mercy on anyone he pleases, and hardens the heart of anyone he pleases". (Rom. 9:18, *An Amer. Trans.*) In Moses' day Jehovah did no injustice to Pharaoh of Egypt by letting him grow hard in stubbornness against God's just demands. God was patient with Pharaoh, although he was ready to display his anger and show his power before he finally did destroy him and his hosts. Before bringing the seventh of the ten plagues upon the Egyptians Jehovah said to Pharaoh by Moses: "By now I could have stretched out my hand and struck you and your people with pestilence, so that you would have been effaced from the earth; but this is why I have spared you: to show you my power, and to have my fame recounted throughout all the earth." (Ex. 9:15, 16, *An Amer. Trans.*) Likewise in 1914, after "seven times" of Gentile misrule of mankind, or in 1918, at the end of World War I for continued Gentile domination of earth, Almighty God could justly have wiped out the nations. In Pharaoh's case the divine forbearance made room for God to demonstrate more of his power right there in Egypt. Next came his mightiest demonstration of power by engulfing the military hosts of Egypt in the Red sea. So, too, since A.D. 1918, by patience toward the greater Pharaoh, Satan, and all his nations, Jehovah has been able to raise up His witnesses on earth to publish his fame throughout all

the earth and to make a fuller display of his power over Satan's embattled hosts at the coming Armageddon.

²⁴ The apostle says such divine long-suffering has allowed for God to "show all the wealth of his glory in dealing with the objects of his mercy, whom he has prepared from the beginning to share his glory, including us whom he has called not only from among the Jews but from among the heathen". (Rom. 9:23, *An Amer. Trans.*) When World War I ended, in 1918, the 144,000 whom God had foreordained for glory with Christ Jesus in the Kingdom had not all been completed. A remnant needed to be prepared for the promised share in the heavenly glory with the enthroned King, Christ Jesus. This remnant needed yet to be fully taken out from the nations and all be assigned their work to finish on earth and thereby prove their integrity and their worthiness of the glory above. For the sake of their full salvation God had to exercise patience with the nations after 1918, even if their "seven times" of world domination had already expired. His holding back from destroying the nations is pictured for us at Revelation 7:1-4. There the apostle John says:

²⁵ "After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that no wind should blow on the earth, or on the sea, or upon any tree. And I saw another angel ascend from the sunrising, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a great voice to the four angels to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we shall have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads. And I heard the number of them that were sealed, a hundred and forty and four thousand, sealed out of every tribe of the children of Israel."—*Am. Stan. Ver.*

²⁶ The "four angels" represent the angelic hosts, the complete organization of them. They are under the command of Jehovah's great 'angel from the sunrising', Christ Jesus, and fought with him in the "war in heaven" in order to oust Satan and his demons. They have it within their power to do vast injury to the sea and the earth and its trees, namely, all nations. The "four winds" of the earth, not yet let loose by them to blow simultaneously, combining to produce a destructive whirlwind raging from one end of the earth to the other, picture the battle of Armageddon. But in 1918 Christ Jesus, Jehovah's Field Commander, could not let that battle take place and bring about the final end of this world. There was yet a remnant of the 144,000 joint-heirs of Christ that needed to be sealed and approved for heavenly glory with him. On this account Christ Jesus commanded the angelic forces under him to halt from

²³ Why has God thus far spared those who have hardened themselves?

²⁴ How since 1918 has he showed mercy on all prepared for glory?
²⁵, ²⁶ How can we explain this by the picture at Revelation 7:1-17?

following up Satan's ouster from heaven in 1918 by at once fighting the final phase of the warfare, Armageddon. This interruption meant that God would have to show further patience toward the "vessels of wrath", the enemy nations. But it was well worth it. That way he could show mercy on the "vessels of mercy", namely, the remnant of the 144,000, that these might be "prepared unto glory".

²⁷ This divine patience toward the worldly "vessels of wrath" required a shortening of the days of tribulation upon this world, but this lull in the tribulation at its middle served for the salvation of the remnant who were yet on earth in the flesh and who yet needed to 'make their calling and election sure'. (2 Pet. 1:10, 11) Referring to the tribulation at this "time of the end" and which began with the "war in heaven", Jesus said: "Then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." (Matt. 24:21, 22) Thus by this merciful intervention on God's part the remnant of the 144,000 have the opportunity after 1918 to be sealed in their forehead with the seal of the living God. To this day they are active in Jehovah's service as his witnesses and ambassadors to the nations.

OPPORTUNITY FOR GREAT MULTITUDE TO BE SAVED

²⁸ Since 1914 Christ Jesus reigns in the midst of his enemies; and with Satan's ouster from heaven he now has all his enemies at his feet, at his footstool the earth. Following up his victory in the "war in heaven" he could have crushed them at once at the earth in 1918. We have seen how halting further battle action in 1918 and thereby sparing the nations resulted in the salvation of the remnant of the elect 144,000. Well, then, what about the salvation of that "great multitude" out of all nations whom John saw after the sealing of the 144,000? God's enduring with much long-suffering since 1918 the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction has also worked out for the salvation of this "great multitude" of earthly worshipers of Jehovah God. This great host of persons of good-will recognize that, by God's mercy and forbearance since 1918, God's salvation has come to them through Christ. Hence John describes them in the following way: "After that I looked, and there was a great host whom no one could count, from every nation and tribe and people and tongue, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clad in white robes, with palm-branches in their hands; and they cried with a loud voice, 'Saved by our God who is seated on the throne, and by the Lamb!'" (Rev. 7:9, 10, *Moffatt*) The fact is, one of the purposes

for which God shortened the tribulation in 1918 and spared the remnant of the elect was that these might bear the divine message of salvation to this "great host" who are to be saved to eternal life on earth.

²⁹ So, since 1918, God's prolonged endurance of the worldly nations doomed to destruction has worked to a twofold effect, namely, the salvation of the remnant and that of the "great multitude". God holds back the destructive forces that are reserved for Armageddon until after this great multitude has gotten the benefit of the Kingdom gospel proclaimed by the remnant.

³⁰ Whereas the remnant are sealed in their foreheads with the seal of the living God, the "great multitude" are marked in their foreheads by the remnant as earthly worshipers of Jehovah and as supporters of his King, Jesus Christ. The holding back of the forces of Armageddon until after the sealed remnant get the work done of 'marking the foreheads' of the "great multitude" is pictured in a vision Ezekiel had just a few years before Jerusalem was destroyed in 607 B.C. God's executional forces appointed to destroy the nations at Armageddon are pictured as six men with slaughter weapons, while the elect remnant with sealed foreheads are pictured as a seventh man clothed in white linen with a writer's inkhorn at his side. In great patience toward those committing abominations throughout the land Jehovah God sends first the man in linen to his work, ahead of the six executioners. We read: "And Jehovah said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry over all the abominations that are done in the midst thereof. And to the others [the executioners] he said in my hearing, Go ye through the city after him, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity; slay utterly the old man, the young man and the virgin, and little children and women; but come not near any man upon whom is the mark."—Ezek. 9:4-6, *Am. Stan. Ver.*

³¹ Seeing the loving, noble ends that God has in view in setting the time for the outbreak of Armageddon yet in the future, we ought not to fret because the organized forces of wickedness in the visible and invisible realms are still permitted to operate and bring untold woe upon the people. We should not become like the prophet Jonah. Due to a measure of self-righteousness and fear for his own reputation as a prophet, Jonah was unwilling that the same kind of mercy that he himself had experienced should be extended to the heathen inhabitants of the city of Nineveh. Jonah had run away from duty and God had had infinite mercy upon him by rescuing him from the belly of the sea monster and restoring him

²⁷. How has the tribulation been shortened, and with what benefit?
²⁸, ²⁹. How has another class benefited by shortening the trouble?

³⁰. Whereas the remnant are sealed, how are the multitude treated?
³¹, ³². Why ought we not to fret at God's patience, as Jonah did?

to his service as a prophet of Jehovah. So Jonah had now preached to the Ninevites that forty days from the time he had begun preaching to them their city of more than 120,000 inhabitants would be destroyed.

³² These Ninevites showed faith in the message of doom and repented, and God mercifully spared them because of this. But Jonah was displeased that God continued to show them patience and long-suffering beyond the forty days. He wanted their instant destruction. However, God's mercy meant the salvation of more than 120,000 persons that could not "discern between their right hand and their left

hand". (Jonah 4:11) In the second century following Jonah Nineveh's doom was pronounced by Nahum and Zephaniah and then her doom was executed by Jehovah God; but the Ninevites of Jonah's day were spared by God's tender regard for their repentance. Those repentant Ninevites pictured the "great multitude" of good-will of today. In Jehovah's sparing the ancient Ninevites we can see a reason for his sparing Christendom and the rest of the nations since 1918. It magnifies his qualities of merciful self-restraint. His wisdom so directs his actions that these qualities of mercy, patience, and forbearance toward the wicked are not misspent, but result in the salvation of some.—Jer. 18:7, 8.

HASTENING THE COMING OF THE DAY OF GOD

KNOWING that God's patience means salvation for men of good-will, we come to the following conclusion: If God can keep on enduring the nations in their oppressions of mankind and their schemes of further world domination against his King, Jesus Christ, then we too can endure these nations. The times of the Gentiles have indeed run out, but we as Christians and witnesses of Jehovah will take no subversive action to overthrow any of these nations. Such action would never hasten the coming of the great day of God Almighty. So we humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, and we yield all to him as the great Potter who makes and who breaks. Grateful that he has not broken us, we say, in Isaiah's words: "But now, O Jehovah, thou art our Father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand." (Isa. 64:8, *Am. Stan. Ver.*) We are grateful that he has spared us since 1918 and that he has committed to us the precious treasure of his ministry in our earthen vessels. (2 Cor. 4:7) Yes, we regret to see how organized religion continues to hoodwink the people and to make gains among men and to bring reproach upon Jehovah's name. We regret to see Satan bring increasing woes upon the people by his visible agents on earth. But while we have no pleasure in these things, yet if Almighty God continues to let the nations remain and rage against him, we are content. We find no fault. In fact, we are thankful for it. We know it has meant our own salvation and will mean further the salvation of countless others.

² Perceiving the divine purpose of God's forbearance with the wicked "vessels of wrath fitted to destruction" since 1918, we act in harmony with his purpose. We take advantage of his shortening of the days of tribulation. We redeem this time of divine grace, by applying it in the way that God wants, ful-

filling the commission that he has laid upon us as his witnesses, his ambassadors, sent forth to mark all foreheads of good-will. We bend all our energies, we devote all our resources, to the great educational work upon the people who sigh and cry, to comfort them with the knowledge of Jehovah God and his blessed Kingdom purposes. We know that this educational work and this training of people of all nationalities to worship the living and true God requires time and patience. We are thankful for the time allowed, and, by Jehovah's grace, we will not fail in patience with his own marvelous example of patience before our eyes. While organized religion of Satan's world makes its own enormous gains, why should we fret? We, too, can get our own work in. Hence we will keep on steadily preaching as God commands. We will expand his true worship, due to the increase that he gives to our efforts. We will also continue to preach the day of his vengeance, warning rulers and subjects alike that Armageddon approaches, when God by Christ his King will dash the nations to shivers like a potter's vessel smashed with an iron rod.

³ We will not sit in the seat of the scoffers, nor follow selfish passions, nor walk with the worldly mockers who have scoffed and mocked since A.D. 1914, saying: "Where is His promised advent? Since the day our fathers fell asleep, things remain exactly as they were from the beginning of creation." (2 Pet. 3:3, 4, *Moffatt*) We will not count God as slow and never getting to the performance of his promises. We know there is a limit to his patience, and that he has appointed a definite time for the battle of Armageddon. When the time for this final feature of the days of tribulation arrives, then his patience toward the "vessels of wrath fitted to destruction" will end. As long as he yet pleases we will endure the

1. Despite continuing wickedness, why be content at God's patience?
2. How do we take advantage of the shortening of the tribulation?

3, 4. (a) What popular course of today foretold by Peter will we not follow? (b) What words of Jehovah to Ezekiel will be remembered?

scoffing and mocking at our hopes and our warnings to the world, remembering his words to the prophet Ezekiel:

“Son of man, what is this proverb that ye have in the land of Israel, saying, The days are prolonged, and every vision faileth? Tell them therefore, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: I will make this proverb to cease, and they shall no more use it as a proverb in Israel [type of Christendom]; but say unto them, The days are at hand, and the fulfillment of every vision. For there shall be no more any false vision nor flattering divination [by Christendom’s clergy] within the house of Israel. For I am Jehovah; I will speak, and the word that I shall speak shall be performed; it shall be no more deferred: for in your days, O rebellious house, will I speak the word, and will perform it, saith the Lord Jehovah. . . . Son of man, behold, they of the house of Israel say, The vision that he seeth is for many days to come, and he prophesieth of times that are far off. Therefore say unto them, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: There shall none of my words be deferred any more, but the word which I shall speak shall be performed, saith the Lord Jehovah.”—Ezek. 12: 21-28, *Am. Stan. Ver.*

“No, we will not take the shortsighted human viewpoint and say God is slow. To speak that way shows lack of Bible intelligence. We accept inspired Peter’s explanation that “the Lord is not slow with what he promises, according to certain people’s idea of slowness; no, he is long-suffering for your sake, he does not wish any to perish but all to betake them to repentance”. (2 Pet. 3: 9, *Moffatt*) For those who sincerely repent by turning from this doomed world and taking up the pure worship of God and service of his King this repentance leads to salvation. We of the remnant know we must yet make our calling and election sure. But, in fact, *all* of Jehovah’s witnesses today must abide in the saved condition into which they have been brought, and in that condition they must seek to help others to salvation. Understanding this purpose of God in not yet having brought on the great day like a thief when the present wicked heavens and earth of Satan’s organization will be consumed as by fire, we accept Peter’s counsel and we “consider that the long-suffering of our Lord means salvation”.—3: 15, *Moffatt*.

“What the many mockers call God’s slowness does not at all shake our confident expectation of that day of destruction for this old unsatisfactory, God-dishonoring world. We keep looking forward joyously to the new heavens and new earth that he has promised. In this gracious time of divine patience toward the “vessels of wrath” we follow what the apostle Peter draws as a conclusion in view of the

dissolution of this old world in the coming day of wrath: “If all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what holy and pious lives you ought to lead, while you await and hasten the coming of the Day of God, which will cause the heavens to burn up and dissolve and the heavenly bodies to blaze and melt. In fulfillment of his promise we expect new heavens and a new earth, where uprightness will prevail.”—2 Pet. 3: 11-13, *An Amer. Trans.; Moffatt; Roth.*

HOW?

“How can we both await and “hasten” the coming of the day of God Jehovah? We cannot hasten it in the sense of bringing it sooner than the time that He has originally fixed for it. No, we cannot alter “the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power”. (Acts 1: 7) His D-day is dated unchangeably; it is immovably fixed. We cannot shift it forward, as some have tried to do in their studies of chronology by fixing dates in advance for certain events predicted in divine prophecy. How, then, can we “hasten” the coming of Jehovah’s day of destruction upon this old world without any subversive action by us against the nations?

“We can do so by not joining with the mockers and scoffers who *postpone* that day into the indefinite future, “not in our day,” as they say with the idea God is slow. They *delay* it in the minds and viewpoints of men. We *hasten* it by pointing out from the Bible and from prophetic fulfillments that it is near, taking the same viewpoint as Paul, when he said: “Knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand.” (Rom. 13: 11, 12) We therefore avoid presuming upon God’s seeming slowness, but act promptly and efficiently in view of the shortness of the time that we know remains. We well know that Satan also knows that “he hath but a short time” before the battle of Armageddon bursts forth.—Rev. 12: 12.

“We know what God’s work for now is, and we see it progressing, moving ahead irresistibly on earth. We know it will be a *short* work, because of the rigorousness, the dispatch and the zeal with which God causes it to be carried out. As the apostle Paul says: “And Isaiah cries out about Israel, ‘Although the sons of Israel are as numerous as the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them will be saved, for the Lord will execute his sentence rigorously and swiftly on the earth.’”—Rom. 9: 27, 28, *An Amer. Trans.; Isa. 10: 22, 23.*

“God is “from eternity and to eternity”, and, by the way he counts time, he is now moving very speedily. His time of merciful patience, already exercised

5. What view by Peter do we take of the situation since 1918?

6. What do we confidently expect and while leading what kind of lives?

7, 8. How can we not and yet can we hasten the coming of God’s day?

9. Whose work do we see progressing, and why will it be short?

10. What climax is near, and to what should we make every effort?

thirty years since 1918, will expire shortly. The day of the final outburst of divine wrath will be upon this world like a thief for suddenness, and it shall pass out forever. The new heavens and new earth will be here, and those who have appreciated God's goodness and taken full advantage of his patience

will enter into the enjoyment of that new world. "Therefore, dear friends, while waiting for this, make every effort to be found by him unstained, irreproachable, and at peace. Look upon our Lord's patience as salvation."—2 Pet. 3:14, 15, *An Amer. Trans.*

DISTRICT ASSEMBLIES IN OTHER COUNTRIES

THE president of the Watch Tower Bible & Tract Society would have liked to drop in on all of the district assemblies throughout the world if that had been at all possible, but it seemed well for him in 1948 to pay attention to the work in the United States, Alaska and Canada, as reported on in our last two previous issues. It was with real interest, however, that he watched the reports as they came in from all parts of the world, from the South American countries, from Central America, from Australia and from Europe. As these reports were read it was noted that the same interest was shown in the district assemblies by the brethren in other countries as was shown by the publishers of the Kingdom in the United States and Canada. It appears that the United States started off first with its initial assembly in March, but closely thereafter the assemblies began in other countries.

Mexico city had a fine assembly in April. There were 1,760 in attendance at the public lecture, and 99 were immersed. Other assemblies were arranged at Veracruz and Tuxtla Gutierrez. These were more in the form of circuit assemblies, accommodating the brethren in those areas.

Toward the end of April Panama had arranged for a special meeting in Bocas del Toro. This was away from the center of population, but many of the brethren from Panama city traveled there by boat in order to give this district a good witness.

Then came May, and our few brethren in British Honduras were convention-minded and they were gathered together in Belize in the number of 66. The British West Indies had a splendid gathering at Port of Spain, Trinidad; 3,623 attended their public lecture. Guatemala city was not to be left out of the enjoyment of having a convention, and the publishers assembled in that city to advertise a public lecture, which 252 attended. In this same month, for the convenience of the people of good-will in El Salvador, assemblies were held in Santa Ana and San Salvador. At these five assemblies there were more than 65 persons of good-will immersed, symbolizing their consecration to the Lord. Away on the other side of the earth a district assembly had been arranged in New Zealand. The first one was held in Auckland, where 400 of the brethren were able to come together at the Town Hall. The second assembly was at Christchurch, in the southern part of New Zealand, and 260 witnesses were present. More than 1,200 persons were in attendance at the public meetings.

As the days flee by, the month of June brings in another group of district assemblies. In Australia, due to the vastness of the country, six district assemblies were arranged, and it is reported that the good-will persons attended these with boundless joy. The spirit of the brethren is now very good, and, as some expressed it at the assemblies, "The

wound has healed." The public talk attendance from one end of the country to the other for the six district assemblies was 6,353.

EUROPE

Continuing around the world, we come to Denmark, where we find 3,286 brethren assembled, and at the public meeting, 4,148. There were two new releases for our Danish brethren, the new book "*Let God Be True*" in the Danish language and also the *Song Book*. These were enthusiastically accepted by everyone. In Switzerland the Branch office had the responsibility of getting the district assembly information to the publishers in three different languages, and the first assembly was held early in June at Vevey in the French language. The next week-end was at Lucerne in a German-speaking section, and the latter part of the month the brethren assembled at Lugano, an Italian-speaking section of Switzerland.

While in all the other parts of the earth Jehovah's witnesses were meeting in peace and quiet and attending to their own business of carrying on true worship, the Catholic clergy in Poland were determined to break up the district assemblies of Jehovah's witnesses in that land. The place selected was Lublin, and when our brethren began to arrive at the city Catholic mobs began to form, and they charged our brethren and beat them severely. The police of Lublin came to the assistance of Jehovah's witnesses and tried to break up the mobs. The interesting part of it all was that the Catholic priest stood right there with the ruffians and directed the affair. The brethren tried to go out into the field service, but it was almost impossible, and the police requested us not to engage in house-to-house witnessing, but to stay in our hall. The only protection that the police were able to give Jehovah's witnesses was at the hall and along the streets leading from the hall to the railroad station and at the railroad station at the time the brethren departed. At times they had to call out the fire department to use high-pressure water hoses to keep the mob back from carrying on their nefarious work. The Catholics were determined to break up the assembly, but they failed. It was held for the three days. There were approximately 2,500 brethren present at the last day of the assembly. A number of these were hurt because of action on the part of the mob, but even these terrible conditions did not scare the newly interested persons associating themselves with Jehovah's witnesses. There were 124 immersed at Lublin at that district assembly.

The week previous there was a district assembly at Poznan, and there were 4,600 publishers in attendance; 6,000 came to the public meeting. It was at the first district assembly in Poland that 278 persons symbolized their consecration by water baptism. These assemblies will be long

remembered in the minds of the brethren in Poland, as well as by the inhabitants of these cities.

In the Netherlands a fine district assembly was held, and the brethren from the entire country were able to come together. On Sunday afternoon at the public lecture there were 8,000 in attendance; 188 were baptized. These meetings were very practical and instructive and were an encouragement to all. In the country of France, ten cities were selected so as to make it convenient to all. The last one in France was held at the end of June, in Lille. It was good to observe that at these 10 assemblies there were 5,795 attending the assembly sessions, and at the public meetings a total number of 9,235 attended. Also, 54 were immersed. A goodly number of brethren inquired about and filled out applications for pioneer service. The work in France is moving along very well despite the difficult times within the country itself. The report from France concludes saying, "These district assemblies contributed to the further expansion of the work in France."

Four district assemblies were held in the British Isles, two in June and two in July. The cities selected were Brighton, Birmingham, Blackburn and Glasgow. The Brighton assembly was the largest by reason of its close proximity to London. The largest attendance of brethren at the four assemblies was 9,729, whereas at the public meeting the grand total came to 18,200. The first assembly at Brighton was held in a very pleasantly situated open-air stadium. It took a lot of work to prepare this ground for the assembly, but the brethren were delighted to do it. The success of the assembly, of course, depended on good, sunny weather. Days before the assembly and the days after saw heavy rainstorms, yet not a single drop of rain fell during the three days of the assembly at Brighton. The whole series of district assemblies in Britain was a real fillip to the British brethren. A number of them are now considering the pioneer work who have not been in it before, and the work in those islands is certainly on the increase, which can easily be seen by the year's report for 1948.

Austria was not to be missed in this great feast of district assemblies throughout the world. There was one arranged at Vienna, and it proved to be very encouraging. Outstanding at this assembly was the release of two new publications, the booklet *The Joy of All the People* and the new *Song Book*. With money very scarce in Austria, it was still possible for 825 brethren to assemble by Saturday. The hall was overcrowded on Sunday when a few less than 2,000 came to hear the public talk. More than 1,400 remained for the concluding sessions because of the interest aroused through the public meeting. The convention was held in the same place where Johann Strauss played his first waltzes. The present owner is a direct descendant of this family which long ago established the place. The owner and his wife were so pleased with the fine organization that had gathered there that, without any request, they reduced the rent by 20 percent for the three days.

An assembly was held in Prague, Czechoslovakia, from September 10 to 12. Because of the national mourning decreed by the government upon the death of the former president, Dr. Benesch, they could only begin their sessions on Saturday morning, but the brethren were active in the field all day Friday. The assembly was attended by almost

500 brethren more than last year. Saturday evening we had 2,135 at the hall, and at the public lecture Sunday afternoon, 2,862. There were 254 immersed. The witness work goes on in Czechoslovakia because the ministers of the Kingdom are determined to praise Jehovah yet more and more.

Sweden, too, was delighted by the district assembly held there at Orebro August 13-15. Orebro is not a very large city. It has a population of only about 62,000, but it is the so-called center of free churches in Sweden. Some of the leaders of the religious bodies in this town were stating that Jehovah's witnesses were dying out, and now all on one week-end thousands of them moved into the city and more or less took over. A wonderful witness was given, and even the newspapers had to take note of the action on the part of the ministers of God. On Sunday at the public meeting there were 3,025, and on Sunday morning there were 123 who symbolized their consecration. There were released at this assembly two new booklets, *The Joy of All the People* and *"The Kingdom of God Is Nigh"*, and during the assembly 22,979 of these booklets were distributed. Before the assembly at Orebro, there were approximately 20 of Jehovah's witnesses meeting together regularly studying *The Watchtower*. The Sunday following the convention 40 were present. We hope this means expansion in Orebro, as well as continued expansion in all of Sweden.

Three assemblies were held in Norway. At a time when the sun shines there 24 hours a day the first assembly was held in Harstad, far to the north, with 103 attending. Two weeks later the assembly at Stavanger drew together 241 brethren. The next week, the assembly at Drammen proved to be the largest, with 470 attending. The total for the public meetings at all three was 1,408 present, and, all together, 21 were baptized. The Branch servant ministered at all three assemblies.

NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN HEMISPHERES

Simultaneously throughout the world other countries have had their district assemblies. Chile had a small gathering. Cuba called its publishers together at Havana, and there at the public meeting they had 2,569. Brazil had fine gatherings at São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. The island of Jamaica, at its principal city of Kingston, played host to Jehovah's witnesses, and at the public assembly there were 5,250. Costa Rica had a most successful assembly. There 950 heard the public talk and 650 brethren were present the opening night. The work in this Central American country is moving ahead fast. In August a new peak in publishers was reached totaling 916. This is a wonderful peak and the brethren will surely have to keep busy to surpass that in 1949 service year. So, from one end of the world to the other many of the Lord's people were able to come together and receive the blessings of these district assemblies.

Two of the outstanding assemblies of the year were the assemblies of our German brethren. For their convenience two district assemblies were arranged, one in Kassel and one in Berlin. Probably among the most wonderful things that Jehovah's witnesses ever experienced in the way of assemblies were these two in Germany. Considering the hardships and difficulties through which the brethren have gone and observing the growth since the second world war has ended, one cannot fully appreciate the joy and enthu-

siasm of these German brethren unless he has seen them and been with them. The one hope of the many brethren was to get to Kassel, there to assemble with Jehovah's witnesses. They did get there, and they were blessed. It was just after the currency reform had taken place, and most of the brethren were depleted as far as cash was concerned, when the time for this assembly arrived, but still they came. What a blessing it was to all of these 18,000 in attendance when the announcement was made that everyone there could obtain free the clothbound book *"The Truth Shall Make You Free"* and the booklet *The Joy of All the People*. It was a pleasure for the Society to be able to give these publications to our German brethren. The report from Germany says, "Without doubt, the distribution of the valuable books and booklets, free of charge, will have reminded the happy receivers of the fact, how much they are being favored above their brethren abroad in this respect." The high-light of the whole feast of the convention was reached on Sunday. At three o'clock in the afternoon there were 23,150 persons, by count, in the Karlsweise. There were many more of the citizens of Kassel standing at the approaches to the grounds who were able to hear by loud-speaker.

The German people are hearkening to the truth, and many of them are desirous of symbolizing their consecration. They know it is not a matter of just joining some organization. It means working and preaching, so that is just what the German brethren are doing. On Sunday morning at the baptismal service there were 1,200 brethren who symbolized their consecration at Kassel. During the day 85 company publishers reported for pioneer service, and they are in hopes that sometime they will receive sufficient literature so they can take it to the people. An old pioneer brother who has been standing for the truth for more than thirty years said that he had witnessed many conventions during the past years but everything had been eclipsed by what the Lord was granting him here at Kassel: new power, new joy, and indescribable blessings. This, probably, was the innermost feeling of practically all of the brethren in attendance.

The second district assembly for Germany was to be held in Berlin. This city, as everyone knows today, is the focus of the greatest political decisions. There is a blockade around Berlin as far as the western sector is concerned, and the "cold war" carries on. But even with all of these hardships and difficulties going on in Berlin and in the Russian section, it did not stop Jehovah's witnesses from arranging for a district assembly. There are no potatoes, very few vegetables, no milk, and very little electricity, gas and fuel and lights available in the western sector of Berlin. Every day the difficult circumstances become more confused, and every day the people's cry for deliverance from their tattered condition and undesirable misery is sounding louder and louder. But, despite this, the district assembly went right ahead. The public meeting was well advertised. Handbills were distributed and beautiful, printed posters were put up advertising the talk. Even a car with a loud-speaker was allowed to go through the streets, announcing the lecture. As a result, the greatest witness for the truth ever given in Berlin was given on Sunday afternoon, August 29. More than 25,000 people

filled the seats of the huge arena of the Waldbühne, which is an open-air theater. Brother Frost, the Branch servant, delivered the public lecture, and people were indeed impressed with the good message of comfort that was brought to them. This climaxed the service year for our brethren in Germany. Here a city filled with turmoil was to Jehovah's witnesses a city of refuge, a haven of peace and harmony, a place where people could gather together to study the Lord's Word and make plans to carry comfort to the nations of the earth. They not only have planned it, but will do it, by the Lord's grace.

There were 16,000 brethren who were able to attend this Berlin district assembly. These had come to Berlin on nine special trains. Of course, they came by other means of travel, too. It was impossible to make provisions for hot meals at the assembly. The brethren could not even prepare hot meals for themselves, because of the shortage of electricity and gas, but neither this difficulty nor the financial troubles within the city itself due to currency reform held up the brethren from coming. They were prepared to receive a meal of fat things at the Lord's table, and this they did. At this assembly there were 1,069 brothers and sisters immersed. Due to all the marvelous outworkings of the arrangements for this assembly, the brethren could certainly shout, "God is with us." They knew that their king was marching on to victory and that they were on the right side. By the Lord's grace, the German brethren along with Jehovah's witnesses throughout all the world are determined to carry on the true worship of the Most High and to do it better and more efficiently than ever. As the Branch servant reported on the convention, in his closing remarks, "A new service year has now begun in which specially the inner construction of the organization shall be furthered. It is now up to everyone to prove his gratitude and appreciation by putting in practice what we have heard at these blessed district assemblies."

AND FOR 1949

It would be difficult to sum up the blessings of all of these assemblies, except to say in the words of the yeartext for 1949, "I . . . will yet praise thee more and more." That would be a natural feeling of everyone wholly devoted to God, and each one can look forward to the new year with joy and gladness. As was announced by Brother Knorr at the Providence assembly, more district assemblies will be held during 1949. It appeared that in most places the convention grounds or halls were too small, and therefore more assemblies will be held in some of the countries than during this year. For example, in the United States there will be twelve district assemblies arranged for in locations convenient to more of the brethren. Other Branches will make similar arrangements, and, if necessary, will have more than one district assembly, so as to accommodate all the brethren during 1949. The district assemblies have proved very helpful, and we are grateful to the Lord for this arrangement.

If it is the Lord's will in 1950, an international assembly will be arranged for, and in most countries one large, central convention will be held for the blessing of all within the country. The true ministers of God will joyfully sing "I . . . will yet praise thee more and more."—Ps. 71:14.

FIELD EXPERIENCES

IN CATHOLIC QUEBEC

"Much interest is manifested by the French-speaking people here. I find in my experiences that the blessings of the New World seem to be most striking to the people. Even strong Catholic people have expressed their dissatisfaction with this present condition existing on earth.

"As I was calling from house to house, just with a Bible, of course, I came across a lady who could speak English. I introduced myself and the message that I presented, but she, being very busy, could not speak long at the door. We made an arrangement for me to call back that same evening when her husband would be home. When evening came I called at the house and was invited in. After a few minutes I learned that this man was the mayor of the town. I felt stiff for a few seconds but quickly overcame this, and then I introduced myself as one of Jehovah's witnesses engaged in the ministry work of announcing the perfect Government. Immediately he expressed interest, although stating 'I am a Catholic'. I got on common grounds with him and then explained the righteous government and its blessings and also gave him conclusive proof that we are now living in the time of the end of the world. He seemed to have gotten completely absorbed in the subject and so began asking me interesting questions. That gave me a chance to explain the Gentile times, that ended in 1914, and many other proofs, as in Matthew 24. He seemed quite interested in my French Bible and, on looking through its pages, said, 'Everything that you have told me from this Bible is a fact. I think I should do more Bible reading.' An hour went by quickly and I had to leave. As I was leaving he expressed his appreciation of my call and asked me if I could call again."

AN EXPERIENCE

in Swiss rurals during vacation

A brother, member of the Bethel family at Berne, told another member the following experiences, which might interest our readers. He spent his whole vacation in the field service and came back happier than ever. He visited especially scattered rurals in the mountainous Jura section, and told her how the Lord provided for shelter and food:

"Once a Catholic woman did not have money but offered him a freshly baked bread, which he gladly accepted. Soon after that he was looking for a place where to stay overnight. He was told to walk about an hour and there he would find a big house with sleeping quarters. This he did and the people accepted him for the night. A brother, however, was with him who wanted to accompany him in order to learn by his methods. A second bed was not ready for this second publisher. But the people were so nice to them that they finally improvised a bed, and so both could stay. When they invited them for supper and the boys brought the bread with them, these kind people were very glad, because they said they just did not have enough bread for all. After supper Bro. Schütz asked the family—there were quite a few at the table—if they would be interested in hearing a Biblical theme treated. All were willing to stay and listen, and he was able to give a talk about 'the end of the world'. In the morning, when he wanted to give them a book, as they did not accept anything in the way

of pay for his accommodation, they insisted to give him 2 francs and asked him to be sure and come back.

"At another place he had a similar experience. Only this time the man of the house invited him into the house after supper and by and by one member of the family after the other turned up, and finally he had a gathering of nine people. He asked them what about treating a Biblical subject, and they were glad to hear something. He spoke over an hour but they would not leave the room yet. So he went on speaking until eleven in the night, and everybody seemed to be highly satisfied. In the morning again they would not accept anything for lodging and food, and furthermore took 3 books and some booklets, and a guest who had just happened to be among them asked him to be sure and call back as this house was so far away from any church and the housewife needed such admonition greatly."

Bro. Schütz has placed during vacation 76 books and over 200 booklets and over 100 magazines in about 105 hours, and he told me how the other boy had liked to be with him telling him: now he saw the secret preaching in a manner of reducing expenses.

THE TRUTH OF GOD'S WORD DISSOLVES OPPOSITION

The following experience shows the power of Jehovah's truth to break up opposition to His witnesses. (2 Cor. 10: 4) By the kind but firm statement of the truth God's faithful servants commended themselves to the consciences of men.

"At the assembly for Illinois Circuit 6 we learned in the early part of Sunday that the American Legion were to come to the public talk, and therefore we prepared ourselves to receive them. About 3 p.m. nearly one hundred of them with their wives came strutting in with their caps on. They approached the main entrance to the high school auditorium, but they were politely told that every seat was taken. They were invited to go into the balcony in a gymnasium which was right behind the stage, where they could see all the proceedings, since the dividing doors were open. They accepted the escort provided by Jehovah's witnesses and sat down with their caps on. After listening to the Scriptural argument, most of them changed their attitude. Some took off their caps, sat on them and listened attentively with some even taking notes. Later they began to smile and even applauded when Jehovah's witnesses did. No disturbance was created, but all became more alert. They all remained for the entire talk, then left quietly and had a short confab on the front lawn of the school, after which they got into their cars and went away.

"The police, who had been notified, were on hand as well as the head of the board of education, who stood for freedom. The police chief said they did not come to take care of us, whom they could trust, but they came to take care of their own! There were other favorable remarks too. One member of the American Legion, as he was leaving with his cap in his hand, said he was going to throw it in the drawer and begin to do a little thinking.

"All of us as servants of the Most High were thankful that Jehovah's guidance and protection was on us and that a greater witness was given to His name."