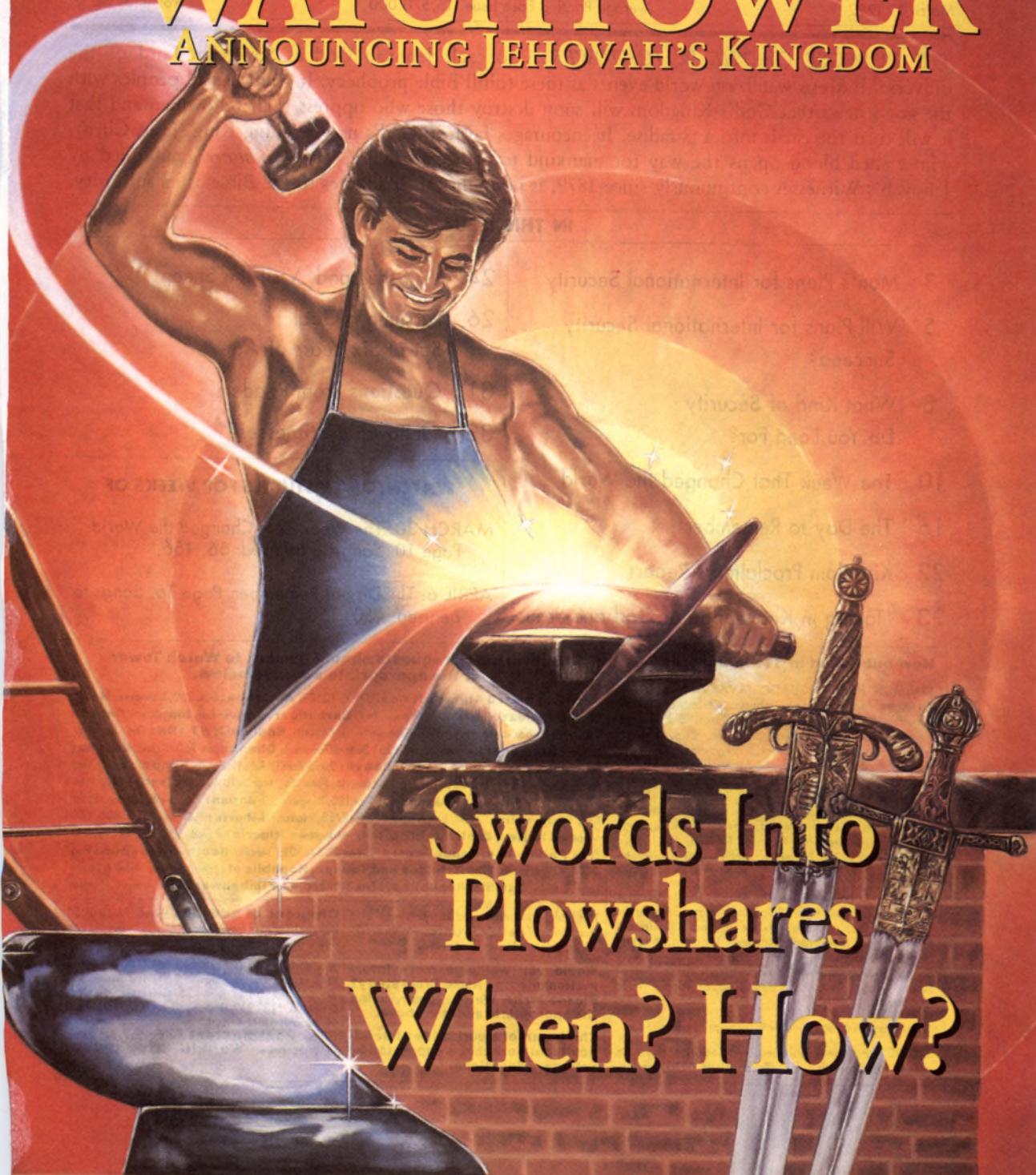


THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

MARCH 1, 1992



Swords Into
Plowshares
When? How?

THE WATCHTOWER[®]

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

March 1, 1992

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

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MAN'S PLANS FOR INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

"When all this is over, we want to be the healers. We want to do what we can to facilitate what I might optimistically call a new world order."

—U.S. president George Bush, January 1991, shortly after the beginning of the war with Iraq.

"President Bush's concept of a New World Order stresses the importance of the rule of law and the belief that nations have a collective responsibility for freedom and justice. With the ending of the Cold War, a new era is emerging."

—U.S. ambassador to Australia, August 1991.

"Tonight, as I see the drama of democracy unfolding around the globe, perhaps —perhaps we are closer to that new world than ever before."

—U.S. president George Bush, September 1991.

MANY world leaders are, like President Bush, speaking optimistically about the future. Is their optimism warranted? Do events since World War II give a basis for such optimism? Do you think politicians are able to bring international security?



Man's Great Plan

"During the last two years of the second world war," explained the television documentary *Goodbye War*, "over one million people were being killed each month." At the time, the nations felt an urgent need for a plan that would prevent such a war from happening again. While the war was still in progress, representatives of 50 nations produced the greatest plan for international security ever devised by man: the Charter of the United Nations. The preamble to the Charter expressed the determination "to

save succeeding generations from the scourge of war." Prospective members of the United Nations were "to unite [their] strength to maintain international peace and security."

Forty-one days later, an airplane dropped an atom bomb on Hiroshima, Japan. It exploded

above the center of the city, killing over 70,000 people. That explosion, and the one that followed three days later over Nagasaki, effectively brought an end to the war with Japan. Since Japan's ally Germany had surrendered on May 7, 1945, World War II thus came to an end. However, was that the end of all war?

No. Since World War II, mankind has seen over 150 smaller wars that have claimed upwards of 19 million lives. Clearly, the great UN plan has not yet brought international security. What went wrong?

The Cold War

The UN planners failed to anticipate the rivalry that quickly developed between former World War II allies. Many States took sides in this power struggle, which came to be called the Cold War and was, in part, a struggle between Communism and capitalism. Instead of uniting their strength to stop war, the two blocs of nations supported opposing sides in regional conflicts and in this way fought each other in Asia, Africa, and the Americas.

In the late 1960's, the Cold War began to thaw. The thaw climaxed in 1975 when 35 States signed what is called the Helsinki Agreement. Included among the participants were the Soviet Union and the United States, together with their respective European allies. All promised to work for "peace and security" and "to refrain . . . from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations."

But these ideas did not bear fruit. By the early 1980's, the struggle between the superpowers heated up again. Things got so bad that in 1982 the newly elected secretary-general of the United Nations, Dr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, acknowledged the failure of his organization and warned of a "new international anarchy."

Yet, today, the UN secretary-general and other leaders express optimism. News reports refer to "the post-Cold War era." How did this change come about?

"The Post-Cold War Era"

A noteworthy factor was a meeting of the 35-nation Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. In September 1986 they signed what is called the Stockholm Document, reaffirming their commitment to

the 1975 Helsinki Agreement.* The Stockholm Document contains many rules to govern the monitoring of military activities. "The results of the past three years are encouraging and the level of implementation is beginning to exceed the written obligations of the Stockholm Document," reported SIPRI (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute) in its *Yearbook 1990*.

Then, in 1987, the superpowers reached a remarkable agreement requiring the destruction of all their ground-launched missiles with ranges between 300 and 3,400 miles. "The physical destruction of missiles and launchers is on schedule and the stipulations of the agreements are being duly observed by each side," says SIPRI.

Other measures have been taken to reduce the risk of nuclear war. For example, in 1988 the superpowers signed an agreement regarding "intercontinental ballistic missiles and submarine-launched ballistic missiles." Before launching such weapons, each side must notify the other "no less than twenty-four hours in advance, of the planned date, launch area, and area of impact." According to SIPRI, such agreements "virtually eliminate the possibility of local incidents escalating to a world-wide nuclear war."

Meanwhile, plans to improve international security gathered speed. In May 1990, during a superpower summit in Washington, D.C., then Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev proposed that the two blocs of European nations sign a peace treaty. In July the 16 Western nations of NATO (North

* This agreement is the first and most important of a series of accords signed in Helsinki by Canada, the United States, the Soviet Union, and 32 other countries. The official name of the chief agreement is the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. Its primary goal was to reduce international tension between East and West.—*World Book Encyclopedia*.

Atlantic Treaty Organization) met in London. Their response to Mikhail Gorbachev's proposal was that both sides sign a "joint declaration in which we solemnly state that we are no longer adversaries and confirm our intention to refrain from the threat or use of force." The front-page headline of an African newspaper described this as "A Giant Step to World Peace."

Then, on the eve of a superpower summit in Helsinki, Finland, a U.S. government spokesman said that "the prospect of war [in the Middle East] is forging a new group plan for world peace." Peace had received a setback when Iraq invaded Kuwait and the Middle East seemed in danger of going up in flames. But under United Nations authority, an international force led by the United States drove the invading forces back into their own country. The international unity of purpose manifested in that war encouraged some to hope that a new era of cooperation had dawned.

Since then, world events have developed

further. In particular, the very nature of what was once the Soviet Union changed dramatically. The Baltic States were allowed to declare their independence, and other republics in the Soviet Union followed suit. Violent ethnic rivalries surfaced in lands that had seemed monolithic under the centralized Communist control. By the end of 1991, the Soviet Union had officially ceased to exist.

These radical changes on the world political scene have opened the door of opportunity for the United Nations organization. In this regard *The New York Times* said: "The easing of worldwide tensions and the new spirit of cooperation between the United States and the Soviet Union could mean a new, more powerful role in international affairs for the world organization."

Is it finally time for that 47-year-old organization to come into its own? Are we really entering what the United States called "a new century, and a new millennium, of peace, freedom and prosperity?"

WILL PLANS FOR INTERNATIONAL SECURITY SUCCEED?

"THE Cold War, which has gripped the world for over 40 years, appears in God's mercy to have ended," states *One World*, a magazine of the WCC (World Council of Churches). "Significant happenings in Central and Eastern Europe . . . seem to bode well for peace and security in Europe and the rest of the world," adds Anglican writer John Pobee, of

the WCC's Programme on Theological Education.

Representatives of the WCC are not alone in linking God with man's plans for international security. In April 1991, shortly after the Persian Gulf war, Pope John Paul sent a message to then UN secretary-general Javier Pérez de Cuéllar in which he said: "The bishops of the Catholic Churches

of the Middle East and the West have confidence in the work of the United Nations . . . They hope that, through the United Nations and its specialized organizations, those whom the recent war has placed in a situation of acute need will not fail to find international sensitivity and solidarity."

Furthermore, the Vatican was one of the 35 States that formulated and signed both the 1975 Helsinki Agreement and the 1986 Stockholm Document. When the United Nations declared 1986 to be the "International Year of Peace," the pope responded by inviting representatives of the world's major religions to participate in a celebration of the "World Day of Prayer for Peace." In October 1986, representatives of Buddhist, Hindu, Islamic, Shinto, Anglican, Lutheran, Greek Orthodox, Jewish, and other faiths sat together in Assisi, Italy, and took turns praying for world peace.

Some years later, in a sermon he gave in Rome, the Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury recalled the above occasion. "In Assisi," he said, "we saw that the Bishop of Rome [the pope] could gather the Christian Churches together. We could pray together, speak together and act together for the peace and well-being of humankind . . . At that initiative of prayer for world peace I felt I was in the presence of the God who said 'Behold I am doing a new thing.'"

Other religions, although not represented at Assisi, are also optimistic about man's plans for international security. An editorial in *Die Kerkbode*, the official journal of South Africa's Dutch Reformed Church, said: "We are experiencing the transition into a new world order. What seemed inconceivable a few years ago is happening before our very eyes. The reconciliation taking place on the greater world scene between the Soviet Union and the West has wide regional implications. In our part of the

world, traditionally opposing parties and sworn enemies are talking to one another, and the urge toward 'peace' is surfacing everywhere . . . From a Christian standpoint, all efforts to bring peace between people should be welcomed. We can pray for peace in our time."

Is God blessing man's plans for international security?

What Does the Bible Say?

When it comes to relying on human endeavors, the Bible offers a straightforward warning: "Do not put your trust in nobles, nor in the son of earthling man, to whom no salvation belongs. His spirit goes out, he goes back to his ground; in that day his thoughts do perish." (Psalm 146:3, 4) Present-day progress toward peace may seem encouraging. But we have to be realistic. Men's powers are limited. Often, events are bigger than they are. They can rarely discern the undercurrents, the hidden forces, that upset their best-laid plans.

Seven hundred years before the time of Jesus, in the days of the prophet Isaiah, Jewish leaders were planning for security through international treaties with neighboring countries in a way comparable to what is happening today. In those days too, the religious leaders supported what the politicians were doing. But Isaiah warned: "Plan out a scheme, and it will be broken up! Speak any word, and it will not stand." (Isaiah 8:10) Their scheme turned out to be a disastrous failure. Could the same thing happen today?

Yes, it could, since through that same prophet, God announced that He has His own way to bring security to the earth. It will be, not through any human organization, but through a descendant of the Israelite king David. (Isaiah 9:6, 7) This Heir of King David is Jesus Christ, who, when in-

terrogated by Pontius Pilate, admitted that he was a King but said: "My kingdom is no part of this world." (John 18:36; Luke 1:32) In fact, Jesus' Kingdom was to be heavenly. And it—not the United Nations or any earthly political nation—was to bring lasting, dependable security to this earth.—Daniel 2:44.

Jesus Christ predicted that his Kingdom would start ruling from the heavens at a time when there would be "wars and reports of wars," with 'nation rising against nation and kingdom against kingdom.' The fulfillment of prophecy marks 1914 as the time when that happened and identifies the years since then as "the conclusion of the system of things."—Matthew 24:3, 6-8.

What does this mean? That the time remaining for this present world setup is limited, and it will soon run out. Is that a cause for concern or sadness? Not if we remember the cruelty, the injustice, the oppression, the warfare, and all the suffering that have marked this system of things. It will surely be a relief to be under a ruler about whom God's Word, the Bible, says: "Upon him the spirit of Jehovah must settle down, the spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the spirit of counsel and of mightiness, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of Jehovah."—Isaiah 11:2.

Real Security on Earth

In truth, there will not be real security on earth until, under God's Kingdom, the

prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled on a worldwide scale: "I am creating new heavens and a new earth; and the former things will not be called to mind, neither will they come up into the heart." (Isaiah 65:17) No matter how many prayers religious leaders offer in behalf of this world, human plans for international security cannot replace God's way for bringing peace and security.

The worldwide, permanent security that God's Kingdom ushers in will be glorious. Here is just one of the descriptions found in the Bible: "They will have to beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning shears. They will not lift up sword, nation against nation, neither will they learn war anymore. And they will

actually sit, each one under his vine and under his fig tree, and there will be no one making them tremble; for the very mouth of Jehovah of armies has spoken it."

—Micah 4:3, 4.

Only security guaranteed by God himself can be permanent and reliable. Hence, rather than putting your trust in nobles, why not put your trust in him? Then you will find that the psalmist's words are true: "Happy is the one who has the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in Jehovah his God, the Maker of heaven and earth, of the sea, and of all that is in them, the One keeping trueness to time indefinite." —Psalm 146:5, 6.

The Catholic Church and International Politics

"Although Christ said that his kingdom was 'not of this world,' high-ranking ecclesiastics and the papacy as an institution have participated intensely in international and national political struggles since the time of Constantine."

—*The Catholic Church in World Politics*, by Professor Eric Hanson of the Jesuit Santa Clara University.

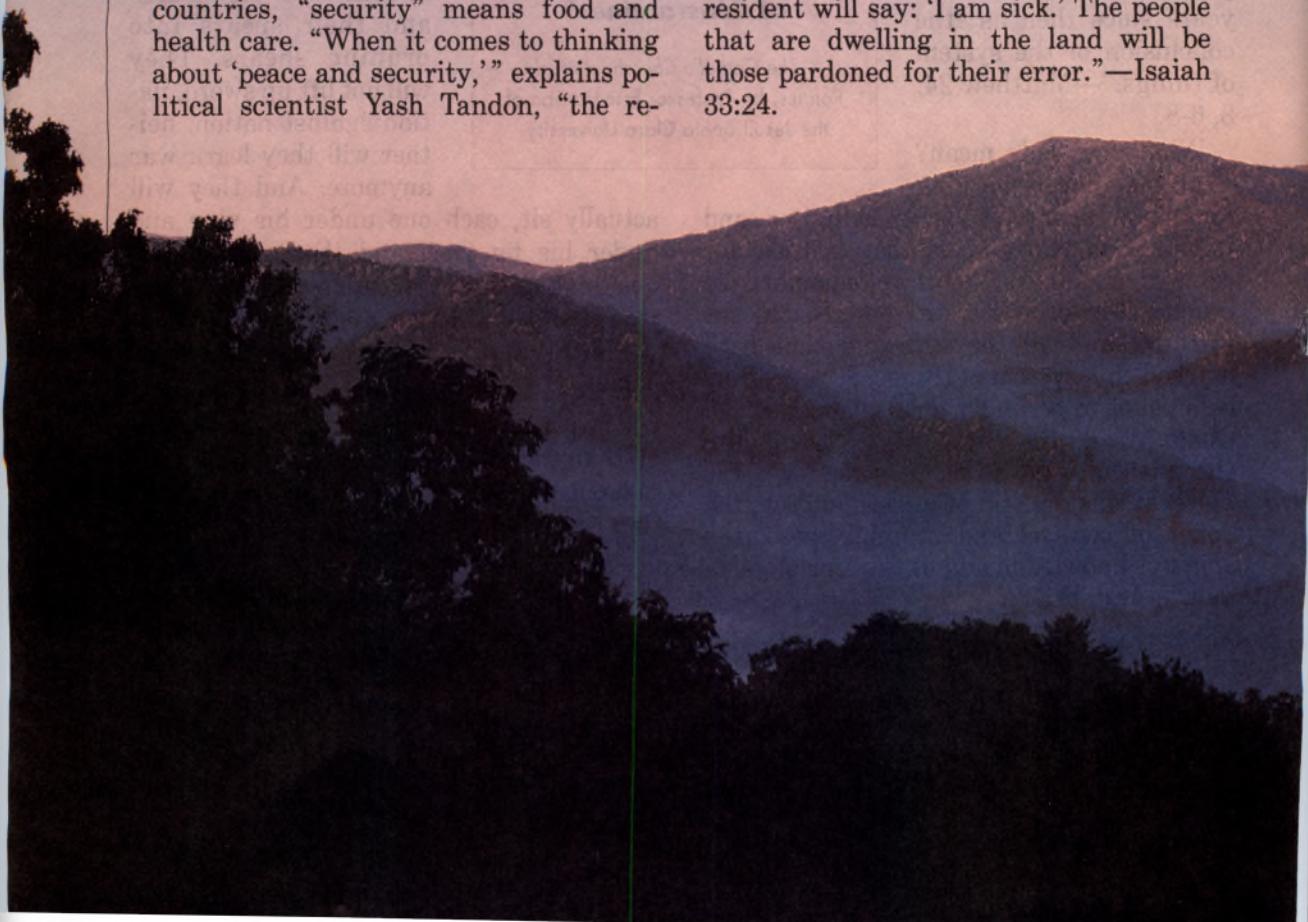
WHAT KIND OF SECURITY DO YOU LONG FOR?

DIFFERENT people have different ideas about security. Some view it as stability between opposing military powers. For example, the powers that dominate the world scene together with their European allies have agreed on many measures to reduce the risk that small incidents will escalate into global nuclear war. The *Stockholm International Peace Research Institute Yearbook 1990* expresses astonishment over the lack of interest in such measures by nations "in other parts of the world."

However, to millions living in poor countries, "security" means food and health care. "When it comes to thinking about 'peace and security,'" explains political scientist Yash Tandon, "the re-

ceived notions of the dominant Western culture take over. . . . 'Security' is seen as a matter of arms and disarmament, isolated from the security concerns of the unfed and the unhoused of two-thirds of the world's population."

As for the Bible, it promises that under God's Kingdom there will be no more war. "He is making wars to cease to the extremity of the earth. The bow he breaks apart and does cut the spear in pieces; the wagons he burns in the fire." (Psalm 46:9; Isaiah 2:4) Physical sickness will be a thing of the past. "No resident will say: 'I am sick.' The people that are dwelling in the land will be those pardoned for their error."—Isaiah 33:24.



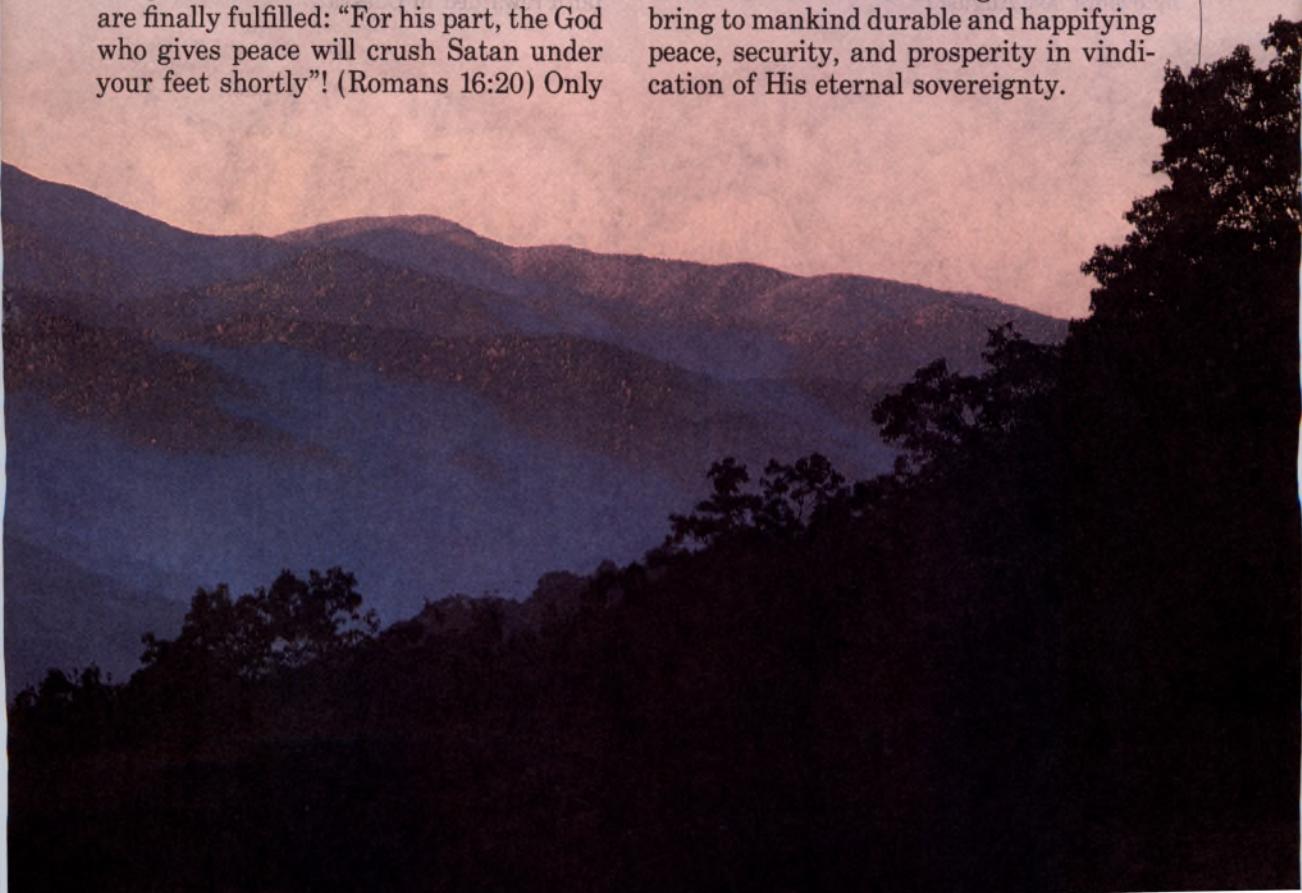
Under that Kingdom, economic insecurity will no longer threaten anyone. "They will certainly build houses and have occupancy; and they will certainly plant vineyards and eat their fruitage. They will not build and someone else have occupancy; they will not plant and someone else do the eating."—Isaiah 65:21, 22.

More important, though, the Kingdom will remove the basic cause for the lack of peace and security. Who has been behind man's long history of unsuccessful and oppressive governments? While God has, for good reason, permitted them to exist, the one who must take responsibility is Satan, since the Bible says that 'the whole world is lying in his power.'—1 John 5:19.

What a relief, then, when under God's Kingdom, Paul's words to the Romans are finally fulfilled: "For his part, the God who gives peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly"! (Romans 16:20) Only

God's heavenly Kingdom, under the King Jesus Christ, could accomplish such a thing. Hence, only under that Kingdom will the earth be transformed into a paradise.—Genesis 1:28; Luke 23:43.

Yes, the security promised in the Bible is far superior and more far-reaching than anything devised by man. Why, we read that "death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore"! (Revelation 21:4) Can we trust such promises? Yes, because they originate with the almighty Creator, Jehovah God, who also declares: "My word that goes forth from my mouth . . . will not return to me without results, but it will certainly do that in which I have delighted, and it will have certain success in that for which I have sent it." (Isaiah 55:11) Certain success marks the steps that Jehovah God is taking even now to bring to mankind durable and happifying peace, security, and prosperity in vindication of His eternal sovereignty.



THE WEEK THAT CHANGED THE WORLD

“Blessed is he that comes in Jehovah’s name!”—MATTHEW 21:9.

“THREE HARROWING DAYS THAT SHOOK THE WORLD.” In August 1991, media headlines such as this emphasized the fact that the world can be turned upside down in a matter of days. Indeed, the closing days of August were most eventful not only for the world but also for a group of which Jesus said: “They are no part of the world.” This group is known today as Jehovah’s Witnesses.—John 17:14.

1. What two contrasting groups were affected by events last August?

² The first international convention of Jehovah’s Witnesses ever planned for Yugoslavia had been scheduled for August 16 to 18. As it turned out, it would also be the first large convention of Jehovah’s people within a nation on the verge of civil war. Local Witnesses, together with volunteers from neighboring lands, had labored for two months in giving the HAŠK Građanski soccer stadium in Zagreb a complete

- 2, 3. (a) How was freedom highlighted in Zagreb despite war clouds? (b) How was strong faith rewarded in Odessa?



facelift. It was spick-and-span, an ideal location for the "Lovers of Godly Freedom" Convention. Thousands of international delegates planned to attend, including 600 from the United States. As the clouds of civil war threatened, the word went around: "The Americans will never come." But come they did, along with delegates from many other lands. An attendance of 10,000 had been anticipated, but 14,684 were in the stadium on the final day! All were richly blessed because they did not 'forsake the gathering of themselves together.'—Hebrews 10:25.

³ During the three days following the Zagreb convention, an abortive coup was staged in the Soviet Union. At the time, lovers of godly freedom were making final preparations for their convention in Odessa in Ukraine. Could the convention be held? With strong faith the brothers put the finishing touches on a complete renovation of the stadium, and the delegates kept on coming. As if by a miracle, the coup ended. A delightful convention was held on August 24, 25, with 12,115 attending and 1,943—16 percent of the peak attendance—being baptized! These new Witnesses, together with longtime integrity keepers, rejoiced that they had come to that convention with full trust in Jehovah.—Proverbs 3:5, 6.

⁴ These faithful Witnesses were following the pattern set by our Exemplar, Jesus Christ. Never did he neglect attending the festivals commanded by Jehovah, even when the Jews were seeking to kill him. As he came up to Jerusalem for his last Passover, these were standing around in the temple, asking: "What is your opinion? That he will not come to the festival at all?" (John 11:56) But come he did! This set the stage for a week that climaxed in a

4. The Witnesses in Eastern Europe have been following what pattern set by Jesus?

reversal of the course of human history. Shall we now review some of the highlights of that week—Nisan 8 to 14 on the Jewish calendar?

Nisan 8

⁵ On this day Jesus and his disciples arrive in Bethany. Here, Jesus will spend six nights at the home of his beloved friend Lazarus, whom he has recently raised from the dead. Bethany is close to Jerusalem. Privately, Jesus has already advised his disciples: "Look! We are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of man will be delivered up to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death, and will deliver him up to men of the nations to make fun of and to scourge and to impale, and the third day he will be raised up." (Matthew 20:18, 19) Jesus is fully aware that he must now face agonizing trials. However, as that time of supreme testing approaches, he spares no effort in lovingly serving his brothers. May we always be of "this mental attitude . . . that was also in Christ Jesus."—Philippians 2:1-5; 1 John 3:16.

Nisan 9

⁶ Following sundown, as Nisan 9 begins, Jesus enjoys a meal at the home of the former leper Simon. It is here that Lazarus' sister Mary pours costly perfumed oil on Jesus' head and feet and humbly wipes his feet dry with her hair. When Judas objects, Jesus says: "Let her alone, that she may keep this observance in view of the day of my burial." Hearing that many of the Jews are going to Bethany and putting faith in Jesus, the chief priests plot to kill him and Lazarus.—John 12:1-7.

5. Of what was Jesus aware as he traveled to Bethany on Nisan 8, 33 C.E.?
6. In the evening of Nisan 9, what did Mary do, and what did Jesus say to Judas?

Jesus commands the poor widow who contributed two small coins—all she had

⁷ Early in the morning, Jesus sets out for Jerusalem. Crowds go out to meet him, waving palm branches and shouting: “Save, we pray you! Blessed is he that comes in Jehovah’s name, even the king of Israel!” Jesus then fulfills the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9 by riding up to the city on an ass. As he nears Jerusalem, he weeps over it, foretelling that the Romans will surround it with pointed stakes and utterly destroy it—a prophecy that would have striking fulfillment 37 years later. (This also bodes ill for Christendom, which has apostatized after the pattern of ancient Jerusalem.) The Jewish rulers do not want Jesus as their king. In anger they exclaim: “See! The world has gone after him.”—John 12:13, 19.

Nisan 10

⁸ Jesus again visits the temple. For a second time, he throws out greedy merchants and money changers. Commercialism—“the love of money”—should not take over in Jehovah’s house of prayer! (1 Timothy 6:9, 10) Jesus is soon to die. He speaks of the planting of a seed to illustrate this. The original seed dies, but it germinates to produce a stalk that bears an abundance of grain. Similarly, Jesus’ death will result in everlasting life for the

7. On the morning of Nisan 9, how was Jehovah’s name honored, and what did Jesus foretell?
8. On Nisan 10, how did Jesus show deep respect for Jehovah’s house of prayer, and what followed?



multitudes who exercise faith in him. Troubled at the thought of his approaching death, Jesus prays that his Father’s name will thereby be glorified. In response, God’s voice thunders from heaven for all present to hear: “I both glorified it and will glorify it again.”—John 12:27, 28.

Nisan 11—A Day of Activity

⁹ Jesus and his disciples again leave Bethany for a full day of activity. Jesus uses three illustrations to show why apostate Jewry is condemned. He had cursed an unfruitful fig tree, and its now withered condition depicts the faithless, unfruitful Jewish nation. Entering the temple, he describes how unworthy cultivators of a master’s vineyard finally slay even the master’s son and heir—picturing the Jews’ betrayal of their trust from Jehovah, which is to be climaxed by their killing of Jesus. He describes a marriage feast arranged by a king—Jehovah—whose invited guests (the Jews) selfishly excuse themselves from attending. Hence, the invitation goes to outsiders—the Gen-

9. (a) Early in the day on Nisan 11, how did Jesus use illustrations in condemning the apostate Jews? (b) In line with Jesus’ parable, who have missed out on a grand opportunity?

tiles—some of whom respond. But a man found to be without a wedding garment is thrown out. He represents the counterfeit Christians of Christendom. Many Jews of Jesus' day were invited "but few chosen" to be among the 144,000 sealed ones who inherit the heavenly Kingdom.—Matthew 22:14; Revelation 7:4.

¹⁰ The hypocritical Jewish clergy seek an occasion to seize Jesus, but he answers a number of their catch questions and confounds them before the people. Oh, those renegade religious Jews! How roundly Jesus castigates them! They crave prominence, distinctive garb, and high-sounding titles, such as "Rabbi" and "Father," similar to many clergymen in our day. Jesus states the rule: "Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted."—Matthew 23:12.

¹¹ Jesus scathingly denounces those religious leaders. Seven times he exclaims: "Woe to you!" calling them blind guides and hypocrites. And each time he gives clear reason for the condemnation. They are blocking entry into the Kingdom of the heavens. When they snare a proselyte, he becomes doubly a subject for Gehenna, likely already being in line for destruction due to previous gross sin or fanaticism. "Fools and blind ones!" declares Jesus, for the Pharisees focus on the gold of the temple rather than on maintaining pure worship there. They ignore justice, mercy, and faithfulness as they pay a tenth of the coveted mint, dill, and cumin, but ignore the weighty matters of the Law. Ritual washings will never remove their inner defilement—only a heart cleansed through faith in Jesus' approaching sacrifice can

10-12. (a) Why did Jesus castigate the Jewish clergy, and what scathing denunciation did he heap upon those hypocrites? (b) How was judgment finally executed on apostate Jewry?

accomplish that. Their inner hypocrisy and lawlessness belie any "whitewashed" exterior.—Matthew 23:13-29.

¹² Yes, it is woe indeed to the Pharisees, truly "sons of those who murdered the prophets" of old! Serpents, offspring of vipers they are, doomed to Gehenna, for they will kill not only Jesus but also those whom he sends forth. This is a judgment to be executed "upon this generation." In fulfillment, Jerusalem was utterly destroyed 37 years later.—Matthew 23:30-36.

¹³ Before leaving the temple, Jesus speaks commendingly of a needy widow who drops into the treasury two small coins—"all the means of living she had." A contrast indeed to the greedy rich, who are dropping in only token contributions! Like that needy widow, Jehovah's Witnesses today willingly sacrifice time, energy, and finances in order to support and expand the worldwide Kingdom work. How different from those immoral TV evangelists who fleece their flocks and build empires of personal wealth!—Luke 20:45-21:4.

As Nisan 11 Draws to a Close

¹⁴ Jesus weeps over Jerusalem and its people and declares: "You will by no means see me from henceforth until you say, 'Blessed is he that comes in Jehovah's name!'" (Matthew 23:37-39) Later, when they are seated on the Mount of Olives, Jesus' intimate disciples ask about this, and in answer Jesus describes the sign that will mark his presence in Kingdom power and the conclusion of Satan's evil system of things.—Matthew 24:1-25:46; Mark 13:1-37; Luke 21:5-36.

13. Jesus' remarks on temple contributions are reflected in what situations today?
14. What sorrow did Jesus express, and how did he answer the further inquiry of his disciples?

¹⁵ Referring to Jehovah's judgment soon to be executed on the temple, Jesus indicates that this typifies future catastrophic events at the conclusion of the entire system of things. That time of his presence will be marked by the outbreak of warfare on an unprecedented scale, as well as by famines, earthquakes, and pestilences, together with lovelessness and lawlessness. How true this has been of our 20th-century world since 1914!

¹⁶ A climax will be reached in a "great tribulation such as has not occurred since the world's beginning until now, no, nor will occur again." Since this will be as devastating as the Flood of Noah's day, Jesus warns against getting absorbed in worldly pursuits. "Keep on the watch, therefore, because you do not know on what day your Lord is coming." How happy we can be that the Master has appointed an anointed "faithful and discreet slave" to sound forth the warning and to provide abundant spiritual food for this day of his presence!—Matthew 24:21, 42, 45-47.

¹⁷ In our 20th century, we have seen "on the earth anguish of nations, not knowing the way out . . . while men become faint out of fear and expectation of the things coming upon the inhabited earth." But Jesus tells us: "As these things start to occur, raise yourselves erect and lift your heads up, because your deliverance is getting near." And he cautions us: "Pay attention to yourselves that your hearts never become weighed down with overeating and heavy drinking and anxieties of life, and suddenly that day be instantly upon you as a snare." Only by keeping awake

15. What sign did Jesus give concerning his presence for judgment, and since when is it being fulfilled?

16, 17. What world developments did Jesus describe, and how should Christians react to the prophecy?

can we stand approved before Jesus, "the Son of man," at his presence.—Luke 21: 25-28, 34-36.

¹⁸ In concluding his masterful preview of modern-day events, Jesus gives three illustrations. First, in the parable of the ten virgins, he again emphasizes the need to "keep on the watch." Then, in the illustration of the slaves and talents, he shows how industriousness is rewarded by an invitation to 'enter into the joy of the Master.' Anointed Christians, who are foreshadowed in these parables, as well as the other sheep can draw much encouragement from these word pictures.—Matthew 25:1-30.

¹⁹ The third illustration refers to Jesus' presence in Kingdom power after he arrives to sit down on his glorious heavenly throne. It is a time for judging the nations and for separating the peoples of earth into two groups, one consisting of meek sheeplike persons and the other, of stub-

18. What encouragement may we draw from Jesus' illustrations of the ten virgins and of the talents?

19, 20. What delightful modern-day relationship is featured in Jesus' illustration of the sheep and the goats?

How Would You Summarize?

- What hospitality and welcome did some give Jesus during Nisan 8 through 10?
- How did Jesus expose the hypocritical clergy on Nisan 11?
- What great prophecy did Jesus give, and how is it being fulfilled today?
- How did events move toward a climax on Nisan 12 and 13?

born goatlike ones. The sheep go out of their way to show themselves supportive of the King's brothers—the remaining anointed ones on earth at this time of the world's end. These sheep are rewarded with life, whereas the unappreciative goats go away into everlasting destruction.

—Matthew 25:31-46.

²⁰ What a grand relationship we see between the other sheep and the King's brothers at this conclusion of the system of things! Though the anointed remnant bore the brunt of the work at the beginning of the King's presence, the millions of zealous other sheep now make up 99.8 percent of God's servants on earth. (John 10:16) And they too have shown themselves willing to endure 'hunger, thirst, nakedness, sickness, and prison' as companions of the integrity-keeping anointed ones.*

* The following article should help us to appreciate all the more the intimate relationship between the anointed little flock and the other sheep.



Nisan 12

²¹ The plot to kill Jesus gains momentum. Judas visits the chief priests at the temple, agreeing to betray Jesus for 30 silver pieces. Even this had been prophesied.—Zechariah 11:12.

Nisan 13

²² Jesus, who stays on in Bethany, likely for prayer and meditation, sends his disciples into Jerusalem to locate a certain "So-and-so." In this man's home, in a large upper room, they make ready the Passover. (Matthew 26:17-19) As the sun sets on Nisan 13, Jesus joins them there for the most eventful celebration in all history. What now awaits on Nisan 14? Our next article will tell.

21. What gained momentum on Nisan 12, and how?
22. What preparation was made on Nisan 13?



THE DAY TO REMEMBER

"I have said these things to you that by means of me you may have peace. In the world you are having tribulation, but take courage! I have conquered the world."

—JOHN 16:33.

THE world today has much to say about peace. At the end of World War II, peace was associated with V-E Day and V-J Day.* Each year, Christmas makes people think of 'peace on earth.' (Luke 2:14) But there is one day in the whole of human history that stands

* Victory in Europe Day and Victory over Japan Day.

1, 2. What one day in history stands out from all other days, and why?

out from all others. It is the day on which Jesus Christ spoke the words quoted above. Out of two million and more days that mankind has existed here on earth, it is *the one day* that completely changed the course of humankind for its eternal good.

² That momentous day was Nisan 14 on the Jewish calendar. In the year 33 of our Common Era, Nisan 14 started at sundown on April 1. Let us consider the events of that epoch-making day.



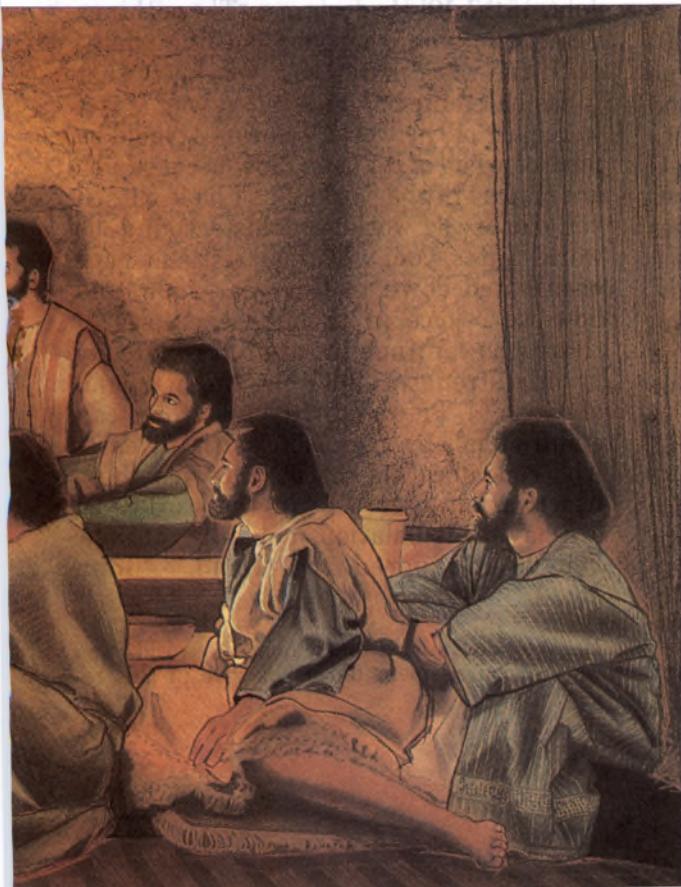
Nisan 14!

³ As dusk falls, a lovely full moon likely shines forth as a reminder that Jehovah determines times and seasons. (Acts 1:7) And what is happening in that upper room where Jesus and his 12 apostles have assembled to celebrate the Jews' annual Passover? As Jesus prepares 'to move out of this world to the Father, he is showing love for his own to the end.' (John 13:1) How does he do this? By word of mouth and by example, Jesus continues to instill in his disciples qualities that will help them conquer the world.

Putting on Humility and Love

⁴ The apostles have yet to rid themselves of a measure of ambitious jealousy and

3. How did Jesus make use of these final hours?
4. (a) How did Jesus demonstrate to his disciples a basic quality? (b) How do we know that Peter learned the importance of humility?



pride. So Jesus girds himself with a towel and proceeds to wash their feet. This is no display of mock humility, as enacted in Rome each year by Christendom's pope. No, indeed! True humility is a giving of self that springs from a 'lowliness of mind that considers others superior.' (Philippians 2:2-5) At first, Peter misses the point, refusing to let Jesus wash his feet. Upon being corrected, he asks Jesus to wash his entire body. (John 13:1-10) However, Peter must have learned the lesson. Years later, we find him counseling others correctly. (1 Peter 3:8, 9; 5:5) How important it is today that all of us slave for Christ in humility!—See also Proverbs 22:4; Matthew 23:8-12.

⁵ One of the 12 does not benefit from Jesus' counsel. This is Judas Iscariot. As the Passover meal proceeds, Jesus becomes troubled in spirit, identifies Judas as his betrayer, and dismisses him. It is only after this that Jesus tells his 11 faithful disciples: "I am giving you a new commandment, that you love one another; just as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love among yourselves." (John 13:34, 35) This truly is a new commandment, illustrated by Jesus' own superlative example! As the hour for his sacrificial death approaches, Jesus displays outstanding love. He uses every precious minute to teach and encourage those disciples. Later, he emphasizes the importance of love, saying: "This is my commandment, that you love one another just as I have loved you. No one has love greater than this, that someone should

5. What commandment by Jesus showed the importance of a further key quality?

surrender his soul in behalf of his friends.”
—John 15:12, 13.

The Way and the Truth and the Life”

⁶ Jesus tells the faithful 11: “Do not let your hearts be troubled. Exercise faith in God, exercise faith also in me. In the house of my Father there are many abodes. Otherwise, I would have told you, because I am going my way to prepare a place for you.” (John 14:1, 2) This place is to be in “the kingdom of the heavens.” (Matthew 7:21) Jesus states how this intimate group of loyal disciples may attain to their goal. He says: “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” (John 14:6) This also applies to those of mankind who gain everlasting life on earth.—Revelation 7:9, 10; 21:1-4.

⁷ Jesus is “the way.” The one and only approach to God in prayer is through Jesus Christ. Jesus himself assures his disciples that the Father will give them whatever they ask in Jesus’ name. (John 15:16) Prayers directed to icons or religious “saints” or replete with Ave Marias and repetitious chanting—none of these are heard and accepted by the Father. (Matthew 6:5-8) Further, concerning Jesus, we read at Acts 4:12: “There is not another name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must get saved.”

⁸ Jesus is “the truth.” The apostle John stated of him: “The Word became flesh and resided among us, and we had a view of his glory, a glory such as belongs to an only-begotten son from a father; and he was full of undeserved kindness and truth.” (John 1:14) Jesus became the truth of hundreds of prophecies in the Hebrew Scriptures by fulfilling them. (2 Corinthians 1:20;

6. What goal does Jesus hold before his intimate disciples?

7-9. Why did Jesus describe himself as “the way and the truth and the life”?

Revelation 19:10) He made known truth in talking to his disciples and the crowds who listened, in his disputing with the hypocritical clergy, and by his living example.

⁹ Jesus is “the life.” As the Son of God, Jesus said: “He that exercises faith in the Son has everlasting life; he that disobeys the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God remains upon him.” (John 3:36) Faith exercised in Jesus’ sacrifice leads to everlasting life—immortal life in heaven for a “little flock” of anointed Christians and life eternal on a paradise earth for a great crowd of “other sheep.”—Luke 12:32; 23:43; John 10:16.

Enduring Persecution

¹⁰ Those who hope to live in Jehovah’s new system must contend with a world that “is lying in the power of the wicked one,” Satan the Devil. (1 John 5:19) How encouraging, then, are Jesus’ words at John 15:17-19! He declares: “These things I command you, that you love one another. If the world hates you, you know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were part of the world, the world would be fond of what is its own. Now because you are no part of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, on this account the world hates you.” True Christians have been hated down to this year 1992, and how we rejoice in the fine examples of those who continue to stand firm, humbly finding strength under the mighty hand of God! (1 Peter 5:6-10) All of us can endure trials by exercising faith in Jesus, who concludes his discussion with these heartwarming words: “In the world you are having tribulation, but take courage! I have conquered the world.”—John 16:33.

10. Why do we need to ‘conquer the world,’ and what encouragement did Jesus give in this regard?

Introducing a New Covenant

¹¹ During that evening, after the Passover celebration has drawn to a close, Jesus speaks of a new covenant. The prophet Jeremiah foretold this centuries beforehand, saying: “‘Look! There are days coming,’ is the utterance of Jehovah, ‘and I will conclude with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah a new covenant . . . I will put my law within them, and in their heart I shall write it. And I will become their God, and they themselves will become my people. . . . I shall forgive their error, and their sin I shall remember no more.’” (Jeremiah 31:31-34) On Nisan 14, 33 C.E., the sacrifice that validates this new covenant is to be made!

¹² Jesus tells the faithful 11 that he has greatly desired to eat this Passover with them. Then he takes a loaf, gives thanks, breaks it, and gives it to them, saying: “This means my body which is to be given in your behalf. Keep doing this in remembrance of me.” In the same way, he passes a cup of red wine to them, saying: “This cup means the new covenant by virtue of my blood, which is to be poured out in your behalf.” (Luke 22: 15,19, 20) The new covenant is made operative by Jesus’ “precious blood,” of far greater value than the animal blood sprinkled in validating Israel’s Law covenant! (1 Peter 1:19; Hebrews 9:13, 14) Those taken into the new covenant enjoy complete forgiveness of sins. Hence, they may qualify to be of the 144,000, who receive an everlasting inheritance as spiritual Israel.—Galatians 6:16; Hebrews 9:15-18; 13:20; Revelation 14:1.

“In Remembrance of Me”

¹³ The 1,960th annual Memorial of Jesus’

11. What did Jeremiah prophesy concerning a new covenant?
12. How did Jesus institute the new covenant, and what does it accomplish?
13. (a) On what should we reflect at Memorial time? (b) Who only should partake of the emblems, and why?

death falls on April 17, 1992. As that date approaches, we do well to reflect on all that Jesus’ perfect sacrifice accomplishes. This arrangement exalts Jehovah’s wisdom and his deep love for mankind. Jesus’ flawless integrity, even to an agonizing death, vindicates Jehovah against Satan’s taunt that His human creation is faulty and will fail under test. (Job 1:8-11; Proverbs 27:11) With his sacrificial blood, Jesus mediates the new covenant, Jehovah’s instrument for selecting “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for special possession.” While yet on earth, these “declare abroad the excellencies” of their God, Jehovah, who has ‘called them out of darkness into his wonderful light.’ (1 Peter 2:9; compare Exodus 19:5, 6.) Properly, they alone partake of the Memorial emblems each year.

¹⁴ At last year’s Memorial, 10,650,158 attended around the earth, but among these only 8,850—less than one tenth of 1 percent—partook of the emblems. Of what benefit, then, is this celebration to the millions of observers? Of great benefit! Though not partaking, they are enriched spiritually by this association with the vast global brotherhood, as they hear of all the grand things that Jehovah accomplishes through the sacrifice of his Son.

¹⁵ Moreover, the apostle informs us at 1 John 2:1, 2: “We have a helper with the Father, Jesus Christ, a righteous one. And he is a propitiatory sacrifice for our sins, yet not for ours only but also for the whole world’s.” Yes, Jesus’ sacrifice, while benefiting first the John class taken into the new covenant, provides also for the forgiveness of “the whole world’s” sins. It is “a propitiatory sacrifice” for the sins of all others of the world of mankind who

14. How are the millions of observers enriched?
15. How do others than anointed ones benefit from Jesus’ sacrifice?

The Wisdom of the Greater Solomon

The articles entitled "Organization" in the June 1 and June 15, 1938, issues of *The Watchtower* established the basic theocratic arrangement that Jehovah's Witnesses follow to this day. They climaxed a remarkable period of doctrinal and organizational readjustment that began in 1919. (Isaiah 60:17) In comparing that 20-year period to the 20 years during which Solomon constructed the temple and the king's house in Jerusalem, *The Watchtower* said: "The Scriptures show that, after the twenty years of Solomon's building program . . . , he engaged in a nation-wide building program. (1 Ki. 9:10, 17-23; 2 Chron. 8:1-10) Then came the queen of Sheba 'from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon'. (Matt. 12:42; 1 Ki. 10:1-10; 2 Chron. 9:1-9, 12) This suggests the question: What is in the immediate future for the people of Jehovah on earth? With full confidence we will wait, and we shall see." That confidence was not misplaced. Under theocratic organization a vast worldwide spiritual building program has gathered more than four million of the great crowd. Like the queen of Sheba, these have come from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of the Greater Solomon, Christ Jesus—channeled to them through "the faithful and discreet slave."—Matthew 24:45-47.

exercise faith in Jesus' shed blood, which opens up for them the happy prospect of eternal life on a paradise earth.—Matthew 20:28.

"In the Kingdom of My Father"

¹⁶ Continuing to encourage his apostles, Jesus points to the day when in a symbolic way he will drink the product of the vine new with his disciples in the Kingdom of his Father. (Matthew 26:29) He tells them: "You are the ones that have stuck with me in my trials; and I make a covenant with you, just as my Father has made a covenant with me, for a kingdom, that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones to judge the twelve tribes of Israel." (Luke 22:28-30) Since Jesus took Kingdom power in the heavens in 1914, we may conclude that the greater number of Jesus' joint heirs, gathered through the centuries, have already been

16. (a) In what do Jesus and his joint heirs now appear to share? (b) What is required today both of the anointed remnant and of the great crowd?

resurrected, to "sit on thrones" with him. (1 Thessalonians 4:15, 16) The day rapidly approaches for the angels to release "the four winds" of "the great tribulation"! By then, the sealing of the 144,000 of spiritual Israel and the gathering of the millions of the great crowd will have been completed. All of these must keep integrity, as Jesus did, in order to receive the prize of everlasting life.—Revelation 2:10; 7:1-4, 9.

¹⁷ What if some anointed ones fail to be integrity keepers? At this late hour, the number of such disloyal ones will no doubt be few. Reasonably, any replacement would come, not from among newly baptized ones, but from among those who have stuck with Jesus in his trials through many years of faithful service. The brilliant flashes of spiritual light that came

17 and box. (a) If an anointed one should be rejected as disloyal, who reasonably might replace him? (b) *Watchtower* articles in 1938 shed what interesting light on the building and later expansion of the theocratic organization on earth?

through *The Watchtower* in the 1920's and 1930's indicate that the gathering of the remnant of anointed ones was practically completed during that period. Those 'washing their robes and making them white in the blood of the Lamb' since then have a different joyful hope. Through Christ, Jehovah's spirit guides them to "fountains of waters of life" in the Paradise earth.—Revelation 7:10, 14, 17.

A Most Fervent Prayer

¹⁸ Jesus concludes his Memorial gathering with his disciples by offering the fervent prayer recorded at John 17:1-26. He prays first that his Father may glorify him as he keeps integrity to the end. In this way Jehovah will also be glorified, his name being sanctified—cleared of all reproach. For, indeed, the perfect man Jesus *does* prove that God's human creation can be faultless, even under the severest test. (Deuteronomy 32:4, 5; Hebrews 4:15) Further, Jesus' sacrificial death opens a grand opportunity for Adam's offspring. Says Jesus: "This means everlasting life, their taking in knowledge of you, the only true God, and of the one whom you sent forth, Jesus Christ." How essential it is to acquire accurate knowledge of Jehovah God and of his Son, the Lamb of God, who gave his life for Jehovah's vindication and for mankind's salvation! (John 1:29; 1 Peter 2:22-25) Do you appreciate that most loving sacrifice to the extent of dedicating your all to Jehovah and his precious service?

¹⁹ Further, Jesus prays to his Holy Father that He watch over the disciples as they prove themselves to be no part of the world, adhere to His word as truth, and maintain precious oneness with the Father and the Son. Has not this prayer been

18. What powerful lessons do we learn from Jesus' prayer at John chapter 17?

19. How may the remnant and the great crowd enjoy precious unity?

wonderfully answered down to this present day as the anointed remnant and the great crowd serve together unitedly in bonds of love, while keeping neutrality toward the world, its violence, and its wickedness? How precious Jesus' concluding words to his Father, Jehovah! "I have made your name known to them and will make it known," said Jesus, "in order that the love with which you loved me may be in them and I in union with them."—John 17:14, 16, 26.

²⁰ Going out to the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus has further brief, upbuilding association with his disciples. Then his enemies are upon him! Words fail to describe Jesus' physical agonies, his heartbreaking sorrow at the reproach heaped on Jehovah, and his exemplary integrity through it all. Jesus endures to the end, through the night and throughout most of the daylight hours of that day. He clearly demonstrates his Kingdom to be no part of the world. And with his final breath, he cries: "It has been accomplished!" (John 18:36, 37; 19:30) His world conquest is complete. Nisan 14, 33 C.E., surely is *the day to remember!*

20. Why is Nisan 14, 33 C.E., surely *the day to remember?*

How Would You Answer?

- What did Jesus teach concerning humility and love?
- How did Jesus become "the way and the truth and the life"?
- What is the purpose of the new covenant?
- What unity and love are shared by the anointed remnant and the great crowd?

KINGDOM PROCLAIMERS REPORT

Jehovah Rewards a Faithful Youth

FAITHFUL youths are very precious in Jehovah's eyes. The following experience of a faithful young man should encourage other young ones to keep their integrity as they serve Jehovah.

In Argentina an 11-year-old boy and his younger brother studied the book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life* with their grandmother. Immediately, the boys' parents manifested opposition, and they forbade the boys to go to meetings at the Kingdom Hall. For a time, in order to attend meetings, the boys escaped through the bathroom window, jumped onto the patio, and from there went over the wall onto the neighbor's patio and on to the Kingdom Hall. Then someone told their mother that they were attending the meetings of Jehovah's Witnesses. The mother threatened to beat them, and this frightened the younger boy, who quit studying. But the older one persisted. For five years he managed to attend meetings without his parents' knowledge.

When he was 16 years old, he wanted to take a course in high school that was not offered in his hometown. Being away from home would give him more freedom to pursue the truth. His parents agreed to let him go, and everything went well for three months. Then the school principal notified his parents that their son would not salute the flag or sing the national anthem. Before an audience of the principal, his parents, a secretary, a lawyer, and ten professors, the young man was able to give an excellent witness as to why he could not conscientiously perform these acts. (*Exodus 20: 4, 5*) The parents were furious. The mother obtained a revolver, intending to shoot the grandmother, whom she considered responsible. But she could never find her alone.

Later, at the suggestion of a friend of the family and with the approval of the school principal, the parents decided to put the youth in a clinic for the mentally ill, thinking that psychiatric treatment would make him abandon his faith. The clinic personnel took the boy 60 miles away in a car and

injected him with huge doses of insulin and other drugs until he lost consciousness. Upon awakening, he was completely disoriented, did not know anyone, and suffered partial amnesia. After many studies the doctors could not find any mental disorder in him. But the clinic went ahead with the treatment. When conscious, the boy prayed continually to Jehovah not to abandon him and begged him for the strength to endure. Jehovah did protect him, and eventually he was released from the clinic.

On one occasion the school principal asked the young man if he was ready to retract. When he said no, the principal told the parents to take him back to the clinic because he was crazier than before. The parents took him to a boardinghouse and told the landlady to make sure that he did not go to the meetings of Jehovah's Witnesses. After the parents left, what a surprise the boy received! The owners of the boardinghouse were Jehovah's Witnesses! Finally the parents took him off psychiatric treatment, convinced that the doctors had lied to them. In the meantime the Supreme Court of Argentina ruled that the children of Jehovah's Witnesses could not be expelled from school for not saluting the flag.

Did these trials benefit this faithful youth? Yes. He states: "I was able to give an extensive witness to doctors, professors, schoolmates, parents, and relatives, in fact, to the whole city. My parents have softened somewhat and have a better concept of the Witnesses. Now, when I look back at my childhood, I see how marvelous and tender our God is in taking care of someone who remains loyal to him. It is exactly as the psalmist said at Psalm 27:10: 'In case my own father and my own mother did leave me, even Jehovah himself would take me up.'"

This young man is now 23 years old, married, and very active in Jehovah's service. Truly, Jehovah's sustaining power is without limit.—*Psalm 55:22*.

'Taking in Knowledge of God and Jesus'

“**T**HIS means everlasting life, their taking in knowledge of you, the only true God, and of the one whom you sent forth, Jesus Christ.” (John 17:3) So said Jesus in prayer to his heavenly Father, and in this way he showed a vital prerequisite for gaining eternal life. Why, though, does the *New World Translation* render this verse “taking in knowledge of . . . God” instead of “know . . . God,” as most other translations of the Bible express it?—See also the footnote to John 17:3.

The Greek word here translated ‘take in knowledge’ or ‘know’ is a form of the verb *gi-no’sko*. And the rendering in the *New World Translation* is designed to bring out as fully as possible the meaning of that word. The basic meaning of *gi-no’sko* is to “know,” but the Greek word has various shades of meaning. Note the following definitions:

“**GINOSKO** (*γινώσκω*) signifies to be taking in knowledge, to come to know, recognize, understand, or to understand completely.” (*Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, W. E. Vine) Hence, rendering *gi-no’sko* ‘take in knowledge’ is not ‘changing the Bible,’ as critics of the *New World Translation* have alleged. In a discussion of the various shades of meaning the word can encompass, renowned lexicog-

rapher James Hope Moulton states: “The present simplex, *γινώσκειν*, is durative, ‘to be taking in knowledge.’”—*A Grammar of New Testament Greek*.

A Grammatical Analysis of the Greek New Testament explains *gi-no’sko* as it appears at John 17:3 as “implying a continuous process.” A further comment on this Greek word appears in *Word Studies in the New Testament*, by Marvin R. Vincent. This says: “Eternal life consists in knowledge, or rather the *pursuit* of knowledge, since the present tense marks *a continuance, a progressive perception*.” (Italics his.) A. T. Robertson’s *Word Pictures in the New Testament* suggests translating the word “should keep on knowing.”

Therefore, in the original Greek, Jesus’ words at John 17:3 imply continuous effort to get to know the true God and his Son, Jesus Christ, and this is well brought out in the rendering of the *New World Translation*. We acquire this knowledge by diligently studying God’s Word and by obediently conforming our lives to its standards. (Compare Hosea 4:1, 2; 8:2; 2 Timothy 3:16, 17.) What fine reward awaits those who acquaint themselves with God’s personality and with that of his Son and then strive to imitate them? Everlasting life!



Scenes From the Promised Land

Visit the Land, Visit the Sheep!



Pictorial Archive (Near Eastern History) Est.

THOUSANDS of Christians have visited the Promised Land, feeling that seeing the places where events occurred would help them to understand the Bible, making it more meaningful. And it has.

Whether you have visited literally or you have visited mentally by studying books and articles about the land, what about visiting the sheep? 'What do sheep have to do with the Promised Land?' you may wonder. Actually, sheep were so much a part of life in Bible times that a visit to the Promised Land is, in a sense, incomplete without including sheep.

The photographs you see here can be part of your visit, since sheep that may be seen in the region today are much like the ones common during the Biblical period.* Their broad tail is heavy with fat. (Leviticus 7:3; 9:19) The thick wool is usually white. But remember that Jacob's large

* The above photograph of sheep in the wilderness of Judea can be studied in the 1992 *Calendar of Jehovah's Witnesses*.

flock included "sheep speckled and with color patches, and . . . dark-brown sheep."—Genesis 30:32.

This same account illustrates that a man having a large flock was considered wealthy. (Genesis 30:43) We read of Job: "His livestock got to be seven thousand sheep and three thousand camels and five hundred spans of cattle and five hundred sheasses . . . [He] came to be the greatest of all the Orientals." (Job 1:3; 42:12) Or recall that Nabal had 3,000 sheep and 1,000 goats. What do you think his status and influence were in David's day? (1 Samuel 25:2) But exactly why did a large flock constitute great wealth?

It was because sheep provided their shepherd or owner with valuable products. The wool itself was a renewing asset. Proverbs 31:13, 21, 22 helps us to see how a wise, industrious wife could use such to



make clothing for her family or garments that could be sold. (Job 31:20) Wool was an important trading commodity. That is implied in the comment that a Moabite king "became a sheep raiser, and he paid to the king of Israel a hundred thousand lambs and a hundred thousand unshorn male sheep." (2 Kings 3:4) Yes, they were "unshorn" sheep; their abundant wool added to their worth.

Male sheep, rams, could have impressive horns, such as in the photograph to the right. Does this call to your mind that a ram's horn was used to announce the Jubilee? (Leviticus 25:8-10) Similar hollow horns were used in sounding alarm signals or directing war maneuvers.—Judges 6:34; 7:18, 19; Joel 2:1.

Understandably, if you had a flock of sheep, you were ensured a source of food because sheep were among the clean animals that Israelites could eat. (Deuteronomy 14:4) The meat (mutton or lamb) could be boiled or roasted. Roasted sheep was a central element in the annual Passover. (Exodus 12:3-9) Sheep were also a regular source of milk, used for drinking and for cheese making.—1 Samuel 17:17, 18; Job 10:10; Isaiah 7:21, 22.

No visit to the sheep would be complete without noting the close bond between the flock and its shepherd. A faithful shepherd cared for



his sheep. As Jesus mentioned, they would recognize their shepherd's voice and respond when he called them by name. (John 10:3, 4) If one was missing, the attentive shepherd would search for it. When finding the lost sheep, he might put it on his shoulders and carry it back to the flock.—Luke 15:4, 5.



David drew on his personal experience with a flock when he likened himself to a sheep having Jehovah as its Shepherd. David was protected, as sheep were defended from attacking animals. The sheep could follow the lead of their caring shepherd. If they got injured, he dressed their wounds, perhaps with soothing oil. What a contrast to the selfish actions of Israel's leaders, described at Ezekiel 34:3-8!

The Bible contains numerous prophetic and figurative references to sheep. So your visiting, getting familiar with, the sheep of the Promised Land can deepen your understanding of terms such as "little flock," "the Lamb of God," and "other sheep."—Luke 12:32; John 1:36; 10:16.

Garo Nalbandian





PURSUING A GOAL SET AT SIX YEARS OF AGE

AS TOLD BY SANDRA COWAN

Many parents choose a career for their children, such as music or ballet, and begin to train them at a very early age. This is precisely what my mother did for me. From the time I was two weeks old, I was taken to all the Christian meetings and out in the field ministry.

WHEN I was four, Mom thought I was ready to preach on my own. I vividly remember my first attempt. We had driven to a big farmhouse, and while Mom and the others waited in the car, I got out and walked up to the door. A kind lady listened while I offered her ten booklets. To pay for them, she gave me a big bar of soap. It took my two hands to hold it. I was thrilled!

That same year, 1943, the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead opened its doors for training full-time pioneer ministers for missionary work. Mom encouraged me to make missionary service my goal in life. World War II was then raging in Europe, and Mom would tell me about young Witness children in Europe who were taken away from their parents. She wanted me to be strong enough to withstand any kind of test.

In the summer of 1946, I was baptized at the international convention in Cleveland, Ohio. Although I was only six years of age, I was determined to fulfill my dedication to Jehovah. That summer I served as a pioneer for the first time. I remember one morning placing 40 magazines with people seated at The Plaza in San Diego, California. My being tiny and talkative had a lot to do with it, I'm sure.

Often we preached near Beth-Sarim, which was where the ailing president of the Watch Tower Society, Brother Rutherford, had spent the winters before his death in 1942. We visited regularly and had dinner with the full-time servants there. Such happy visits made me decide that this was truly the kind of life I wanted. I then made Gilead School and missionary service my goal in life.

The following year my parents divorced, but the changed family situation didn't dampen our spirituality. Mom was a pioneer and very concerned about the training my brother and I received. Our small trailer was alive with visits of Christian brothers and sisters. Mom made a point of my meeting Gilead graduates. Two such graduates were Lloyd and Melba Barry, who were visiting in the traveling work while waiting to go to their foreign assignment in Japan. They took time to encourage me—a little girl who yearned to be a missionary—and that really impressed me.



When I was ten years old, Mom married a wonderful Witness who was also a pioneer minister. He adopted my brother and me not only on paper but also in his heart. His love for Jehovah and zeal for the service were very contagious.

Mom and Dad worked as a team to guide both of us children through the difficult teenage years. Our home was a spiritual haven that I look back on fondly. For them to pioneer on a small income while raising two children wasn't easy; it took self-sacrifice. But Mom and Dad depended on Jehovah and put Kingdom interests first.

How well I remember the international convention in New York City in 1950! Dad obtained a loan from the bank, and we took three passengers to help with expenses. Mom, Dad, my brother, and I sat together in the front seat all the way from San Diego to New York, while the others sat in the back. Because Dad's employer refused to give him two weeks' leave from work, attending that convention cost him his job. But as Dad assured us, Jehovah would provide for our needs, and He did. Dad sold the car to pay off the bank loan, and then he obtained a better job. This and similar experiences proved invaluable to me years later when my husband and I faced difficult situations.

On our return trip from New York, we visited Kingdom Farm, where I got to see Gilead School for the first time. I remember standing in one of the classrooms and saying to myself, 'I'm

not quite 11 years old. I'll never get to come here. Armageddon will come first.' But that visit made me more determined than ever to make Gilead my goal.

Working Toward My Goal

Every summer vacation throughout school, from first grade on, I pioneered. Then, two weeks after graduating from high school in June 1957, I became a regular pioneer.

The district convention meeting for those interested in Gilead held at the Los Angeles convention in 1957 was a special one for me. As I was walking into the tent for that meeting, I met Bill, a young brother I had known since I was six years old. For the past year, he had been away

We moved there on our way to the New York convention in 1958. While at that convention, we attended the meeting for those interested in Gilead. Hundreds were present. Looking at that crowd, we felt our prospects of being called to Gilead were slim indeed. Nevertheless, we turned in a preliminary application, even though we had been married only 11 weeks. The following year at the district convention in Philadelphia, we turned in a second application.

Bill and I learned in Romney to depend on Jehovah to help us through difficult situations. Romney was a town of about 2,000 inhabitants. Work was impossible to find. We lived in a 16-foot homemade trailer designed for California weather. We had no running water, no heat, and no refrigerator. It got so cold inside that we had to break the ice in the bucket to get water. The brothers helped us as much as they could, sharing the food they had hunted. We ate deer, raccoon, and squirrel. More than once we thought that we would have nothing to eat for the day, and then when we got home from service, we would find some apples or cheese left in front of our door.

We struggled for nine months living on a shoestring that got threadbare from time to time. Finally, we decided it would be wise to move to Baltimore, Maryland, where Bill could find work. When we told the brothers of our decision, they cried and we cried. So we decided to hang on just a bit longer.

Right after that a Witness who was manager of a supermarket in Westernport, Maryland, about 40 miles away, offered Bill a part-time job. The same month one of our Bible students offered us a cute



New York convention, 1958

serving where the need was greater in Louisiana. We were surprised to find out how much both of us were interested in missionary service. Six months later we decided to make it a joint project. We wrote the Society asking for an assignment and one month before our wedding, we received one in Romney, West Virginia.

little furnished house with a large coal stove. It was then that Malachi 3:10 became my favorite scripture. Jehovah had emptied upon us a blessing beyond our expectations.

Gilead at Last!

One of the most exciting days of our life was the day, in November 1959, when we received our invitation to Gilead. We were invited to the 35th class, the last one held at Kingdom Farm. When I stood in the same classroom I had visited as a child, I had a warm, happy feeling that no words can aptly describe.

Gilead was a spiritual oasis. It was like living in the new world for five months. Rarely in life do we wait years for something and then find it to be better than we had anticipated. But Gilead was just that.

We were assigned to India, but eventually we were denied visas. So, after a year of waiting in New York City, the Watch Tower Society reassigned us to Morocco, North Africa.

Missionaries in Morocco

We spent 24 joyful years in Morocco, falling in love with the people as soon as we arrived. We learned both French and Spanish, languages that helped us communicate with the many nationalities living there. It was mostly those who had come from other countries that responded to the Kingdom message.

One woman with whom I studied the Bible was a Spanish flamenco dancer who was employed in a cabaret in Casablanca. After learning Bible principles, she left the cabaret owner with whom she was living and returned to Spain. There she

witnessed to all in her family, and some of them accepted the Bible truths she shared with them. Afterward she returned to Casablanca, where she remained faithful to God until her death in 1990.

Our first few years in Morocco saw increases in the number of Kingdom publishers. However, when it became difficult for foreigners to obtain work and residence permits, there was an exodus of Witnesses to Europe. Some of those with



whom we studied are now in New Zealand, Canada, the United States, Bulgaria, Russia, and France, and some of them share in the full-time ministry.

Suddenly, in April 1973 our preaching work in Morocco was banned. What a blow that was! On a Thursday evening, we had been a happy crowd at the Kingdom Hall, talking until the lights were turned off to let us know it was time to go home. Little did we know that we would never again see those lights shine on such open Christian fellowship. Under banned conditions, our meetings and circuit assemblies were confined to small groups in private homes. To attend district conventions, the Witnesses traveled to either France or Spain.

As our numbers decreased, the few Witnesses left in Morocco became quite attached to one another. So when the Watch Tower Society finally decided to close the branch and to assign us elsewhere, all of us shed many tears.

On to Central Africa

Our new assignment was the Central African Republic. What a tremendous change from North Africa! Whereas Morocco had a climate much like southern



Bill and Sandra Cowan, 1991

California, we now found ourselves in the hot, steamy tropics.

There were new problems to face. For example, I now had to control my fear of crawling critters. On three occasions a lizard fell on my head as I walked through a doorway. Sometimes, while conducting a Bible study, a rat would decide to join us! Although I wanted to jump and run, I learned to control myself, never taking my eye off Mr. Rat and keeping my book bag and feet off the floor until he decided to go

away. I found that you can get used to anything if you just stick with it.

When we had been there six months, an announcement was made on the radio that our work was banned. So our Kingdom Halls were closed, and the missionaries were asked to leave. Only we and another couple managed to stay on at the branch for another three years. Then one Sunday morning during our *Watchtower* Study, armed police came and took us to police headquarters. They released the women and children, but they detained 23 brothers, including my husband, Bill. After six days they released him to go home and pack; three days later, by government order, we left the country, in May 1989. It was another tearful departure at the airport, where many of our loving brothers came to bid us farewell.

Finally, to Sierra Leone

Our present assignment is Sierra Leone, West Africa, a lovely country with beautiful, white-sand beaches. People are very friendly, and the field ministry is a pleasure. We are invited to sit down at every house, often in the shade of a mango tree or a coconut palm. People like to talk about God and get their own copy of the Bible to follow along.

Both Bill and I work at the Freetown Bethel Home. I serve as a receptionist and also work with subscriptions and congregation accounts. After 16 years of serving in countries where our preaching work was banned, it is wonderful to be in a land where the work is free and prospering.

I finished 30 years of missionary service in June 1991. Truly, Mom set before me a worthwhile goal! If she were still alive, I'd love to tell her again, "Thank you, Mom!" Happily, I can still say, "Thanks, Dad!"

QUESTIONS FROM READERS

Hebrews 9:16 says that a covenanter must die for a covenant to become valid. But God made the new covenant, and he did not die. So how can we understand this verse?

We read at Hebrews 9:15-17: "So that is why he [Christ] is a mediator of a new covenant, in order that, because a death has occurred for their release by ransom from the transgressions under the former covenant, the ones who have been called might receive the promise of the everlasting inheritance. For where there is a covenant, the death of the [human] covenanter needs to be furnished. For a covenant is valid over dead victims, since it is not in force at any time while the [human] covenanter is living."*

Jehovah is the actual Maker of the new covenant. At Jeremiah 31:31-34, God specifically foretold that he himself would make the new covenant with his people. The apostle Paul quotes this scripture at Hebrews 8:8-13, which shows that Paul appreciated that, strictly speaking, God originated this divine covenant.

However, in Hebrews chapter 9, Paul went on to deal with the various roles Jesus played in regard to the new covenant. Christ came as High Priest of this covenant. From another standpoint, Jesus was the sacrifice for the new covenant; only "the blood of the Christ" can "cleanse our consciences from dead works." Christ was also the Mediator of this covenant, even as Moses had been the mediator of the Law covenant.—Hebrews 9:11-15.

Paul mentioned that a death was needed to validate covenants between God and humans. The Law covenant is an example. Moses was its mediator, the one to bring about this agreement between God and fleshly Israel. Moses thus played a crucial role and was the human who dealt with the Israelites when they were coming into the covenant. Moses could thus be viewed as the human covenanter of the Law

* The two Greek words used here for "of the covenanter" are literally rendered "of the (one) having made for self covenant" or "of the [one] making covenant."—The Kingdom Interlinear Translation of the Greek Scriptures, published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., and The Interlinear Greek-English New Testament, by Dr. Alfred Marshall.

covenant that originated with Jehovah. But did Moses have to shed his lifeblood for the Law covenant to come into force? No. Instead animals were offered, their blood substituting for Moses' blood.—Hebrews 9:18-22.

What about the new covenant between Jehovah and the nation of spiritual Israel? Jesus Christ had the glorious role of go-between, the Mediator between Jehovah and spiritual Israel. Though Jehovah originated this covenant, it rested on Jesus Christ. Besides being its Mediator, Jesus had direct dealings in the flesh with those who would first be taken into this covenant. (Luke 22:20, 28, 29) Moreover, he was qualified to provide the sacrifice needed to validate the covenant. This sacrifice was not of mere animals but of a perfect human life. So Paul could refer to Christ as the human covenanter of the new covenant. After "Christ entered . . . into heaven itself, now to appear before the person of God for us," the new covenant became valid.—Hebrews 9:12-14, 24.

In speaking of Moses and Jesus as human covenanters, Paul was not suggesting that either of them had originated the respective covenants, which were actually made by God. Rather, those two humans were intimately involved as mediators in bringing about the respective covenants. And in each case, a death was needed—animals substituting for Moses, and Jesus offering his own lifeblood for those in the new covenant.

In Our Next Issue

What Does God's Kingdom Mean to You?

God-Given Freedom Brings Joy

Justin—Philosopher, Apologist, and Martyr

“Jehovah’s Witnesses?”

THE above question appeared as a title in the Finnish language *Bulletin of the University of Helsinki*. Under the title was a letter written by Professor Jorma Palo, and it said in part: “I took a closer look at the seal of our university printed on the cover of the *Bulletin*. In the middle of the upper half, I found a Hebrew text the meaning of which I inquired of a Jewish guest of mine. According to this scholar, who knows Hebrew, this word is ‘Jehovah’ in Finnish.”

The presence of the personal name of God on the seal of this Finnish university surprised some. In fact, though, the university is 350 years old, and when it was founded, the name Jehovah was widely known and used throughout Europe. The name appears on countless public buildings, coins, and seals that date from that period.—See the brochure *The Divine Name That Will Endure Forever*.

In our century, Christendom no longer uses God’s name, and that earlier interest in it has been largely forgotten. Only one group uses the divine name in worship and publishes it abroad, in harmony with the first petition in the Lord’s Prayer: “Our Father in the heavens, let your name be sanctified.” (Matthew 6:9) That is why, when the name was identified on the university seal, people immediately thought of Jehovah’s Witnesses.

